

Superintendent Report: February Board Meeting
Submitted on February 18, 2021

Administrative work:

Our team has been reviewing the winter benchmark data from FastBridge for literacy and Spring Math. We reached out to Amanda VanDerHeyden (the Spring Math creator) to examine our data in a program review, which was very helpful. Our staff has been reviewing all of the data for each student and continue to intervene to ensure we are doing everything we can do improve outcomes for our students. Amanda pointed out that in some grade levels our students made more progress this year than in previous years, which she found particularly impressive. One other important point to make is that our online elementary teachers figured out a way to continue to implement the Spring Math protocols with fidelity, while many across the country were not able to do so. We have also continued to provide Spring Math individual interventions throughout the school year.

We hired a permanent sub for the elementary school to help ensure we have the staffing necessary to remain open. We have also hired additional paraprofessional support to help with staffing.

I attended a Title IX online training over the past month. I also set up a meeting with the doctor at the health department to determine whether our clear masks intended for potential use in classes with students with a hearing impairment were sufficient.

Finally, I participated in a county focus group regarding school calendars. Our calendar has garnered interest from area schools as we are all seeking ways to best meet the needs of our students, especially post-pandemic. Speaking of calendars, in keeping with the goal of publishing two years' worth of calendars to help families with their planning, I developed the 2022-23 calendar and met with the DEA to talk through it. The calendar will be shared with the Board on Monday night.

Athletics:

High school bowling, boys' and girls' basketball, wrestling and MS boys' and girls' basketball are all underway. Special thanks to Christy for all of her hard work to develop so many versions of the schedules and to continue to adapt/add new games as teams cancel/drop out with little notice.

Budget Info:

Raelynn and I have continued working on the 2021-22 budget. Our admin team has been working on enrollment projections, consumable budget items and other curricular needs. We will know a lot more about the budget when we are able to establish the schedule for next year, which has been greatly delayed by the work we've been doing to return in-person. While the Governor has shared her budget, we now await the House and Senate budget proposals to get a better idea of what we may be able to plan on for the upcoming school year.

Beginndergarten/Kindergarten Round Up are nearly complete, as some families have had to be rescheduled due to the inclement weather we had on 2/16/21. We are currently anticipating two sections of kindergarten and one section of beginndergarten, but because we held Round Up so early, we realize that we will continue to add students over the coming months.

We have received calls from several families requesting to join us next year as Schools of Choice students. We have also been reaching out to new families/families that chose to homeschool this year about their plans for next year and are taking all of these decisions into account in our planning and budgeting.

Communication:

It has been really helpful to be able to stay in touch with Linda Vail at Ingham County's Health Department. An example of this is that she has called a special meeting with county superintendents that will take place on Friday, February 19 at 4 pm. I always look forward to hearing from her and having the chance to ask questions and seek clarification as needed.

We are still hoping to get the winter newsletter out to families sometime in the next month or so.

At least once weekly communications continue to be sent to the entire district as well as to individual buildings for MS and HS families in an effort to be as helpful and transparent as possible given all we are experiencing with school.

Several conversations have taken place with our parents as we have worked through the transition back to in-person learning between the principals/me and our parents.

Community Outreach/Partnerships:

We are very excited to have recently been awarded a \$500 grant from Aldi to help pay for the food we need to purchase for our Weekend Survival bags. Thank you to Becky for seeking this out and completing it on behalf of the district.

Curriculum/Training:

Our January professional development included Aggie Improvement Team work, a staff mental health activity and then the bulk of the time was spent working on mapping curriculum plans for the remainder of the year in grade level and department teams.

Met with the DSIT folks to plan the February Professional Development. We will spend more time in Aggie Improvement Teams, as the Social Studies AIT has their first meeting this month and this will also allow other teams to make more progress towards accomplishing their goals. Teachers will also meet as elementary and secondary groups to focus on improvement targeted at the building level.

In preparation for the upcoming PD, Andy and I met as the new Social Studies AIT leadership team to help plan our first meeting. We will focus on a presentation by Ingham ISD staff re:

Quality Social Studies Resources and then work to gain a common understanding of the second strategy of the Social Studies group as outlined in the District Improvement Plan. Erin and I also met with the Rigor Aggie Improvement Team to talk through the DIP and establish a focus for the remainder of the year for each strategy group. This group has finalized the Parent Guides for Assessment, the Teaching and Assessment Expectations Guide for each building and an Assessment Flow Chart to help clarify this work for teachers.

It is also important to note that the Math AIT finalized some important products as well prior to dismantling and re-forming as the Social Studies AIT. They created a Coach Talk poster to help guide the peer coaching sessions that occur during Spring Math and also created a poster outlining the Aggie Dos and Don'ts as it relates to using accurate math talk. Both of these were shared with Amanda VanDerHeyden to get her input. It is quite a privilege to share our work with a national expert to ensure we are on the right track.

Data

Updated data regarding student engagement was shared in the Board packet, in accordance with the legislative requirement.

We are very excited to formally share that it was recently announced that Senior Elizabeth Troia has moved from a National Merit Semifinalist to National Merit Finalist. This puts her in an elite group of only 15,000 students nationwide who will then be narrowed further into a group half this size of National Merit Scholars. National Merit Scholars receive scholarship funds and arguably earn the highest academic honor a high school student can achieve. We are so proud and excited for her and continue cheering her on as she continues through this amazing process.

Facilities:

Rick and I have continued to work through a list of needs as it relates to the facility. Rick has worked hard to examine all of our assets and then to determine what we can still use and what is no longer needed. Items that are no longer needed have largely been able to be sold online. This effort to clean and organize each of our storage areas has been greatly appreciated after we have completed this bond project.

Personnel Update:

We will begin hiring for any known vacancies we will have for next year ASAP, as there is a shortage of qualified teachers and other support personnel.

Policy Work:

There is no update to the Wellness Policy for this year.

Safety:

We have worked hard with the teachers and students to ensure we are creating routines and cleaning practices, combined with mask wearing and distancing, to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Teaching and Learning:

Please see the Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan in the Board Packet for more information about our current structure and plans.

We continue to work on planning and staffing for our Summer Intervention Month. I wrote about the importance of this month in the weekly email to our families in hopes that they realize that **THE TIME IS NOW** to help our students “catch up”. We cannot wait. The month of June is intentionally set aside for our most intense intervention. We then intentionally strive to take the month of July off for both staff and students to allow for restoration and recharging and then will start school again in mid-August. High school students who are doing credit recovery may need more time beyond June to help them reach their goals. This model reflects research and was adopted after consultation with local and national experts re: best practice for summer school.

Technology:

We have been working on updating our asset plan and hope to outfit the remaining classrooms in the district that currently do not have interactive teaching boards. We await the allocation of the COVID one-time funding we are scheduled to receive to purchase this type of equipment that will have long-term benefits for our students.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

*Parent-Teacher Conferences: March 10 and 11

*Spring Break: April 2- April 9

*Graduation: May 23

*Last Day of School: May 28