

Inter-School Teacher Council
April 12, 2017

Welcome!

Dr. Simon provided quick updates and then asked the group to do provide feedback on the Strategic Plan's Vision, Mission, Core Values and Goals. Below are comments/thoughts that were shared:

Vision

- Tag Line – short and sweet
- Inspire – as a teacher
- Innovate – challenging with pacing guides
- Excel – work towards
- Inspiration – will take time – but totally worth it!
- Inspiration – how do we inspire our students to value education? To Love learnig
- Innovation – how do teachers get time and resources and freedom to pull off?
- Excel – means growth, not perfection – like it!
- Is it time to end “social promotion? (exactly – agree several times)
- Dow do you fix this problem then?
- Why be with certain class just because of age?
- IT sounds good...what does it mean?

Mission

- Thrive – skills needed in job market
- Their future – meet the varied needs
- Ability
- Cultural
- Interests
- “Their future” – Love this, gives them ownership! Intrinsic motivation
- Empower is a great word to use!

- Engage is a good word – we want students and community members to do more than just show up.
- Teachers need to model engagement with current technology to train students.
- “Their future” –family like may play a role BUT doesn’t determine
- NOT predetermined – by their current situation
- What is the vision to engage students who resist our efforts? Can we use tech to access different learning needs? Diversify curriculum?
- Truancy improvement? Get students to school – parent accountability?
- Consequences for parents as well as students
- Saturday school?
- Require community service to graduate from high school.

Core Values

- Diversity – do we?
- Communication – yes
- Equity – resources?
- Responsibility for self – can teachers’ professional judgements be trusted?
- Hoping kids see the bigger picture.
- What communication issues do we have?
- What results do we want? Short and long – term
- Better communication internally and externally
- What does exploration in opportunity and inquiry look like at elementary level?
- Readiness – ensuring students understand they will be held accountable for their learning.
- Inquiry – 5 minutes or 5 days
- Celebrate our differences

Reading by 3rd grade

- Intervention – what does this look like for non-title schools?
- Professional development – teachers need more
- Kindergarten readiness – how will this work?

- Smaller classes!
- Not proficient
- Consequences
- Held back?
- Social Promotion?
- What happens to 4th and 5th grade?
- Parent responsibility?
- Attendance?
- Need lots of support for transient and low-income students – agree multiple times
- Consistency in core instruction
- More opportunities for early childhood for all not just lower income
- What will literacy support look like?
- How do we hold students (parents) accountable?
- Teach parents how and what – parent university
- PD for classroom teachers to provide much needed intervention for their own students (not just the bottom 5%)
- Will support be pulled to cover as subs?
- How do we support parents? Partner with parent organizations
- Why doesn't our District have a grant-writer?

21st Century Learning

- Dynamic – no more district pacing guides?
- Growth mindset and self-directed learning – yay!
- Facilities – tell me more!
- Love – we need to address this generationally!
- Will art still be a component?
- How does personalized learning look?
- New Buildings? Improved facilities?
- Can this include mass customized learning tools/curriculum?
- Technology – training – need more digital education coordinators!!
- Lack of training – especially on-going
- Computers for all students

- Embedded training
- When is “rigorous” too rigor? Especially in elementary? (to prevent defeated students attitude)
- Mandatory job shadow experience for high school students to graduate.
- Educators to have a growth mindset, too. Students mimic what we do!!
- Personalized learning plans at high school, middle school, and elementary levels with the support of a teacher mentor.
- Responsibility for monitoring – developing?

College, Career and Life Readiness

- First bullet – how to predict for 21st century?
- Multiple pathways and opportunities – lack in the tech ed department
- Does it include a tech high school?
- What is meant by multiple pathways?
 - -Can it mean alternative school, like RCHS?
 - Can we get an alternative middle school?
- Job readiness/training for entry level jobs – support/training/education
- Job readiness in elementary?
- Start young.
- Teaching a love of learning first then they will want to learn as they get into higher grades
- Scope and sequence – elementary – middle school – high school
- What does this look like at the elementary level?
- Personal and social skills
- Connect content to the future
- We need more tech ed
- Success look different for everyone

