

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
ALBION CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ALBION, NEW YORK
Ronald L. Sodoma Elementary School Conference Room A
Wednesday, November 13, 2019
SUMMARY OF A SPECIAL MEETING
FOR THE PURPOSE OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT VENDOR PRESENTATIONS

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Board President, Mrs. Kathy Harling, called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

BOARD APPROVED

EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT

BOARD APPROVED

OPEN SESSION

BOARD APPROVED

PUBLIC FORUM - None

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Needs Assessment Presentation by Vendors

Mrs. Harling introduced Mr. Randy Richards of PLC Associates, Inc.

Mr. Randy Richards provided a Power Point and an introductory overview of PLC Associates to begin his presentation. "PLC Associates has worked in the fields of education, business and industry in 19 states, in over 600 schools; has 32 associates; is a certified provider of SED surveys for DTSDE Reviews; facilitated over 200 reviews; and is known for comprehensive models, protocols and structures that develop high performance systems."

Mr. Richards additionally provided his own background. He is a retired school superintendent with 34 years of experience in education. Throughout his career path, he has held positions as a counselor, elementary school principal, high school principal and superintendent. He has strong interest in strategic planning and helping schools improve.

Mr. Richards began his presentation with the question "What is the enemy of great? Good is the enemy of great." He added that good means you settle, are complacent and go with routine. He welcomed feedback through the presentation.

Mr. Richards indicated a review of the district website and the Board of Education District Goals showed that the word "collaboration" shows up a lot. He reviewed the Mission, Vision and Values statements and cited the importance of "building goals derived from data and the overall needs of students." He indicated you need to measure goals to know you're hitting them. "High performing schools and districts connect the critical components of goals, structures and practices into an integrated, sustaining system. They fully align all resources - human, financial and material for predictable impact. They connect all of the pieces important to the puzzle - leadership, curriculum, instruction practices, professional development and family engagement."

Mr. Richards asked the Board, "Where do you want to be in a year?"

Mrs. Brown responded that she would like to see the district back to a place where we all work together. She indicated there are not great relationships and trust and she would like to see more energy toward working together.

Mr. Richards noted that there should be a high accountability; that the district is only as good as the relationships and culture they build on.

Mrs. Weller added there is general trust with culture; some don't feel valued.

Mr. Richards noted there needs to be community trust. When something happens, news travels fast and chips away at trust. It's tough to win back.

Mr. Richards further indicated the importance of knowing where you are now and where you want to be.

Mr. Richards reviewed that the following plan would be implemented if PLC Associates were chosen to work with the district.

- Strategic Planning: The Building Blocks
 - Vision
 - Mission
 - Strategic Intents (SMART Goals)
 - District Based Strategies and Action Plans
 - District Wide Teams
 - School Based Teams
 - Grade Level/Content Area Teams
 - Administrators
 - Beliefs and Parameters
 - Core Team Task Forces

- Building the Strategic Plan
 - Setting the Context for the District: Core Team
 - Vision
 - Mission
 - Core Beliefs
 - Parameters
 - Identifying Strategies and a Path to Achieve Them: Task Forces
 - Strategic Intents with Annual Targets
 - Data Dashboards
 - Multi-year Strategies
 - Clear, Supportive Action Plans

Both areas are needed - the context (Qualitative Framework) and the explicit goals (Quantitative Benchmarks), supported by the activities that form the path forward.

- Clear Strategic Intents (What)
 - Strategies/Action Plans (How)
- Core Team and Task Forces: Interdependent
 - District decides the number and nature
 - There is a place for everyone
 - Task force teams report to the core team
- Data Driven Decision-Making: Inputs
 - Surveys of staff, students, families, community
 - Focus Forums
 - Interviews
 - Bench-marking
 - Research
 - Historical and Current District Data
- PLC Organizational Audit: Global Perspective
 - Meet with Administration
 - Meet with Board of Education
 - Foundational Elements: Assessment provides key points and rubric for scoring
- Gathering Data
 - What are staff, students and families saying about:
 - School Leader Practices
 - Curriculum
 - Teacher Practices
 - Student Social/Emotional Health
 - Family and Community Connection

