



Academic Success Committee Meeting Summary October 5, 2017 • 9:00am

Committee Members

- Chair, Leslie Gray - Board of Education Vice-President
- Meeta Jain Patel, M.D. - Board of Education Member
- Dr. Don White - Superintendent
- Joan Woolwine - Interim Assistant Superintendent of Learning (C&I)
- Dr. Cynthia Heidorn - Interim Assistant Superintendent of Learning (Project Lead)
- Dr. Christina Sepiol - Assistant Superintendent of Learning (Pupil Services)

Other members of the community were in attendance, including building administrators, teachers, PTO members, and parents. Board President Jennifer Burns was also in attendance.

Grade 5 Accelerated Math

ASC Chair and Board Vice-President Leslie Gray shared a brief history of math acceleration at the elementary school level. She commented on the inconsistencies across the District over the years, which led to the subsequent development of math instructional tiers at the elementary school level and uniform District-level placement criteria. She commented that under the current math trajectory, grade level students complete 5th grade math by the time that they complete 5th grade, and advanced students complete 6th grade math. However, it was noted that there is confusion under the current trajectory as to whether accelerated students are intended to complete grade 7 or grade 8 math by the time that they complete 5th grade. The current scope and sequence for 5th grade accelerated math has students in that trajectory completing 8th grade math by the time that they complete 5th grade.

Interim Assistant Superintendent of Learning (C&I) Joan Woolwine shared concerns from teachers, students, and parents regarding the current pacing of 5th grade accelerated math, which has students in that trajectory completing all of 7th and 8th grade math by the time that they finish 5th grade. Concerns were raised that the current pacing does not allow students to develop mastery and depth of the content. Some parents shared that their students were feeling overwhelmed with the pacing and advanced content of the course. Ms. Woolwine explained that teachers had voiced concern about the initial assessment data. Teachers also shared that formative assessment data showed that students needed greater exposure to the prerequisite 6th grade skills prior to beginning the 7th grade content. In response to the concerns and data, the Department of Learning determined it was in the best interest of the students to reduce the pacing and allow students to develop mastery of the 6th and 7th grade content during the current school year. Ms. Woolwine shared that it is the administration's recommendation that the scope and sequence of the 5th grade accelerated course should be altered so that students in that trajectory complete 7th grade math, rather than 8th grade math, by the time that they finish 5th grade. Ms. Woolwine emphasized the importance of meeting students' social and emotional needs while ensuring students develop the ability to apply all skills and have a deep understanding of the content and concepts without skipping essential



mathematical concepts. She shared that differentiation within the classroom should focus on not only content, but also in process and product to meet individual student needs.

Ms. Woolwine then shared the process for making District-level decisions and recommendations, such as the decision to alter the scope and sequence of 5th grade accelerated math. She shared the “Decision Making Tree,” a process that involves all District stakeholder groups. This 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, Rtl 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) then vets the work of these teams. This group is comprised of staff and administrators representative of the entire District. The CIAAC is facilitated by the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Learning, 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 then acts as a conduit of information to the Board of Education as a whole. This process may sometimes be linear, but there are also other times when it is circular as the information flows through various levels of the organization.

Special Education Speech Rubric

Assistant Superintendent of Learning (Pupil Services) Dr. Christina Sepiol and Hinsdale Middle School Speech Pathologist Kory Blacklock provided an update on the status of the new special education speech eligibility and service rubric developed by the D181 speech language pathologists.

Beginning in the 2016-17 school year and continuing into the 2017-18 school year, the speech pathologists have been working on the development of a speech rubric that clarifies the areas of speech, and severity levels of speech challenges, that drive speech eligibility and the amount of provided services. They shared that the speech rubric had been vetted with CIAAC, and that it would be shared with parents and IEP teams for their use in the special education process. The speech rubric will help bring structure to the decision-making process (i.e. eligibility for speech services). The speech rubric will also help to establish uniformity across the District.

Dr. Sepiol confirmed that the speech rubric would be posted on the District website and communicated to parents and staff.



