Report to the Board of Education

December 10, 2019

Mark Mathews

Brady Farnand

Upcoming Events:

12/10/19-Board of Education meeting
12/13/19-Interim 2 ends
12/13/19-Middle School Dance-NRWE 6:00
12/19/19-Middle School Winter Concert-NRWHS 6:00
1/13/20 - 1/17/20-Interim Assessments administered 5-8
1/16/20 – Roller Skating party-NRWE 5:30-7:30
1/24/20-Marking Period 2 ends
1/27/20 – 1/31/20 Aimsweb Benchmark assessments administered

You may remember from my last report:

In the DTSDE Rubric (Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness), there are six main beliefs that outline a framework for effective practice and school improvement. Tenet 1 outlines district leadership and is therefore not addressed in our building improvement plan; Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions; Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support; Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions; Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Health; and Tenet 6; Family and Community Engagement.
Tenet 2: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

In our School Improvement Plan, the SLT chose to use the same format that we used when involved with the Focus School designation. We created goals in each of the tenets 2-6.

Tenet 2 in 2019-2020: By June of 2020, the School Leadership Team will create, monitor, and assess the effectiveness of systems that: create engaging, dynamic, and rigorous curricula in all areas; ensure effective, targeted instructional practices using data from all subgroups; ensure high-quality Social and Emotional Learning at all tiers; and create increased opportunities for families to become involved in their child's learning

We are using student data to create and monitor these systems. As an example, we have organized “on-demand” writing tasks for students in grades 7 and 8.

Description:
All students independently respond to a writing task. Students with accommodations receive their accommodations, but general education students are independent. They have one class period to complete the task. The teacher brings the assignments to their Tier 1 team, and team members score the assessment based on the New York State rubric for short constructed responses.

The November writing prompt demonstrated that students may need additional instruction in finding important information in text and taking notes in the text. The team created an action plan based on the November writing prompt, expecting students to make annotations in all subject areas across the grade level. After two weeks, the team reflected on outcome data from using these strategies:

Possible text annotation strategies

Highlight Your Support- Students highlight the specific text, which supports their response to comprehension questions. Students can also number the highlighted portions to match the associated questions

Teacher Feedback: Purposeful, we get an idea of what they’re looking at. It helps/forces a return to the text. This is something that could be done through Kami and that might speed up review from the teacher’s end. This strategy would be easier to get introduced and operational in every class. Once students realize this is helping, we could perhaps move to something more complex.

Notice and Note - Fiction and Nonfiction Signpost system

Teacher Feedback: Almost needs to be an “all in” to support a grade-level developmental program. Would take some serious time to implement, but might have some long-term value if we stick with it. Some parts are applicable to specific subjects (science) but maybe not other disciplines.

Annotating with Purpose - Interesting twist on annotating questions that supports metacognition (See Math examples). Students must specifically identify the purpose of their annotations (predict, identify claim, identify vocab, etc.)

Teacher Feedback: This is a more advanced strategy that might be just a bit over the heads of our 7-8 grade students.

Explanation:
The school Leadership Team organized these activities in the assessment calendar to engage staff in the analysis of student work and making data-driven decisions. Our goal is to create consistency with vertical alignment in subject areas, but also across the grade level with literacy strategies. Literacy skills are learned more effectively when they are taught in a variety of environments, including English but also in all other aspects of learning. Students encounter vocabulary, text, and are expected to write in all subjects, which is why we are asking science teachers, social studies teachers, and math teachers to help students develop literacy skills across the content areas.

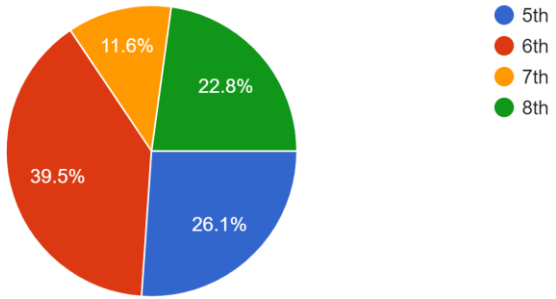
Tenet 5: Student social and emotional health

You may also remember the staff survey from last month. The survey asked teachers about community circles and their impacts on school climate.

I mentioned that I shared a survey with students.

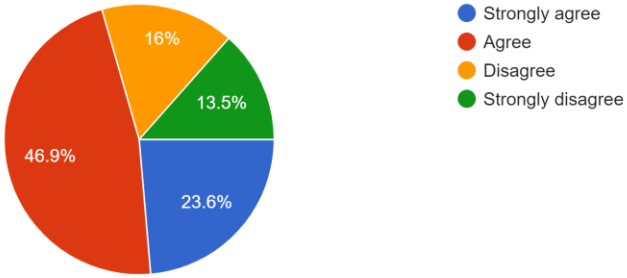
What is your grade level?