- What metrics tell
 - Achievement Scores
 - Student Growth Scores
 - Social Emotional Data
 - Longitudinal Data
- Focus Forums/Interviews
 - Surveys and questions for students
 - Take input and do something with it, measure it
- Benchmarking
 - Quantitative results - path to measure
 - Data Dashboard - tracks key points
 - Determine most important things and find a way to fund them
- Collective Inquiry
 - Get the best there is
- Data Triangle: An Essential Component
 - Student voice
 - Family/Community Engagement Survey
 - School Performance Scan (staff)
 - Collection of data from stakeholders in school and community together with student perspective to build framework for beginning of discussion
 - Data Interpretation to provide baseline, benchmarks and progress monitoring
 - Find most important issues
 - Design surveys
 - Tabulate numerical report

Mrs. Riley asked if the tools would be provided to the focus groups and with the surveys, would they look at the percentage of returns. The community return of surveys may be low. Do you integrate; use focus groups to increase participation?

Mr. Richards responded that the first time out with surveys often nets a low result. The district will have a five-year plan, so you stay with it. Focus groups are good for hot topics. When you show results, the survey responses will increase. Focus groups are phenomenal to drill down and find out information.

Mrs. Nesbitt asked with regard to the surveys, would they work with the Board and Administration on how they are whittled down.

Mr. Richards referred to the 100 best practices for districts they use. They can work on questions and add a personal piece specific to the district.

Mrs. Nesbitt asked if the normal process involves surveys and focus groups.

Mr. Richards responded that the surveys are communication based; that we really want to go deep, focused; more intense to drill down information.

Miss Leto asked if the focus groups are drawn from the data in the survey.

Mr. Richards responded that they are.

- Student Voice
 - Provides honest feedback
 - Ask tough questions for answers
 - Kids are quite truthful
 - Commentary responses go first to the Superintendent for review
- School Performance Scan
 - Provides what to focus on
- Family Engagement Survey
 - Build it for good response
- Support Staff Survey
 - Often forgotten but room for everyone
 - What is important to them?
- Cross Survey Comparative Analysis
 - Deeper look when comparing parents/teachers/students
- Data Based Strategic Intent
 - Cultural, academic - what fits the district
 - Data Dashboard - provides baseline to compare year to year
- Core Team/Focus Areas: Task Forces
 - Division of work fit to District preferences
- Task Force Charge: Well Planned Work
 - Charge presented for review and research by specific task force group
 - Critical issues surrounding the charge
- PLC Model: Well-Designed Supports
 - Map out plan
 - Prepare Surveys
 - Board approves the plan
 - Templates, agendas, task forces
 - Video/Conference call to follow up with district, Internal Coordinator, Task Force facilitators and others as needed
 - Strategic Plan completion

Mr. Richards concluded his presentation by a recommendation that to develop a Strategic Plan, the district should consider the following steps.

- 1) Conduct an Orientation Session with groups - Board of Education, Leadership Team
- 2) Administer Data Triangle Survey
- 3) Conduct Data Cafes with selected groups
- 4) Consider the SEDH Climate Survey (Social, Emotional, Developmental Health)

Mrs. Brown asked Mr. Richards if PLC Associates works with all sized districts.

Mr. Richards responded that they do work with many sized groups; each has a different flavor.

Mrs. Riley asked how long it would take to start getting surveys out and the information to the district.

Mr. Richards responded that their company would be very accommodating. It could be 30 to 45 days using on-line or paper copies for the surveys.

Mrs. Harling asked if they would be able to utilize BOCES aid.

Mr. Richards responded that there is aid available.

Mr. Richards left the meeting; Mrs. Alioto entered.

Mrs. Harling introduced Ms. Nicole Alioto owner of Alla Breve Educational Consulting.

Mrs. Nicole Alioto provided a Power Point and an introductory overview of Alla Breve Educational Consulting to begin her presentation. Alla Breve Educational Consulting LLC was formed in 2017 and is a certified IBM Business Partner.

Mrs. Alioto additionally provided her own background. She is a New York School Boards Association consultant with 25 years of experience; 5 years of higher education administration; 10 years of K12 data analysis; 4.5 years with IBM and is an adjunct faculty member at Johns Hopkins University.

Mrs. Alioto began her presentation with a framework of "Plan, Implement and Evaluate."

