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**Board of Education
Park Ridge – Niles School District 64**

**Committee-of-the-Whole: Curriculum and Technology
Tuesday, October 9, 2018
Jefferson School – Multipurpose Room
8200 N. Greendale Avenue
Niles, IL 60714**

On some occasions the order of business may be adjusted as the meetings progresses to accommodate Board members' schedules, the length of session, breaks and other needs.

TIME

APPENDIX

- 7:00 p.m. 1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Comments
4. Student Learning and Technology Update
5. Adjournment

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64 Park Ridge-Niles will provide access to public meetings to persons with disabilities who request special accommodations. Any persons requiring special accommodations should contact the Director of Facility Management at (847) 318-4313 to arrange assistance or obtain information on accessibility. It is recommended that you contact the District, 3 business days prior to a school board meeting, so we can make every effort to accommodate you or provide for any special needs.

To: District 64 Board of Education
Dr. Laurie Heinz, Superintendent
From: Dr. Lori Lopez, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning
Mrs. Mary Jane Warden, Director of Innovation & Instructional Technology
Date: October 9, 2018
Re: Student Learning & Technology: *2020 Vision* Strategic Plan Update

Overview

The first four objectives of the District 64 *2020 Vision* Strategic Plan address the rigor of our educational program, including curriculum, assessments, resources, and communication surrounding teaching and learning as well as student growth.

At this meeting, we will present an update on the Middle School Review Committee activities, which was rescheduled from the September 24, 2018 meeting.

We will also highlight several key topics related to the first four Strategic Plan objectives:

- Strategic Objective #1: Develop Students Who Master the 4 Cs
- Strategic Objective #2: Provide a Rigorous Education for All Students
- Strategic Objective #3: Differentiate to Meet the Academic and Social/Emotional Health Needs of All Students
- Strategic Objective #4: Foster Effective Communities of Practice Through Professional Development/Staff Support

Responsive Teaching

The focus of our report will be on the instructional practice that has the most significant impact on student learning, called “*responsive teaching*.” Effective teachers use feedback from students to monitor student learning and provide targeted instruction in three key areas: student learning, student engagement, and student connectedness.

Key Area One: Student Learning

Teachers address a range of academic needs in the classroom. To support student achievement, teachers use a variety of tools to diagnose student needs and design instruction, including: formative assessment strategies, the Workshop Model, and benchmark common assessments. Technology plays a significant role in helping teachers access student learning in real-time and organize data for differentiation.

Formative Assessment Strategies

Teachers make the distinction between formative and summative assessment. Summative assessment happens *at the end* of a unit of instruction and is designed to give the teacher a *summary* of student achievement. Formative assessment happens *during* the unit and is designed to inform *instruction*. Teachers use information from formative assessments to decide what to teach next, and which students need more support or a greater level challenge. Formative assessment is one of several high-impact instructional strategies that have a significant positive effect on student learning. It is a key strategy for supporting differentiation.

Formative assessments do not have to be an “assessment event” like a formal test or quiz. They can include simple strategies like exit slips where students respond to a short question designed to gauge where they are in their understanding of a concept. While there are many “low tech” formative assessment strategies, technology has greatly enhanced a teacher’s ability to get feedback from and to students about their learning. In our Board presentation, we will highlight several tools that teachers use to diagnose student learning.

Common Assessments

Over the past several years, D64 Strategic Plan activities have focused on the development of curriculum maps, pacing guides, and common assessments. Mapping the curriculum has enabled teams to come to consensus on the important topics that we teach aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards. Through the creation of pacing guides, teams identified when to teach specific topics and the amount of time to dedicate to each instructional unit. Consensus around content and pacing enables us to develop *common assessments* for each unit of instruction. Common assessments are assessments that all students take to demonstrate their learning.

Common assessments support student learning in four critical ways.

- First, they provide us with a shared understanding of “proficiency.” Students across the district experience the same level of rigor on common assessments which will occur at the end of each unit. This helps us communicate consistently about student progress with students, parents, and one another.
- Second, common assessments help us identify opportunities for intervention and enrichment. Because all teachers have the same expectations for students, we can offer intervention and enrichment equitably.
- Third, common assessments help us identify systemic curricular issues. For example, if students do poorly on certain assessment items, this might indicate a need for additional resources and professional development, or it may indicate that we have a curriculum alignment issue.
- Finally, common assessments help all teachers access everyone’s best ideas. We can look at the data, identify the instructional activities that caused the greatest student learning, and share these ideas across teams.

PowerSchool’s *Assessment Builder* and *Performance Matters* are two tools that bring momentum to our work with common assessments. These two systems round out the District’s system for tracking student progress toward learning goals. PowerSchool’s *Assessment Builder* is a platform designed to house and deliver a range of assessments, including our local common assessments. Our students will take these assessments online and measure their progress toward mastery of skills and learning targets. With assessments graded immediately, teachers see in real-time their students’ growth, and then drill down through visual graphs to the class level, student level, assessment level, or item level. Assessment results provide insight as to what instructional adjustments need to be made to close learning gaps or misconceptions before they become firmly established.

