

**REPORT OF COMMITTEE**  
**Academic Achievement Committee and Public Hearing**

Tuesday, April 18, 2017  
Board Chambers/Auditorium  
9:00 A.M.

Present: Rev. John Matias, Katherine Downes-Lewis, Raynard Ross, Carolyn Evans, Mel Atkins, II, Mary Jo Kuhlman, Bridget Cheney, Sharron Pitts, Steve Petros, Mulonge Kalumbula, Cheryl Lofton, Jonathan Harper, Amy Powney, Pat Reagan

Absent: Maureen Slade

**Public Comment**

None.

**Instructional Council Update**

None.

**Social Emotional Learning and Development**

Mel Atkins, II, executive director of community and student affairs and Natasha Neal, student reform supervisor provided an overview on Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Social Emotional Learning is the process of explicitly teaching and modeling the attitudes and skills necessary for students and adults to:

- Recognize and manage their emotions
- Demonstrate caring and concern for others
- Establish positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Constructively handle challenging social situations

When students possess these skills along with a strong academics foundation, they are poised to succeed in their personal and professional lives. This is important because a national survey completed by over 148,000 sixth through twelfth graders found that only approximately 37 percent of students surveyed possessed social competencies such as empathy, decision-making, and conflict resolution skills. Twenty nine percent indicated that their school provided a caring, encouraging environment; Fifty percent stated that they became disengaged in school and approximately 30 percent engaged in multiple high risk behaviors such as substance abuse, violence, etc. that interfered with their school performance and jeopardized their potential for success.

The Social Emotional Learning opportunities are being funded through the Wallace grant to foster children's social and emotional development through a partnership between school districts and out-of-school-time intermediaries. This would also foster leadership during in school and out-of-school-time using programming to effectively teach and develop these skills.

If the district is successful in receiving this grant, millions of dollars would be awarded over five years to support five elementary/K-8 buildings coordinate programming to implement and measure the effects of explicit social emotional learning instruction during in school and out-of-school-time.

Next Steps:

- Work with five pilot sites to identify strategies that are working. These buildings include:
  - Brookside, Buchanan, Mulick Park, Palmer, and Stocking
- Assist staff with identifying an evidence-based resource
- Identify current programs within the district that exemplify explicit SEL instruction
- Capitalize on the strategies that are currently in place and demonstrating promise, including:
  - Restorative Practices
  - Second Steps
  - Michigan Model Lessons
  - Mindfulness

### **District Wide Achievement-NWEA Scores and Trends**

Steve Petros, GRPS assessment specialist provided an overview of the district wide achievement and growth results as measured by the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association/MAPP Assessments). The two of the four KISA areas goals are 3rd grade reading and 8th grade math and represent the focus of this report.

The NWEA is an assessment that reports scores in two ways: growth and proficiency. The typical growth targets are based on students in the same grade, taking the same subject test, for the same growth period, the same number of instructional weeks, and with the same starting scores. A typical growth percentile demonstrates the projected growth for students sharing these variables. A score greater than 50 percent is a reflection of better than average growth and anything less than 50 percent is a reflection of less than average growth.

Proficiency represents a percentile ranking achieved by comparing all students within a norming pool regardless of where they have begun the year. Mr. Petros went on to summarize the following trends and results over the past academic year for GRPS third and eighth grade students:

#### **Third grade reading:**

- Over the past three full academic years, more and more students are meeting or exceeding the 50th percentile. Growth has been incremental and steady.
- Every year upon entry, a greater number of the third grade students tested are at or above the 50th percentile.

#### **Eighth Grade Math:**

- When comparing fall to spring scores, more students are at the 50th percentile in the spring than in the fall.

- Every year upon entry, a greater number of eighth grade students tested are at or above the 50th percentile.

Meeting adjourned 9:57 a.m.

---

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

/dct