

The Board of Education, Downers Grove Grade School District 58, DuPage County, Illinois met for a curriculum workshop on Monday, October 26, 2015 at Herrick Middle School; 4435 Middaugh; Downers Grove, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The President called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Members present: President John D. Cooper; Vice President Doug Purcell; and Members Diehl, Heppner, Lupescu, and Sigale. Members absent: Miller. Also in attendance were Kari Cremascoli, Superintendent; Jayne Yudzentis, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel; Jessica Stewart, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services; Matthew Rich, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Lorie Pilster, Director of Business Services; Richard Bubula, Director of Buildings and Grounds; James Eichmiller, Director of Innovative Technology and Learning; Megan Hewitt, Coordinator of Community Relations; and Pamela A. Osika, Board Secretary. Attending this meeting were at least 93 visitors. (Visitors' Roster attached to official minutes.)

2. CURRICULUM WORKSHOP

President Cooper introduced Superintendent Kari Cremascoli. Dr Cremascoli explained that the purpose of the workshop was to review district and school continuous improvement efforts including the 2015-2016 Strategic Goals Action Plan; review student performance data; review the Rising Star Continuous Improvement Plan; review Title I and Title II grant reporting; give the Board an opportunity to discuss District goals and changes in education the District is facing; and consider next steps regarding continued professional development, supports and adjustments in terms of curriculum and longitudinal reporting plans.

A. District and School Continuous Improvement Efforts – Data and Curriculum Overview

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Dr. Matt Rich began his presentation by reviewing the three goals that relate directly to instruction and curriculum development. As outlined in the District 58 2015-2016 Strategic Goals Action Plan, the District's goal is to enhance student learning through differentiated and flexible instruction, student engagement in and ownership of learning, and growth-based data and reporting systems. Dr. Rich cited recent curriculum and instruction enhancements including the expansion of and continued development of the biliteracy program, progress reporting and development of the English Language Arts curriculum, development of and supports for the Grove Children's Preschool, continued review of in-district special education programming options, the implementation of the Optional Kindergarten Enrichment and Enhancement Program (OKEEP), and continuing work in science curriculum with a focus on Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

The Board was provided School Improvement Plans for each of the 13 District 58 schools. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments at this time.

B. Rising Star Continuous Improvement Plan

The Rising Star Continuous Improvement Plan, a summary of many efforts already occurring in the District, is one of the required components for the District Title I Plan. To date, three of six goals have been reached and the remaining three areas are continuing to develop.

C. Title I and Title II Focal Points & Grant Report

Title I is aimed at supporting schools and school districts with certain levels of low income students. The Title I Grant identifies schools with need but funds are not limited within schools to only low income children. Title I services provided by District 58 are in the areas of reading and math. Schools designated as Title I are El Sierra, Henry Puffer, Highland, Indian Trail, and Kingsley. Title I allotment in 2015-2016 is budgeted at \$284,667, a carryover from 2014-2015 is \$93,240, which totals available Title I funds at \$377,907. Title I expenditure allocations in 2015-2016 include additional non-certified staff in Title I buildings (salaries & benefits = \$183,105); and transportation, materials, clothes for homeless children, and OKEEP (\$101,562); and additional instructional resources for Title I buildings (\$93,240). No local private schools have opted to utilize Title I funds at this time.

Title II is aimed at increasing teacher quality. Funds are used for professional development in all schools throughout the District. Title II allotment in 2015-2016 is budgeted at \$120,552, a carryover from 2014-2015 is \$59,132, which totals available Title II funds at \$179,684. Title II expenditure allocations 2015-2016 include differentiated professional development (\$37,800); coaching support for longitudinal reporting and guided instruction (substitutes & consultant fees = \$33,600); committee work (substitutes = \$23,900); Professional Development in Core Content Areas, SEL, (Conference Registrations & Substitutes = \$22,250); kindergarten curriculum development (\$3,780); private school share (\$30,451); and Institute Day trainings (\$27,613).

D. Understanding How Curriculum and Instruction in School Is Changing

Dr. Rich gave the Board an overview of how curriculum and instruction in school is changing and new expectations in education. In the area of standards, also known as Common Core State Standards or the New Illinois Learning Standards, implementation dates for new standards in English-Language Arts (ELA), Math, Next Generation Science Standards and Social Studies were reviewed. This has challenged both educators and publishers. Growth-based evaluation is new as well, driven partially by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and other legislative requirements. Schools and districts would be assessed by growth and not just by achievement. Growth-based evaluation was implemented in 2012-2013 for administrators. Growth-based evaluation for teachers is set to be implemented in 2016-2017. State standardized assessments have changed five times over the past five years

with the most recent being the PARCC assessment, which was implemented last year. The advancement of technology has had a tremendous impact on the classroom. There is a national and state initiative regarding Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). A movement to competency-based measurement is on the horizon; this would be a move from courses and seat time to measuring specific skills and competencies students have. Dr. Rich spoke about guided differentiated instruction, NGSS science topical development, and OKEEP.

E. Differentiated and Flexible Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a primary focus for the District this year. Guided differentiated instruction actually started in the District several years ago. Over the past three years, the District has worked to enhance and refine guided reading and guided math practices. A goal of the District has been to align instruction and resources to support guided instruction, common core and growth. With median student performance in District 58 often at the 70th percentile or higher, this means that more than half of District 58 students perform above grade level statistically. The District works to identify where student needs are and support those needs moving forward. NGSS and OKEEP are also major foci for the District.