Mrs. Alioto reviewed the following Needs Assessment and Planning Proposal.

- Needs Assessment Process (Shannon & Bylsma, 2007)
 - Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
 - Clear and shared focus
 - High Standards and Expectations for all students
 - High Levels of Collaboration and Communication
 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards
 - Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching
 - Focused Professional Development
 - Effective School Leadership
 - Supporting Learning Environment
 - High Levels of Family and Community Involvement

Mrs. Alioto indicated that the Needs Assessment timeline usually starts in January. There should be a solid framework aligned to the characteristics to guide the process.

- Stakeholder Input
 - Instructional Staff
 - Non-Instructional Staff
 - Administrators
 - Board Members
 - Students
 - Community
 - Parents

Mrs. Alioto indicated the process touches all of the groups through on-line surveys; interviews with Administration and Board of Education; community/focus groups; and parent K-12 surveys or focus groups. There is a determination made for the logical approach to the return of surveys.

- Data Collection Timeline
 - January-Mid-March:
 - Surveys, interviews, focus groups, document review
 - Mid-March - Mid-April:
 - Analysis and draft report
 - End of April:
 - Final report to the district

Mrs. Alioto indicated the timeline is aggressive, efficient and timely. The stakeholders see the district acting on it; that the district is listening. There is a tight window for document review; findings and recommendations are communicated out and meetings held with administrative teams to accomplish the final report by the end of June.

- Planning Process Begins
 - Evaluate Needs
 - SWOT
 - Priorities
 - Gap Analysis
 - Goal Setting
 - Action Planning
 - Implementation
 - Monitoring
- Needs Assessment Planning
 - Needs Assessment informs SWOT
 - Strengths/weaknesses (internal)
 - Opportunities/threats (external)
 - SWOT informs priorities
 - Data driven direction from multiple stakeholders
 - Priorities inform gaps
 - What needs to be done differently?
 - Gaps inform goals
 - How are gaps closed between current and future states?

- District Goals inform building action plans
 - Board develops district goals
 - Administration/staff develop action plans
- Logic Model - Board & Administration
 - Helps provide road map forward
 - Short and intermediate outcomes
 - Priorities, goals and outcomes to drive district direction throughout the 3 to 5 year planning process
- Logic Model Template
 - Foundation for building plans
- Action Plans - Building Teams
 - Objectives
 - Tasks
 - Timeframe
 - Resources & Responsibility
 - Baseline/Evaluation

Mrs. Alioto provided that the action plans indicate what is required; identifies who and where the funds will come from and the accomplishment of benchmarks, articulated down to a classroom.

Mrs. Alioto further reviewed that if the district decided to work with her company, by June 2020 district goals would be shared, building goals set and all stakeholders would be aware of the direction of the district. By Summer/Fall 2020 building plans would be drafted, baseline measures collection started, professional development scheduled to support the plans and the budget cycle in place to support the plans.

Mrs. Alioto shared some information regarding recent clients and the positive feedback on the process from the Hornell City School District.

Mrs. Harling asked what the strategies would be for reaching community members that are not part of the stakeholder groups.

Mrs. Alioto responded that the information could be put out there to allow community members to self-select. The district could identify key civic organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and invite them to be a part of the conversation.

Mrs. Harling asked for direction on hard to reach parents; those not engaged.

Mrs. Alioto responded that low response rates are typical; disengaged participants feel their voices won't be heard; why participate? It is important to have open communication even with a low result. Student voice can add in where parent voice lacks.

Mrs. Riley asked if the survey questions were standardized or totally developed from where the district is coming from.

Mrs. Alioto responded that the questions are based on the Nine Characteristics to align and provide flexibility if there is a critical need. The survey is designed to align across all areas. She would welcome up to five additional questions but wouldn't want to increase the length of the survey. The student survey for example has a core group of questions based on the Nine Characteristics which provide more insight. Open ended comments made by students are provided in full to the Superintendent for review. This shows students that the district is listening while red flag areas are addressed.

Mrs. Riley asked if there would be an initial assessment or baseline interval and what the frequency would be to see change and improvement.

Mrs. Alioto responded that it takes three to five years. If there is something the district wants to investigate, a focus group can be formed after the fact to look at additional items.

