

Superintendent Advisory Goals 1 & 2 Meeting

November 27, 2018

The goal of tonight's advisory was to provide information and engage in conversation with participants about ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). Superintendent Rains presented information about ESSA, the new national educational law, and how its accountability formula focuses on student growth and the whole child. John Snipes, Director of Curriculum shared information about how District 161 is supporting students academically within the new ESSA guidelines. Leslie DeBoer, Director of Special Education shared information about social emotional supports that have been provided to students and staff in the district.

Participant Discussion and Response

- How does one define a closely studied cycle? *Monthly meetings with A&G Team and then review at mid-year and end of year.*
- What data will show growth? What objective measure will you use to send to the state? *Growth measurement is determined by the state metrics. (i.e. PARCC test/Illinois Assessment of Readiness)*
- How do we know our schools are good schools (not because of numbers we are showing the state)? *The District is looking at individual student growth via NWEA RIT scores with projected growth. The District also feels our school improvement plans focus on continuously challenging our students to provide the best possible education. The District continues to communicate with the high school to ensure we are preparing our students appropriately.*
- How will we compare to Lincoln-Way/surrounding districts if we go to standards-based grading? *Some of the other feeder districts use standards-based grading in the early elementary grades and then move to traditional grades in the older grades. Some use a hybrid of both standards-based and traditional grades.*
- Do subgroups include 504s? *No.*
- Is there a link to YouTube videos on the district web page? *The PowerPoint, meeting notes, fall progress report on Board Goals 1 & 2, and a link to curricular videos produced by the District on YouTube will be posted on the front of the District website under the **ESSA and Student Growth** link.*
- Gratitude to the district for the changes the district is making, yet some teachers do not seem to fully understand the changes or are unable to articulate them correctly. Concerns are with ensuring that the teachers are grading based on content and not behaviors. For example, if an assignment was not completed in cursive but the content was accurate, why would the grade be lowered? *To promote understanding, the initiative has been communicated via teacher institutes and in-services, faculty meetings, Supt. Advisory meetings, and at Board of Education meetings. Communication and updates, including Q&A documents and A&G meeting minutes, have been produced and distributed. Principals, District Office Admins, and each school's A&G team members continue to be readily available to support teachers.*

- Rigor for the “bubble kids.” How can we push my kid? How do we get them over that hump? *The District is discussing an accelerated program for implementation next school year in grades 5-8.*
- Is the district cross-training - i.e., grade 5 teachers & grade 8 teachers sharing strategies to address differentiation? *Instructional Coaches are sharing strategies and created a collaboration team online portal to share instructional delivery and technology ideas with the 5-8 math department.*
- With some of the comments about A&G guidelines, will the standards-based reporting initiative be derailed? I’ll be disappointed if we don’t have this in place next year. Recommendation was made to move towards standards-based reporting at the primary levels as a starting point. *We will continue to communicate and educate our school community. We will continue moving forward in aligning instruction and assessment to the standards to then move to standards-based grading and reporting.*
- Discussion about additional parent reports from NWEA - parents would like to have more feedback about their child’s scores and areas of strength and weakness. *We will investigate other reports that can be generated.*
- How is the universal behavior screener (SRSS) administered? *This is not an assessment students take. Classroom teachers complete a checklist of internalizing and externalizing behaviors.*

Additional comments/suggestions:

- Concerns from parent-teacher conferences that behaviors of students were discussed rather than student grades/growth. Also, the length of time in grades 5-8 was short.
- If we are moving to standards-based grading, I want my child to co-change from here to the high school.
- Is it possible we could use standards-based grading forms in a folder during parent-conferences even though we are still using letter grades?
- Why is there not a Spring parent-teacher conference - maybe in March - to help prepare them for next year? I want to know their weaknesses. We need something to communicate in 3rd or 4th quarter.
- Concern about PowerSchool and bank comments at the end of the quarter: Recommendation was to encourage more customized comments.