Teaching and Leading

- Risk taking – students and teachers alike
- Continuous improvement – data
- Professional development – during inservice? Ed credit opportunities as we have in the past/

- Positive school climate – school spirit – school pride – more opportunities to show it
- Best Practices and results – training
- Technology – reliable access? Equitable among schools?
- Strong teams through shared governance and shared leadership – provide buy – in
- We want kids to feel safe taking risks, how do we help staff to feel safe taking risks?
- What will P.D. look like next year?
- Must be relevant and focused?
- PD is relevant to all teachers. We need to be life-long learners for teachers and students
- Positive school climate – need to include more arts, music, tech ed, interest based electives
- Teachers need more/better training as we integrate more technology front loaded instead of after the rollout
- Does our district value professional development? Our salary/lack of does not reflect this schedule.

Partnerships

- Student leadership at all levels
- Community engagement – help eliminate misconceptions and grow support and build trust
- What do the local businesses want to see from our students? How can they be interactive with business? What can they do to help teach students?
- Volunteer program – Love it!!
- Could be applied at both/all levels
- High school could volunteer to support elementary!
- Community based project learning at both levels
- It takes a village!
- Community ownership/buy in of student futures!
- List of community volunteers to come into all schools.
- Ring back the “old” DECA program. (OJT program)

- More internship/experience opportunities for HS
- Building a bridge with N.A. community. More role models for all ages!
- How do we deal with families that don't value education?
- How about credits for middle school classes again – would help!

Following this activity, Dr. Simon provided comments:

- Thank you for your thoughts on the strategic plan – we must remember this is not a one year plan but a working plan.
- College/career level at the elementary level – putting it in graphics – intentional in teaching our students success skills – studying, research, organizational skills – career fairs and job fairs at elementary levels – title schools and plant seeds in them so they can see a possibility for the future – skill set or exposure at their home.
- Arts are front and center in STEAM – otherwise becomes too technical – opens so many pathways.
- We have so much work to do with professional learning – providing differentiations – not all teachers are brand new. They may be a new district teacher but taught in another district in/out of state.
- We have work to do with partnerships.
- We are looking forward to implementing action plans and the work as we start the new school year.

Questions submitted:

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS:

This district has hired many young teachers in the past several years. Have you considered the impact of “generational diversity” among staff, and how this affects the work environment, collaboration with colleagues, and job satisfaction of young staff? Do you have a plan to address this issue?

Really about all staff – talk about developing more shared leaderships and collaboration opportunities – build more bridges between incoming and current staff – no plan to address now – barriers of new teachers to district but veteran teachers – staff p.d. time and building that relationship

April 29 – Ed Camp – contact Sue Podoll if have questions

You have done an amazing job collecting data and surveying the community to see the needs of your district and to guide decision-making in the future. As classroom teachers, we sometimes feel that we do not have a voice in regards to our school leaders and the culture of the buildings we work in. Although this is not my experience, there are teachers in some buildings that currently feel intimidated by their leadership.

Grants – out of state travel – looking at SLT – work group with process and criteria – experiences beyond the region or state of SD – number of schools going to model schools conference – counselors attending regional training –

Grant that they used to apply - not in favor of going to go but no relevance – align with mission, vision and strategic plan and relevant to the work that the teachers are doing.

Do you think it is important to know how teachers feel about their principals and their current work environment? Would you consider doing a district-wide survey with the teachers at the end of the year regarding building culture, support from leadership, and general satisfaction with leadership to help guide your future work with administrators?

Firm yes – hope to have in place for next year – important as a leader to have that feedback

The plan for applicable routes to graduation for our students (particularly in math) is a question I have. Bringing back technical education into our schools, (WDT is not appropriate for every student). Those classes might be the hook to keep students we might lose when they do not see high school as being relevant.

Part of the action plan process – national math association is having a different take on

I'm curious if/how she's going to apply what we learned from Dr. Beagle? Does she have plans for training staff at schools based on Dr. Beagle's information?

Not yet – haven't had a chance to sit down with staff that attended – was impactful Important for growing staff and responsiveness (SLT)

Are the paraprofessionals expected to participate in the scheduled teacher professional learning days next year?