Performance Matters goes hand-in-hand with *Assessment Builder* as it focuses on bringing together student and educator information into one cohesive, analytics-driven platform. Data is no longer “siloesd.” Instead, teachers now have the opportunity to easily compare the results from different assessments. Teachers can review student performance periodically to design instruction informed by data.

The Workshop Model

In Reading Workshop, instruction begins with an explicit mini lesson that targets reading skills and strategies. Students then practice these strategies and skills in shared texts before applying them independently in their own texts. Because these texts are matched to students based on their individual instructional levels and interests, the Reading Workshop provides for differentiated instruction and promotes student engagement.

The Workshop Model is very responsive to student learning needs. Through their interactions with individuals and small groups, teachers are able to diagnose a student’s current level of performance and then design remediation or instruction at the next level of challenge. Transitioning to the Workshop Model requires teachers to develop a deep understanding of the learning progressions in each content area. Learning progressions define what students are expected to learn at each grade level. Teachers who are familiar with grade-level learning progressions can remediate or differentiate instructions one to two grade levels outside of a student’s current grade level.

District 64 teachers are currently implementing the Workshop Model in reading and we are piloting this model in writing. The Workshop Model also has applications in other subject areas where content can be introduced and then differentiated for small groups of students who are working at the same level of challenge.

Key Area Two: Student Engagement

Research shows that students who are actively engaged in their learning are more likely to excel. Today’s teacher makes the distinction between passive compliance and active engagement. Advances in technology offer opportunities for students and teachers to experience learning in ways that were not possible in the past.

Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL)

In District 64, we continue to build high-impact instruction around inquiry that fosters real-world contexts for students to master content and skills. Inquiry-based learning is a form of active learning that starts by posing questions, problems or scenarios -- rather than simply presenting established facts or portraying a singular path to knowledge. Currently, we are on the fifth cohort of teacher teams designing these amplified learning experiences. In our modern-day world, technology has allowed for this learning process to be enhanced with rich resources, powerful creation tools, and global connections.

Learning Expeditions

Google’s Learning Expeditions are a form of virtual reality that enable students to “visit” a place where they may never set foot and make learning connections. Students use the Expeditions

mobile app to view 360° scans of locations and place students in the middle of them to explore, inquire, and make connections. These are places like the Mojave Desert, Mount Everest, the Coral Reefs, an Antarctica expedition, or the human anatomy. Students may pose questions like:

- How do you build the tallest building in the world in a desert?
- What are the impact of humans on a pristine environment?
- What would it take to build a prosthetic lung?

The technology around virtual reality also has implications for staff professional development. This past spring, our K-5 ELA Curriculum Specialist and Roosevelt’s Instructional Coach designed a 360° view of a Reading Workshop classroom. This gave teachers who were adopting this new pedagogy a sense of how the spaces in their classroom would be used differently and the various activities their students would participate in as they learn in this new model of instruction.

Key Area Three: Student Connectedness

As you know, District 64 is developing a comprehensive program to promote positive school culture. Teacher-student rapport has been identified as one of the most critical drivers of student achievement. When students feel a deep sense of connectedness to their classmates and other adults, they are more engaged, more persistent, and demonstrate fewer disruptive behaviors. District 64 has a number of tools in place to support student social emotional learning (SEL), some of which are enhanced by technology. Our District-wide SEL program consists of four components: explicit skill instruction, environmental structures, community-building practices, and data collection for the purpose of progress-monitoring.

Explicit Skill Instruction

The *Second Step* program is a core resource that guides explicit skill instruction at both the elementary and middle school level.

- In grades K-5, skill lessons are built around four important strands, including skills for learning, empathy, emotional management, and problem-solving. The K-5 program also includes a Bullying Prevention Unit, which helps students develop the skills to recognize, report, and refuse bullying. In grades K-3, students are introduced to the “bystander power.” In grades 4-5, students learn how bystanders have the responsibility to stop bullying and cyberbullying.
- At the middle school level, *Second Step* lessons are built around four strands: mindsets and goals; values and friendships; thoughts, emotions, and decisions; and serious peer conflicts. Middle school students learn to make decisions based on their personal values, build strong positive friendships, stay in control when they’re experiencing strong emotions, resolve serious conflicts, and prevent bullying and harassment.

Environmental Structures

At the building level, all staff have come to consensus on three to five expectations for student behavior. These expectations are part of the “Building Behavior Matrix” and communicated through the school culture. For example, an Emerson Eagle SOARS (**S**hows Respect; **O**ffers Empathy; **A**cts Safely; is **R**esponsible for Learning and Behavior; and **S**hows Self-Regulation and Self-Awareness) and a Roosevelt student demonstrates the five bees (Bee Caring, Bee

Responsible, Bee Safe, Bee Respectful, Bee Fit). In addition to common expectations, buildings have also determined how all staff members acknowledge positive behavior and respond to misbehavior. Staff also make plans to introduce the Behavior Matrix annually to students and to teach students positive behaviors in each of the different areas of the school.