Secure Assessments

Ms. Woolwine shared that part of the curriculum development process involves creating and administering common assessments that are aligned to the standards for each curricular area. She shared the intent of common assessments is to ensure that the standards outlined in the curriculum are being taught at a level of mastery that is uniform across all classrooms and buildings within the district, and to ensure that trends in achievement results can be calculated across years in order to provide longitudinal data. She then explained the reasons why common assessments are kept secure and not sent home. She explained that the goal of test security is to protect the integrity of the assessment, and to ensure that results are accurate and meaningful. If a common assessment were to be made public, then the validity of the test may be compromised because students may know the questions and answers before taking the assessment, thereby rendering the assessment invalid. She also commented that if common assessments were made public, then the questions would need to be rewritten on a yearly basis, which would have many implications, such as the cost to the district and the time it would take teachers to continually develop new questions.

It was clarified that all content area common assessments will remain secure, with the exception of math, as math assessments have already been sent home during the previous school year. Ms. Woolwine emphasized the importance of keeping families informed about the progress of their students. Student progress on common assessments will be shared with parents in the form of a cover sheet identifying the standards that students have mastered and/or need continued instruction. She then commented that moving forward, the intent is to use Skyward's item analysis tool to identify these standards for parents and teachers. Ms. Gray emphasized the need to keep parents informed, and to have a parent-friendly and easy to understand cover sheet. It was also emphasized that the common assessments are just one piece of student progress, and that classroom assessments will continue to be sent home consistent with past practice.

Ms. Woolwine will provide an additional common assessment update at the Academic Success Meeting on November 2, 2017.

Extended School Year and Special Education Procedural Manual Update

Dr. Sepiol shared that the Extended School Year eligibility criteria and the draft Special Education Procedural Manual were presented to CIAAC for review.

CIAAC reviewed the ESY historical data, as well as the ESY section of the procedural manual. After discussion, CIAAC members recommended that the ESY considerations in the draft procedural manual be implemented as presented following a review by ASC and the Board of Education. CIAAC members stressed the importance of the criteria being communicated clearly to both staff and parents, and the criteria being implemented uniformly across the District.

Dr. Sepiol also shared that during the CIAAC meeting, the committee members discussed the possibility of implementing a track in the Summer Learning Program that targeted the needs of students who may not be eligible for ESY but would still benefit from additional summer support. This type of program could also capture the needs of struggling learners who are not identified as special education. It was noted that there



has been feedback from parents about the need for this type of program, especially given that the District provided a Bridge math program for advanced learners.

HMS Assistant Principal and Summer Learning Administrator Rocky May shared that the Summer Learning Program is fluid and teacher driven. He discussed the challenges with Summer Learning (i.e., three weeks, goals, finances). Dr. Sepiol commented that the proposed course could be a re-teach model for students who struggle during the year but who do not qualify for ESY.

Summer Learning Update

Rocky May, Assistant Principal at HMS and Summer Learning Administrator, shared that the Summer Learning Program welcomed 630 students in Grades K-7, and 84 courses were offered. Courses included core curriculum in reading, writing, and math, with a focus on maintaining skills. Enrichment courses were offered on topics such as creative writing, technology, science, art, and instrumental music.

Mr. May then shared ideas and recommendations for the upcoming summer learning program. He requested that the course catalog be sent to parents prior to spring break. He also requested that if a Summer Bridge math program is offered, that parents be informed of eligibility as early as possible. He also requested that a separate administrator be put in charge of the Bridge program due to the extended time requirements the program requires beyond the Summer of Learning Program.

2017-18-PSAT

It was shared that District 86 has decided to use Fall NWEA MAP data, in place of PSAT data, for freshman placement purposes. Using Fall MAP data allows the High School to share placement information with parents and teachers earlier than PSAT data allows. It was shared that the current 2017-2018 D181 assessment calendar provides for administering the PSAT to current 8th grade students within D181 during the school day. The initial intent of administering the PSAT within D181 during the school day was to provide students with practice taking the assessment. However, it was noted that the administration is now recommending that the PSAT be removed from the 2017-18 D181 assessment calendar. Building and District administration believe that MAP, District common assessments, PARCC, and classroom assessments provide students with sufficient test taking practice. Additionally, it was noted that the administration of PSAT would reduce instructional time.

Subsequent to the October ASC meeting, the BOE approved at the October 16, 2017 Board of Education meeting the removal of PSAT from the 2017-18 assessment calendar.

Institute Day Planning and Professional Development

Ms. Woolwine shared that the Staff Development Team is comprised of teachers and District administrators. They meet regularly to discuss professional development needs across the District in all content areas. The Staff Development Team recently reviewed and revised the staff development plan. After consultation with teachers, the team provided recommendations for the November Institute Day schedule and the long-range plan for staff development.