Working on that now – are their specific trainings for paras

I am concerned about the inconsistency of enforcing students to wear IDs at the high school level. Each building seems to have their own rules regarding whether students wear them or not.

Something has shared with building principals – culture at our h.s. continue to look at.

RESTRUCTURE OF IST

“With the restructuring of the IST position to Literacy and Intervention at the elementary level, will we be seeing more small group support from our literacy leaders as opposed to coaching. If we are to get all of our students proficient by third grade, the intensive small group work is vital.”

CONFERENCES:

- The history of school communication:

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards + Voicemail

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards + Voicemail + Email

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards + Voicemail + Email + Family/Student Access

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards + Voicemail + Email + Family/Student Access + Website

Mailbox + Phone + Openhouse + 4 Conferences + Report Cards + Voicemail + Email + Family/Student Access + Website + Mobile Phone Notifications

We are shouldering all accountability when a significant part of parenting is to communicate with and extract information from the child.

We should provide an opportunity for parents to meet teachers and tour the environment, but perhaps an open house in the fall and a conference in early spring would be more reasonable. Ideally, using current communication venues, a parent is readily informed regarding student progress, attempts to motivate and assist their child, and ultimately contacts the school if their efforts fail. If a student is struggling, communicating with the parent will require more than the allotted five minutes at conferences. The current format is antiquated and even obsolete.

Looking at bigger range of date – elementary looking at options

Technology is not being used as it was intended and has become cumbersome in the workplace. Perhaps we could alleviate some teacher workload by decreasing the number of conferences. Future discussion

EARLY RELEASE

Five years ago, when we went to early release, we lost the equivalence of about 7-8 days out of the curriculum. I threw out quarter testing and a number of labs in order to get the necessary curriculum covered. Science teachers at Stevens were excited that we were getting rid of early release and that we would be able to reinsert some of the lost labs.

But it is my understanding that we are more or less doing an even swap minutes wise for the year and not gaining much time back for curriculum. While I understand some inservice time is necessary and newer teachers need more prep time, the veteran teachers would really like to have the time to teach. I see students as being robbed of classroom time compared to five years ago.

Long term goal is to add more instructional time – we are going to change our practice so we need more professional development. Quality of time and not early release days should impact student levels.

Getting arid of Easter Monday – looking at thru negotiations

NEW SPED DIRECTOR

When does the new director of special education start? July 1st?

Start June 1st since we have been without one for a year

SPRING BREAK NEXT YEAR

Could you find out why we're having such a long spring break next year instead of getting out earlier ?

We already get out pretty early. Tourism families can take vacation during the summer.

SNOW DAY QUESTIONS

Why do we get to know about snow days until the last minute?

Talk at next SLT meeting. Licensed staff make up the days. Concerns of making up in increments – accountability – recommendation would be the two days following Memorial Day -

Could we have some clarification on make-up days for the snow days during this meeting?

I understand that Dr. Simon is recommending that only staff make up the snow days. I'm curious as to how/when the time is to be made up and when a decision will be made.

Can teachers make up the 2 snow days (equivalent to 15hrs) in 1 hour increments starting now? Teachers have been allowed to do this in the past and obviously with an agreement/arrangement set up with the principals.

I have several staff member wanting to know if making up our snow days (in the event that students do not come back) would have the option of being done by the hour instead of the full day. We had done this in the past by staying late or coming in early to make up that time. I am not sure if this is the right platform to ask on but since I have had several interests I thought I would pass it on!

As summer is quickly approaching, teachers naturally want to make summer plans that include hotel reservations, flights, etc.... Yet we are stuck in limbo (having

to wait to make reservations/plans) until the Supt. and/or Board makes a decision--hopefully sooner than later.

Totally get the philosophy but that isn't always the case – hoping that we can find a happy medium to this discussion.

Are those days going to be structured or give the teachers time to work.

Will the paraprofessionals, cafeteria staff, and custodians be able to make up their hours lost from the snow day?

Hourly staff will be allowed to make up the time. They must report to their supervisor if they will/will not be making up days on May 30 and 31.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Fletcher
Senior Administrative Assistant