Community-Building Practices

Community-building practices enable all staff and students to build supportive relationships, a positive school culture, and a nurturing climate. This school year we are introducing “*restorative practices*” as a key strategy for building community. Schools that embrace restorative practices provide consistent opportunities for students to build positive rapport with one another and with adults. Students can then build on this rapport to manage conflict, repair harm, and develop even stronger relationships. One restorative strategy that we are exploring is the use of communication circles. In a communication circle, students have the opportunity to speak and listen to one another, and shared varied perspectives. Circles can be used for a variety of purposes, including rapport-building, conflict resolution, and decision-making. Circles give students “voice” in resolving conflict, addressing tension, and contributing to decisions at school.

The District 64 SEL Committee was introduced to restorative circles in spring 2018. A cohort of about 30 middle school teachers participated in a two-day workshop in June 2018. Over the next two years, all staff will participate in professional development related to restorative practices. This expanded work will begin at the upcoming November 6 Institute Day.

Data Collection & Progress Monitoring

Because of District 64’s commitment to continuous improvement, we collect data that informs our decisions about SEL programming. During the week of October 1-8, 2018, staff, parents, and students participated in the Safe and Civil Schools *Climate & Safety Survey*, a proven tool for accurately and consistently measuring perceptions of school climate and safety. These baseline surveys will provide information our school leadership team can use to analyze strengths and weaknesses in: safety in the common areas of the school; social/emotional safety of students and staff; positive interactions between students and staff; understanding of school behavior expectations; attitudes about schoolwork; frequency of discipline problems; and a sense of belonging and support for all stakeholders. A follow-up survey will be administered in March.

In addition to the *Climate & Safety Survey*, the Technology Department has a designed a Data Dashboard to help schools review real-time behavior data and look for opportunities for improvement. Examples of data collected include: names of referring teachers, location of behavior incidents, time of day, and specific type of behavior. A review of the data will enable staff to look for trends and design targeted support for students. While middle schools have had Data Dashboards for the past year, elementary schools are implementing this tool for the first time in the 2018-19 school year.

Committees at Work

Much of the planning and work of the *2020 Vision Strategic Plan* is completed in District committees comprised of staff representatives from all schools, grade levels, departments, and roles. Committee members attend meetings during release time and are responsible for

communicating committee activities with their school buildings. At the middle school level, committee work is often completed during monthly department meetings where all team members have the opportunity to contribute.

For 2018-19, the active committees engaged in this important work include:

Student Learning

- **Curriculum Team:** The Curriculum Team is comprised of three full-time release Curriculum Specialists and 15 additional Specialists and Department Chairs who hold a leadership role in addition to teaching responsibilities. In addition to supporting day-to-day instructional needs, the Curriculum Team supports professional development and assessment.
- **K-5 & 6-8 ELA Committees:** Both ELA Committees are reviewing our current practice in English Language Arts. At Kindergarten through grade 8, the study of reading includes literature and informational text. At Kindergarten through grade 5, foundational skills like phonics, word study, and fluency are also included. Ten anchor standards and clear grade-level expectations guide teachers with instruction and assessment. Additional middle school standards are also addressed through social studies and science.
- **K-5 Math Steering Committee:** After completing a curriculum adoption in 2013, the K-5 Math Committee has continued to collaborate to finalize common assessments and make revisions to the K-5 pacing guides.
- **K-5 Science Committee:** After completing a curriculum adoption in 2015, the K-5 Science Committee has continued to collaborate to finalize common assessments and make revisions to the K-5 pacing guides.
- **6-8 Social Studies:** The Department is reviewing topics and pacing in Social studies at the middle school level. They will share an updated scope and sequence later this fall as well as a recommendation for the adoption of a new core resource.
- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee:** The SEL Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending practices in each of the four dimensions of SEL programming: explicit skill instruction, environmental structures, community building practices, and progress-monitoring.
- **Middle School Review Committee:** The Middle School Review Committee is reviewing our current middle school schedule and offerings.
- **Mastery Learning Committee:** The goal of the Mastery Learning Committee is to refine our grading and reporting practices so we are communicating accurately about student mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards.

Technology

- **Technology Integration Committee (TIC):** This committee has focused on Digital Citizenship and Handwriting/Keyboarding, and are currently exploring Learning Management Systems.
- **Apps/Extensions/Software Evaluation Committee:** This ongoing committee convenes three times per school year to evaluate new apps, extensions, and software based on a rubric developed. These new technologies are suggested by teachers and instructional coaches alike and are reviewed for learning utility, reliability, sustainability, and ease of use.