F. Assessment Data Review

It was announced that PARCC data for individual schools and districts was not yet released from the State. Preliminary PARCC data for the State was recently released and Dr. Rich briefly reviewed these State results with the Board. Looking ahead, refinements have been made to the PARCC assessment for the 2015-2016 school year. There will only be one testing session, which will take place in March 2016. Time for the assessment will be reduced by 90 minutes, except for grades 5 & 8; these students will participate in the NGSS Test. ACCESS testing for ELL/biliteracy students will have a new computerized system this year. These revisions will make it difficult to compare PARCC #1 data with PARCC #2 results.

Assessment bars to focus on include: Achievement – point in time attainment; Growth – how much students improve year to year; and the Multiple Measure Outcomes (MMO) included within the “Balanced Accountability Model (IBAM),” which is new starting in 2015-2016. Details of MMO/IBAM, however, are not yet clear at this time as information is just beginning to be released regarding this new model of accountability connected with ISBE waivers.

District 58 takes a blended approach to assessing student growth and progress. Data is analyzed from a variety of sources, including the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments, PARCC, AIMSweb, classroom performance and classroom assessments. MAP assessment data and AIMSweb data were shared with the Board.

Students take the MAP assessment three times per school year. When reviewed together, the three assessments measure students' annual progress and show their growth compared to other students with similar baseline (or starting) MAP scores. While the national norms have dipped, District 58 MAP results have consistently improved since the District first administered the MAP in 2011. Summer regression declined for many grade levels in reading; this was credited to the District's summer learning efforts in 2015. It was noted that kindergartners enter District 58 at the 70th percentile in mathematics, but fall closer to the national mean by third grade. Students again improve to the 70th percentile in middle school. In analyzing the mathematics data, District 58 hopes that through differentiated instruction, students can realize the same achievement and growth gains in math that occur currently in reading. The District hopes that an increased emphasis on differentiated learning and guided instruction across the District will result in continued improvement and academic advancement in English Language Arts and Math for students.

A district standard process is used to identify tiers in the AIMSweb assessment. Students also have an opportunity to graduate from participation in AIMSweb assessments. Graduation is granted by meeting the following criteria – 1) student must be in at least third grade, 2) the student must read 150 words per minute average on grade level text, and 3) the student must be recommended by teacher, principal, and reading specialist. AIMSweb data has remained relatively consistent in recent years.

G. Professional Development

District 58 is moving from the one size fits all approach to a differentiated staff professional development model, aiming for a methodology that is both collaborative and responsive. All district Common Core half-day trainings have been discontinued. These will be replaced with learning strands connected to teacher growth foci, building School Improvement Plans, and the District Strategic Plan. Additional supports for longitudinal reporting and SQUIRREL are being provided as well. The process of moving toward differentiated staff professional development was explained.

Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments at this time.

H. Board Dialogue

President Cooper opened the dialogue by explaining that he and Member Sigale had recently met informally with representatives of the DGEEA and administration because teachers had expressed concerns. He shared that positives were articulated during that meeting and solutions to concerns were brought to the table as well. In the past decade, the number of changes impressed upon education was reiterated. Board members were given an opportunity to make comments at this time. The 2015-2016 Strategic Goals Action Plan and School Improvement Plans were mentioned.

I. Continued Professional Development, Supports and Adjustments

Superintendent Cremascoli affirmed how everyone is struggling to keep up with change, all the while looking ahead to changes still on the horizon and wanting to provide highly engaging learning experiences for students. The District must help teachers integrate change in ways that empower collaboration, capture expertise, are manageable and meaningful, and ensure repeatable and scalable success. Supports and adjustments to consider include:

- providing teachers with monthly math collaboration time, as well as up to three half-day differentiated professional development days,
- increasing focus on math and middle school science reporting efforts, while scaling back efforts in other subject areas,
- eliciting a broader representative voice to serve on the District's curriculum committees,
- integrating terms from the District's traditional standards-based report card with the longitudinal report card to provide consistency, and
- forming a Report Card Committee to examine future improvements to the District's report cards.

The Board was asked to consider approving adjustments to the 2015-2016 Strategic Goals Action Plan, which would revise the District's curriculum development and implementation schedule. It was also suggested financial support be considered for professional development, collaboration, and possible additional/new curricular resources. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. Support from the Board was indicated for these adjustments and a revised version of the 2015-2016 Strategic Goals Action Plan will be placed on the November Board agenda for Board consideration.

3. RECEPTION OF VISITORS

Bob Grogan, Fairmount/O'Neill parent, commented on his recent attendance at Board meetings and expressed support for the pause being taken by the District to reevaluate the grading system, encouraging simplicity.

Marla Gilbert, DGEEA co-president, read a statement prepared in cooperation with teachers who recently took a survey conducted by union leadership. She spoke of student potential, concerns regarding pace of change, direction of the District in regard to curriculum, and seeking a collaborative and working relationship.

Mark White, Henry Puffer teacher/DGEEA Vice President/Hillcrest resident/O'Neill parent, expressed pride in being a member of the District 58 faculty and staff. He explained that MAP should not be the sole measure of student growth but that consideration should also be given to the depth of student learning.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Member Diehl moved and Member Lupescu seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOICE VOTE

Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

John D. Cooper, President

Pamela A. Osika, Secretary