

Curriculum Director School Board Report:

September 21, 2009

TEACHING FOR LEARNING:

CURRICULUM:

The ELA teachers are planning to continue their small group study of secondary literacy practices. This fall they will include the elementary teachers in their meetings. The goal of this process is to develop a K-12 approach to literacy that includes best practices with a seamless transition for students as they progress from elementary through high school.

The state of Michigan has produced several new documents which directly relate to curriculum. The "Writing across the Curriculum" is a document which contains a number of strategies for teachers to use within the content areas. At this point, they have completed a 148 page section for English language arts. Sections are also planned for social studies, math and science. Two math documents contain comparison charts for grades 6 through geometry and 6th grade through algebra I. These are helpful documents to aid teachers with curriculum planning.

INSTRUCTION:

Our district level initiatives this year will focus on writing across the curriculum and "Response to Intervention" (RtI). All teachers received a book: "Pyramid Response to Intervention" last spring. This school year, our PD will focus on strategies for developing this program in all three schools.

TECHNOLOGY:

The first STARNET (Sharing Technology and Academic Resources Network) steering committee will meet on Wednesday, 9/30. The meeting will focus on building updates, workgroup updates and what to expect with future initiatives. I will have updates by next month.

A select group of teachers and administrators participated in a three day training session for our new student information system, "Power School". All teachers received training on the first professional development day on September 1st. Implementation of the parent portal is expected to occur sometime in October and November (most likely at parent/teacher conferences).

ASSESSMENT:

MEAP tests have been ordered for grades 3-8 (and 9th grade Social Studies). Final class rosters, submitted by September 17th will allow us to have tests and barcodes preprinted for all students. Once again, this year, due to State mandate, all students will take each section of the test on the same days beginning on October 13th and ending on October 29th.

I will be attending the state Assessment and Accountability conference on September 28th to update myself with any new changes to the testing procedures.

LEADERSHIP:

SHARED LEADERSHIP:

This year, 22 administrators and teachers will continue working together to steer the direction of our professional development. Along with the “Failure is not an Option” (FNO) initiative, the group will also introduce and develop the sessions for our “Response to Intervention” training. Working with the ISD the district has identified a coach, Bill Norton, to help guide us in this process. We are able to use special education ARRA funding to help us pay for this venture.

COLLABORATIVE TIME:

Our PD committee continues to be composed of two teachers and one administrator from each building. Krista Voss is also participating as a representative for special education. These individuals are also taking part in the FNO and RtI work group. Topic areas will also include writing and some building level initiatives along with those topics identified by this group.

Teachers participated in two days of professional development to start the school year. On day one, all staff participated in an opening “icebreaker” activity followed by “Power teacher” training. The afternoon was dedicated to building level meetings. On day two, all teachers and administrators rode buses to the Breslin Center where we saw guest speaker, Sue Nelle DeHart. Dr. DeHart spoke to us about the culture of poverty within our schools. Teachers thoroughly enjoyed her presentation. Much of what she talked about is directly related to the behavior of students within our district. Teachers returned to the high school where a luncheon was provided by the DEA. Mr. Stoneman overviewed the RtI process before building level groups met for a short time in the afternoon.

PERSONNEL AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:

MENTORING PROGRAM:

Our mentoring program continues this year for all teachers within the first three years of teaching. Administrators will meet with mentees, review individual development plans and determine a course of meetings and evaluations for the coming school year.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

COMMUNICATION:

Information on MEAP testing will be added to the district web page. This will include exact dates and times of each of the tests to take place beginning October 13.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

This year the entire district participated in the August 18th registration day. Overall the response was very positive. We are planning to continue with the process next summer.

DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT:

As part of the RtI model, we will be searching for universal screeners for reading and math. Our goal is to screen every student twice a year to determine grade level rankings for interventions.