

REPORT OF COMMITTEE
Academic Achievement Committee

Tuesday, February 21, 2017
Board Chambers/Auditorium
9:00 a.m.

Present: Rev. John Matias – Chairperson, Maureen Slade, Katherine Downes Lewis,
Staff: Carolyn Evans, Dr. Ron Gorman, Mayda Bahamonde-Gunnell, Bridget Cheney,
Pay Reagan, Jonathan Harper
Absent: Raynard Ross

Public Comment(s)

Mary Bouwens, GREA President-Concerning Evaluation

Instructional Council Update

Pat Reagan, School Reform Facilitator and chairperson for Instructional Council, shared minutes from council meetings held at the GRPS University. The minutes reflected meetings dated December 15, 2016; January 19, 2017; and February 16, 2017. A supplemental meeting took place at Union High on January 5, 2017. This date was agreed upon by Instructional Council members and was held for the purpose of reviewing and supporting essential edits to the new course, Newcomers Integrated Science A. Jonathan Harper, science curriculum supervisor was the presenter. This course is to be included in the 2nd Semester schedule for the students exiting the Newcomers Program at Union.

The following courses were presented and reviewed by council members during the 2016-17 school year thus far:

- Newcomers Integrated Science A
- American Sign Language I Grades 6-8 and 9-12
- MYP (Middle Years Program) Honors Statistics Grades 9-10
- PLTW (Project Lead the Way Courses)
 - Biomedical Sciences: Human Body Systems Grades 10-12
 - Sparking Future Engineers: PLTW Gateway to Technology-Grades 6-8

Dr. Mulonge Kalumbula, social studies curriculum supervisor, presented Cultural Landscape informing members of the Instructional Council the current multi-cultural and supports needed by the diverse population attending GRPS.

District Wide Strategies

Dr. Ron Gorman, Assistant Superintendent of PreK-12 Instructional Support, shared the work that is in place supporting the enactment of the GRPS theory of action for improvement. The Academic Team analyzed the 2015-2016 M-STEP results and determined that not enough students were reaching grade level proficiencies. After much deliberation and with feedback from principals and teachers, support from the district's Harvard and ASCD consultants, the Cabinet and Academic Team identified "The Three Focus Areas" that guide the strategic direction for improvement during the 2016-2017 school year. They are:

- Knowledge of Standards
- Backwards Mapping

- Assessment Literacy

Monitoring and Support Plan

The team identified three categories of schools: (1) Non-Proficient, (2) Minimally Proficient, (3) Close to Proficient/Proficient (based on two consecutive years of M-STEP data).

From this data a plan is being implemented that:

- Ensures schools with the lowest levels of proficiency take priority, receive more school visits, and are provided more intense support
- Assigns Academic Team members to specific schools. Academic Team members partner with the curriculum staff to perform building walk-throughs each month which focus on the Three District Priorities. Assignments do not change over the entire 2016-2017 school year. These meetings are scheduled with principals so there are no surprises. The visits consists of:
 - 20 minute discussion with principal to discuss school strategies and progress
 - 40 minute building/classroom walk-through to look for artifacts of teaching and learning
 - 20 minute debrief with principal to discuss observations and determine next steps
 - Observation artifacts from the visit and brought back to the next Academic Team meeting.
- Informs the Academic Team of school progress. Each team is responsible for providing a visits summary that focuses on the following guiding questions:
 - Are standards being taught?
 - Is there evidence of backwards mapping from the standards and assessment?
 - Are students becoming proficient on standards? How do we know?

Classroom Expectations

Each classroom should demonstrate evidence of:

- Instruction driven by the standards
- Standards displayed in classrooms every day in the form of “I can” statements in elementary buildings or grade appropriate language at the secondary level
- Students able to articulate standards, outcomes of lessons and how they will demonstrate their understandings
- Formative and summative assessments
- What has been learned from aligning the content, lessons and assessments to the MSTEP format?
- Students struggle with U.S. History questions, especially those that require prior knowledge. Only a small percentage of students were able to answer these (prior knowledge) questions. This form of content knowledge cannot be memorized, it must be taught for understanding and application over time.
- Students were more successful on “referring” questions, those where the answers could be located on the page.
- Some content on the practice assessment was not yet taught. Backwards mapping will continue to be a priority to ensure students learn required content before they take M-STEP.

Priority Schools

Bridget Cheney, Executive Director of Elementary Schools, shared the priority status of schools released and added to the list. The schools that were released are: (1) Aberdeen, (2) Campus, (3) Martin Luther King Leadership Academy, (4) Mulick Park, (5) Ottawa Hills, and (6) Union High. The schools that were added to the list this school year are (1) Burton Elementary, (2) Burton Middle, and (3) Westwood Middle.

The schools that are currently on the priority schools list and strategies addressing deficits are listed below:

- Alger Middle - culture and climate, close and critical reading, and high quality questioning
- Coit Elementary - formative assessment, Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
- Dickinson Elementary - Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), and flexible grouping
- Ken-O-Sha Elementary - quality Questioning, Universal Design for Learning, and student engagement

Ms. Cheney shared that literacy focused professional learning and coaching is provided by ASCD faculty members. This is a continuation from last year's Fisher-Frey professional learning. This professional learning enabled both teachers and principals to deepen content knowledge, and infuse learning into practice by implementing: (1) learning targets and success criteria, (2) gradual release model, (3) formative assessment, and (4) culture and climate in literacy.

Science Materials Update

Jonathan Harper shared information on potential new resources for science in the district. The is Discovery Education, a sub set of Discovery communications. Discovery Education is national and international; reaching across the world. They are the number one in the distribution of nonfiction media in the world and they provide content to hundreds or countries and multiple languages.

. The district began with trial access and pilot implementation of the services they offer. The experience provided the opportunity to examine its effectiveness as well as provided the opportunity to learn about effective implementation strategies.

- Winter 2013
 - Trial accounts activated for few secondary teachers, one year DE Techbook accounts were set up at five middle schools hosting summer school (Harrison, Martin Luther King, Westwood, Alger, and Burton Middle.
- 2013/2014 & 2014/2015 school year
 - MIS coordinates LDAP authentication for student accounts (single GRPS username/password), accounts purchased for KEC Oakleigh/Beltline, and Bethany based school. Gerald R. Ford and Ottawa Hills purchased accounts from building based/SIG funds.
- 2015/2016 school year

- Museum School purchased Techbook as the base resource for Science, Math, and Social Studies. Shawmut Hills purchased Science Techbook for K-8. District studied implementation challenges and successes.
- 2016/2017 school year
 - CS Frost MS/HS purchased Science, Social Studies, and Math Techbook. CA Frost Elementary purchased 4th grade Science. District identified implementation challenges and successes.

Techbook is a digital K-12 Science textbook supported by continuously updated content. Real-time student data will upload on any device in any instructional setting. It is fully aligned to Michigan Science and NGSS Standards and includes Three-Dimensional Learning, science and engineering practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCI), and Cross-Cutting Concepts (CCC).

This web-based and platform can be accessed online at all times. Content can also be downloaded or printed providing access to students, teachers, and parents at their convenience without internet access.

Meeting adjourned. 10:39 a.m.

Rev. John Matias, Chairperson
Raynard Ross
Maureen Slade
Katherine Downes Lewis

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