

Director of Curriculum & Instruction BOE Report for 2015-16

Building/Administrator: M. Stevenson

Date of Meeting: 5/10/16

Student Achievement:

I attended training in Albany this week regarding writing the DCIP (District Comprehensive Improvement Plan) and the SCEP (School Comprehensive Improvement Plan). Tammy Jones (BOCES staff developer) attended the training with me and will be assisting with writing the plans. We will also have to write a local assistance plan (LAP) for the elementary school. All the plans will need to be written and approved by the board prior to submitting them to SED. They are due July 31st, but I am planning on having them done between now and June so that you can approve them during the July meeting. If we happen to get one of them done sooner than that, I'll be sure to share that earlier.

The recommendations that came out of the middle school review focus on (also included is the "why" for the recommendation):

***Please note: the recommendations are public but the rationale, where I share insight into what the reviewers learned and thought during the process, is for your information only at this point. I wanted you to know where they were coming from, because quite frankly some of the things our students, staff, and parents shared were alarming.**

- Forming a school leadership team (basically a shared decision-making team). This recommendation came out of discussions with Mark and me, and also with the teachers who shared they wished they had more input into school initiatives, etc. These people will become the "stewards" of the SCEP-figuring out how things should be done, providing support for people, and helping with the data collection.
- Focusing leverage leadership visits on a specific part of instruction, e.g. higher order questions, whereby administrators let teachers know they are looking for higher order questions, they go in for the class visits & take notes, they have the follow-up meeting where they talk about the instruction and in particular higher order questions, and they also look for evidence of higher order questions in the lesson plans. This came out of SED's observations and in talking with Mark and I. They observed way too much teacher-talk at students, absence of higher level questions, and in many cases the teacher would answer the question for the students. They heard from the students that that all they do is packet after packet. They also spoke to Mark and me about holding teachers accountable for the PD and expectations that they have been given. For example, teachers have had a TON of PD around learning targets yet there are still

teachers that do not write adequate learning targets and there are some that refuse to put them in student-friendly language.

- Formative assessment-teachers will be provided some PD around formative assessment (e.g. exit tickets) and how teachers can use that data to plan your instruction for the following day/week. Data will be collected around student performance on formative assessments and how that information is used. This came out of observations and conversations with Mark and me.
- Increasing the amount of social emotional support groups we offer, such as a group for students with ADD (the middle school has about 60 students with that diagnosis). They also recommended that school social events and trips be inclusive of ALL students. They pointed out that many times the students who need the social experiences to improve their skills are the very students that are “ineligible.” SED was very critical of the 8th grade honors trip because there is nothing comparable offered that is inclusive of all students.
- Teachers need to update Family Link every week so that the information is current. They also need to respond to parent contact within 24 hours. They also need to find out from parents what their preferred method of communication is and keep a log of communication between school and home. This came out of the parent focus group where SED heard from the parents that they always get a fast response from the school leaders, but that they have to contact teachers multiple times to get a response and the response is rarely timely. Parents felt like they had to consistently advocate for their children in order to get anywhere.

School-Based Inquiry Process: Our last early release day was today, May 6th, which is also the Special Olympics. Teachers analyzed the last interim assessment that day, and created updated action plans based on their results.

Grants:

We have submitted the SIG grant, which is the grant where we get funds for school improvement based on our focus district and focus school status.

APPR:

We have collectively bargained all of the requirements of the plan. We are now working on forms and putting the plan into language for the required SED portal document and also for our own understanding and implementation.