Mrs. Riley noted that the district has three schools and asked if something different could be done for the primary, middle and high schools; if data could be teased out for teachers and students by building because there are definitely different needs.

Mrs. Alioto confirmed that survey data could be collected from parents/students/and staff by building.

Mrs. Weller asked if a parent has a child in each building, will they need to fill out a separate survey for each.

Mrs. Alioto responded that the survey data would be collected for the oldest child; that the parent can respond and add more details.

Mrs. Riley asked if Mrs. Alioto could send a sample of the survey questions.

Mrs. Alioto responded that she could send some of a survey electronically but not all questions.

Mrs. Harling indicated Mrs. Alioto could e-mail those survey questions to one of the Board members and they could e-mail them on to the other members.

Mrs. Alioto thanked the Board for inviting her to present.

Mrs. Alioto left the meeting.

Mr. Wadhams asked about the cost of the process.

Mrs. Brown added that cost is important; it is not everything but it is something.

Mrs. Harling asked if the Board would like her to get the cost from both of the presenters. Board members concurred they would like that information.

Mrs. Riley added that she would like to see a complete redacted survey, to see what it looks like; how we'd use it and what she collects. She would like an outline of steps completed explained to the Board. Mrs. Alioto's presentation indicated it could take at least a year of work or a little more to complete; Mr. Richards' timeline was shorter.

Mrs. Harling indicated she liked the timeline.

Mrs. Brown indicated goals are Mrs. Alioto's business aspect.

Mrs. Nesbitt added that Mrs. Alioto's approach is open-ended while Mr. Richards' is rote and set.

Mrs. Riley added that once completed, they would have a better idea of what they could do with it.

Mrs. Nesbitt added that the process gives a plan and the data to feed a strategic plan.

Mrs. Brown asked what the administration's thoughts were.

Mr. Bonnewell responded that Mr. Richards brings a group of 32 associates while Mrs. Alioto is it; she doesn't have a school background but there is benefit and drawback to this; she is new to schools.

Mr. Sidari indicated that Mr. Richards has a more comprehensive package and spoke to how he wants to rename the Vision and Value statements.

Mr. Bonnewell added that Mrs. Alioto's survey comes from a book.

Miss Leto added that Mrs. Alioto's approach appeared to be one and done while Mr. Richards' plan handles parents, teachers and goal setting.

Mrs. Harling indicated that she liked things about both and added that Mr. Richards' boss, Penny is phenomenal; that his company cross-contracts with BOCES. Mrs. Alioto knows it can be done but it would have to be on our own.

Mrs. Harling will ask for quotes from both vendors and sample survey questions from Mrs. Alioto.

Mr. Bonnewell directed the Board to the Hornell School District website and indicated there is no strategic plan on the site. The New Palz strategic plan on their website showed it was completed in 2016 and he was not sure she was part of the process for that as her business began after that.

Miss Leto added that Mr. Richards' process is an annual assessment while Mrs. Alioto waits 3 to 5 years and the district does it.

Mrs. Weller asked who the third vendor was that canceled.

Mrs. Harling responded that Marla Iverson had canceled; that she is on her own and was referred by another district but because she is retired, is only able to earn a certain amount each year.

Mrs. Harling indicated she would get the information and asked Board members to e-mail any other thoughts they had.

Mrs. Nesbitt asked what the next steps would be and whether the Board should aim for a decision before the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Harling indicated that Mrs. Alioto's timeline makes sense; if the Board goes forward with her company, the process would start in January.

Mr. Bonnewell reminded the Board that their next meeting is December 2nd and the difficulty in presentations being made before Christmas.

Mrs. Riley suggested looking up some of the things Mrs. Alioto had listed so the Board could take a look at them.

Mr. Bonnewell indicated that he could reach out to Mrs. Alioto for more information.

Mrs. Harling added that she would get information for the December Board meeting.

3. BOARD DATES

DAY	DATE	EVENT	TIME
Monday	December 2, 2019	Regular Board of Education Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	January 6, 2020	Regular Board of Education Meeting	7:00 pm
Monday	February 3, 2020	Regular Board of Education Meeting	7:00 pm

BOARD APPROVED

4. ADJOURNMENT

BOARD APPROVED