276 responses



I like community circles.

275 responses

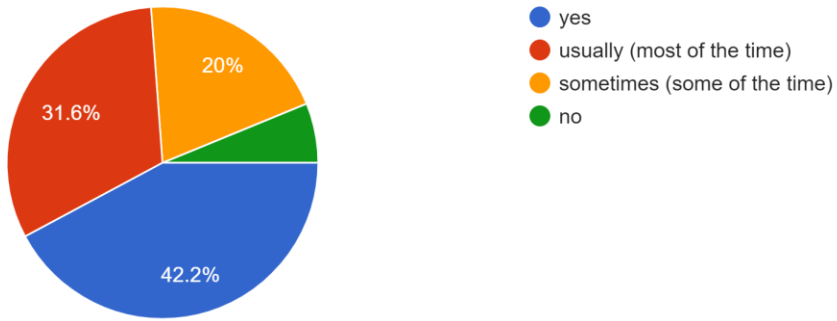


Please explain (optional)180 responses

I like to hear what other people have to say.
I like community circle because you can get your feelings out
i like it because its a time to share your feelings.
because i can learn about people
we get to learn info about people and what they might be going through
I like them cause we get to share and here other peoples thigs about what they are doing in their life
I like community circles because they make the classroom feel more united and it helps people get to know each other better.
you can tell them what you have to say knowing they wont tell anyone else.
I like answering the questions.
good
cause i can talk about my life
Can help with my sadness
I like sharing my thoughts and my life with my classmates th

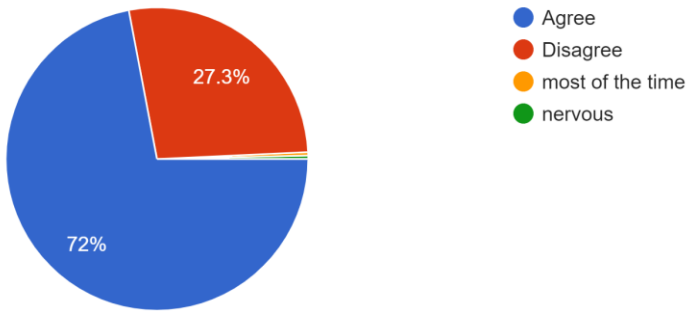
When my class has a community circle, I participate in them and share my thoughts or feelings.

275 responses



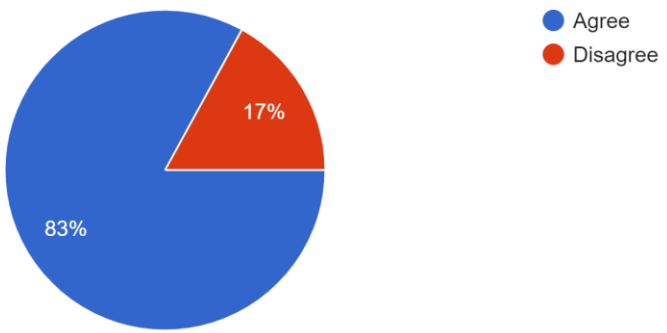
When it's my turn to speak during community circles, I feel respected.

275 responses



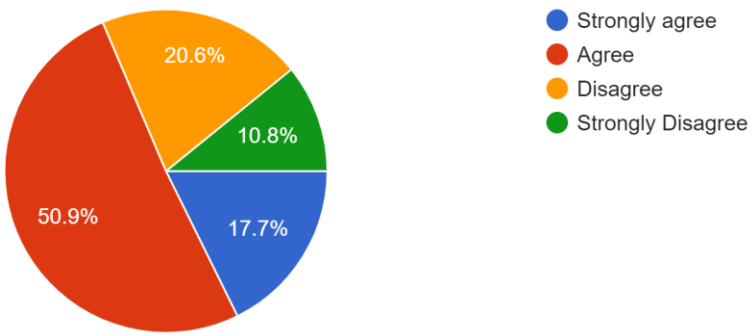
Community circles give students the opportunity to get to know each other better.

276 responses



Community circles help make our class/school a better place.

277 responses



Comments:

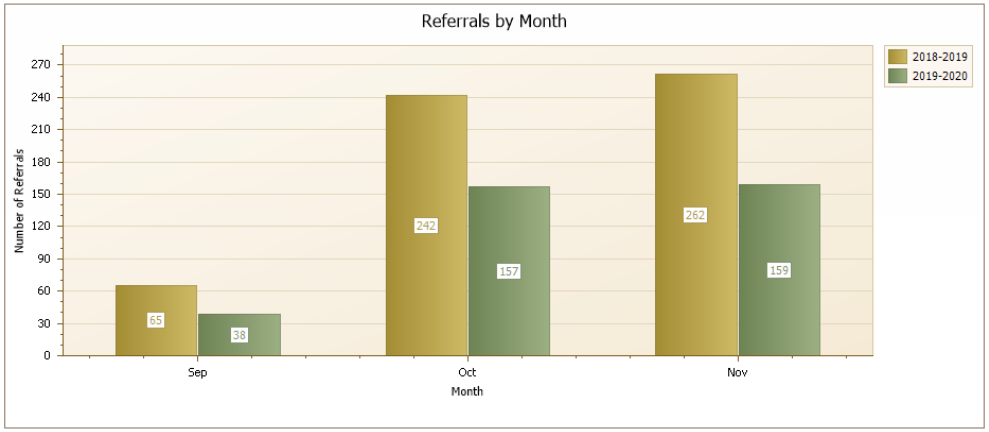
According to these outcomes, it is clear that most students find them to be valuable and that they can contribute to a positive learning environment. Clearly, there are gaps, indicating that some students do not support the use of community circles. We have to dig deeper with this data, since there were disparities between how the adults perceive the community circle initiative and how the students perceive them.

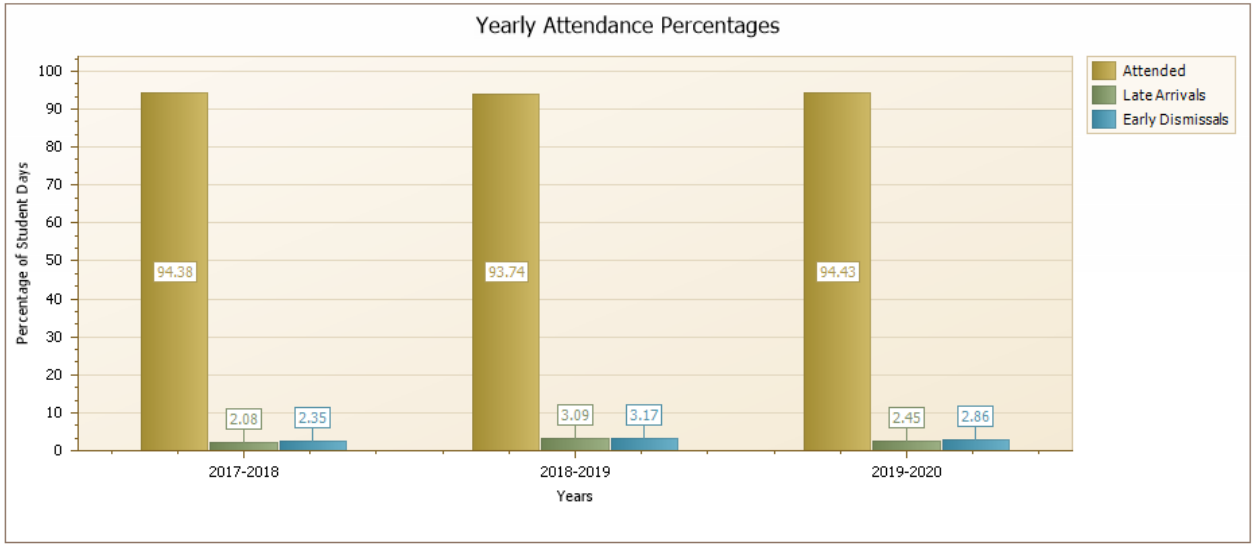
Brady Farnand - NR-W Middle School Assistant Principal (5th-8th grade) – November 2019 - BOE Report
**Linked to focus areas determined by the Building Principal Mr. Mathews, and directly linked to our District Strategic Action Plan.*

Projected Middle School Enrollment – 2019-2020:

5th grade	96
6th grade	99
7th grade	69
8th grade	107

District Strategic Action Plan	Focus area	Progress
Focus Area 1	Action Step 1	***Actionable Items*** *Staff Referrals-* Our referrals continue to be a huge reduction from where we were at last year. Our disciplinary referrals are down almost 48% compared to this point last year!

	Action Step 1 Action Step 1 Action Step 1	 <u>Community building:</u> On November 25th we recognized all 7/8th grade students that scored a 4 on the NYS test or improved their score from last year. Students were also able to identify teachers that were positive role models for them and always offered encouragement and support. This was a great way to recognize students and staff! <u>Attendance:</u> Although our attendance percentage fell a touch from October to November, we still have had the best attendance for the month of November for the last 3 years.



Character trait of the month: For the month of November we focused on responsibility. Town hall meetings and community circles were tailored to address responsibility, what does it look like, and how do we hold ourselves accountable for our own actions and be responsible for ourselves. Our character trait of the month for December is being conscientious.

Just for fun! Our 6th grade students did their annual egg drop. Students were able to create some sort of contraption that would hopefully keep their egg from cracking when dropped from a third-floor window. Some of the students used balloons, plastic bags as parachutes, and even diapers to keep their eggs safe! The students loved seeing if their projects would hold up!

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