



Academic Success Committee Meeting Summary
September 1, 2016
9:00am – 12:00pm

Committee Members:

- Chair, Ms. Leslie Gray
- Jennifer Burns
- Mridu Garg
- Kelley Gallt
- Dr. Don White

Committee Structure:

During the meeting of the Academic Success Committee, Assistant Superintendent Kelley Gallt shared the recommended Department of Learning's Committee Structure for the 2016-17 school year. The structure includes various subject specific and learning-centered teams that are driven by teaching and administrative staff and based on the Strategic Plan. Such teams include the Science Team and Mathematics Team, RtI Team, Staff Development Team, etc. The identified subject specific teams are formed in order to develop, align, and articulate curriculum based on State Standards. A District-level leadership team called the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Advisory Council (CIAAC) will vet the work of these teams. This group is comprised of staff and administrators representative of the entire District. The CIAAC is facilitated by the Assistant Superintendent of Learning, Ms. Kelley Gallt, and is designed to provide teacher voice to the leadership process as it relates to teaching and learning. The CIAAC is responsible to provide feedback and input as the District works to accomplish goals set forth in the Strategic Plan, specifically those related to the objectives identified within the Academic Success Goal area.

The Board of Education's Academic Success Committee (ASC) is designed to provide Board of Education members, District leadership, and families an opportunity to not only be provided with information regarding the work of the district level committees, but also to participate in discussions with committee members; and therefore, unlike regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings, it allows for planned two-way communication to take place with all committee members and the general public. Its primary role is to provide feedback, suggestions and ask questions related to the work of the District level committees. The Board ASC will also act as a conduit of information to the Board of Education as a whole.



Digital Learning:

Dr. White and Ms. Gallt shared that the District will be presenting a recommendation for a 1:1 initiative as part of the District's Digital Learning work during the September 26, 2016 Board of Education meeting. The committee discussed the grade levels that will likely be impacted by the recommendation. There was discussion as to whether this should begin at the third grade or fourth grade level. In addition, Dr. White shared that the District's recommendation will likely delay the initiation of a 1:1 implementation until the start of the 2017-18 school year. Dr. White shared that if this is the recommendation, the delay may only target middle school, as elementary was slated to start in subsequent years. He also stated that the delay is based on the District's budgetary constraints for the 2016-17 school year, as the Board of Education has a strong desire to maintain a balanced budget. The team discussed the need for greater communication with the PTOs from each school, as they are preparing fundraising events and identifying potential investments for their schools in partnership with staff.

Curriculum Renewal Cycle:

Ms. Gallt provided information related to the Curriculum Renewal Cycle, which included a detailed description of the curriculum and assessment work being completed during the 2016-17 school year, as well as the plan for future curriculum and assessment work. The committee participated in conversations related to the work that will be done by the World Language Subject Specific Team once it is formed in the fall.

The Curriculum Renewal Cycle presented showcased a cycle that allows for resources to be adopted at a reasonable point as to provide the needed level of support to students, staff, and families, while also remaining fiscally responsible. The committee members discussed potential opportunities to expand World Language instruction to younger grades as well as opportunities to possibly add other languages to the middle school level. Once this committee is formed, its members will have an opportunity to conduct research in both areas and provide a recommendation to the Board of Education. Additionally, the committee discussed a potential change at the middle school level through the work of the upcoming Exploratory Subject Specific Team. Once this team is in place, it will be responsible for researching and making recommendations for future course offerings at the middle school. There was conversation about the focus of the exploratory courses to be grounded in STEAM as well as a need for alignment with what is offered at the high school level. Ms. Gallt shared that elementary teachers are likely to experience multiple curricula changes for the 2017-18 school year and suggested the district look to ways to minimize these changes through consideration of a delay to the implementation of social studies at the elementary level. The committee discussed many options that could afford less change to the elementary level. Ms. Gallt will be making a recommendation to the Board of Education during the September 12, 2016 Board meeting following a detailed description of the discussions and feedback provided to date.



Math and Science Curriculum:

The committee reviewed draft curriculum work in the areas of science and mathematics. The committee discussed the possibility of incorporating advanced programming for science courses in future years. Options were shared including finding ways to allow for advanced learning to take place in the general classroom in lieu of the formation of self-contained classrooms. Further discussion will take place with the Science Subject Specific Team in order to provide a final recommendation to be a part of the curriculum presented to the Board of Education. Ms. Gallt anticipates bringing math and science curriculum documents to the Board of Education meeting scheduled for September 26th for the Board to consider approval of each document. Science is intended to be implemented during the 2017-18 school year.

Mathematics Placement:

The committee discussed placement decisions related to mathematics. Ms. Gallt shared that she has received parent feedback regarding the timeliness of the information and requests for greater specificity. Ms. Gallt shared that she agrees that the Department of Learning can improve with regard to more timely communication involving student placement. She indicated that the Mathematics SS Team and the CIAAC would be reviewing placement criteria to include assessment data that will allow for those decisions to be made for returning students by early summer. The team talked about the potential for a cognitive test to be used as a placement assessment. Making placement decisions in early summer will mean that the District will not be able to use PARCC results for initial decision-making, but could use it as a part of an appeal process.