



LEAN INTERMEDIATE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Preparing for future success...one student at a time

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OIMS BLT MINUTES Monday, February 6, 2017

Present: Jerry Trietley, Helen Button, Joel Whitcher, Maureen DiCerbo, Kim Kruse, Sue Kallenbach, Angela Mest, Jennifer Mahar

Mr. Trietley welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Minutes from the December BLT meeting were briefly reviewed, as well as the Springboard Committee meeting minutes from December 21st and January 26th. Jerry mentioned that the District's January Wellness Committee meeting was canceled. The next one is scheduled for April 19th. Each building has been tasked with finding a forum for discussion of health and wellness strategies – OIMS will use our BLT Committee to achieve this directive. February is American Heart Health Month.

Maureen DiCerbo distributed two sets of data to the group. One set showed the STAR data benchmark testing progression for grades 4-7 from the Fall to the Winter in both Math and Reading. The data reveals the greatest overall gains in Reading have been in 6th grade, whereas both 6th and 7th grades have made equal gains in Math. The 2nd set of data showed IRLA proficiency rates for students in grades 4, 5 & 6 as measured November 1st, January 3rd and February 6th of the 2016-17 school year. As expected, each grade level showed improved proficiency. 4th grade went from 45% to 60%, 5th grade from 30% to 47%, and 6th grade from 22% to 35% proficiency between November 1st and February 6th according to the IRLA/SchoolPace Data Wall report. Maureen pointed out that we have 4 new teachers getting comfortable with IRLA. Jerry mentioned, also, that even if these figures don't correlate perfectly with the state tests, at least they are closer.

Jennifer Mahar provided an update on the OIMS Local Assistance Plan (LAP), handing out a summary of the 4 goal areas showing where we stand at mid-year and highlighting the strategies, resources and staff efforts that have been completed toward achieving the District's goals. Our current percentage increases are right on track with, and in some cases exceeding, the goals set at the beginning of the year with regard to student academic achievement, staff professional development, additional math supports for students, and chronic absenteeism. Jen mentioned that they were still working on getting data for after-school programming to see how those offerings are impacting our goals, as well. She explained that we are not currently required to have a state review or to report the outcomes of our LAP to the state. She will continue to monitor the outcomes through the remainder of the year.

Joel Whitcher discussed the upcoming NYS Assessments and the plan to send another mailing home to parents in March emphasizing the importance of allowing their children to take the tests and why we are encouraging participation. Angela Bello, OIMS Math 7 teacher, is taking the lead on the testing preparations as part of her Administrative Internship. Joel shared that preparations begin weeks before the test dates to count and sort testing booklets and answer sheets, making sure that every student is accounted for on every portion of each test. Many factors have to be considered in order to make testing day go smoothly, including student attendance, opt-out requests, alternate testing locations and other IEP accommodations. He said that the directions for administering and collecting the tests have recently changed. Before you had to keep track of every single piece of paper; however, last year the State didn't require this. Joel said we will do a field test in the spring to test the State's electronic testing format to see how it works.

Joel told the group that the 5th grade team has pursued using another tool in their classrooms called Front Row, which has been a great addition to their teaching arsenal. Front Row is an inquiry-based program written by teachers for use on the iPad which allows teachers to track student activity and understanding of math and ELA concepts. The lessons are based on real-world application of the lessons students are learning in the classroom. Google Chrome will also soon be installed on 5th grade student workstations. Grade 4 will follow.

Jerry provided an overview of topics discussed at the District CDEP Committee meeting on December 5th, which included the search for a new Superintendent. Folks were asked what qualities they would like to see in a District leader, and the District is soliciting names of anyone who would be a good candidate for the Superintendency.

In reviewing minutes from the January 25th District CIAC Committee meeting, the topic of cursive writing came up and the consistency with which it's taught within the District. Sue Kallenbach shared that it can be an issue at the intermediate level if one elementary school teaches something and the other one doesn't. The students aren't equally prepared for certain lessons when they come together at OIMS.

Minutes from the December 14th ELA Committee meeting were read, and some upcoming dates announced. The Report Card Committee will meet on Monday, February 13th; the Unified Basketball game is slated for April 21st at St. Bonaventure; and the Exceptional Track & Field Day is scheduled for May 19th. End of the year field trips will be essentially the same as previously. The PTO is working on coordinating the Olean Oilers School Day Baseball Game. Angela Mest suggested we have some sort of staff volleyball game or something in the gym as a Plan B if the baseball game gets rained out. The level of disappointment for the students was palpable after all the build-up to the baseball game last June. Instead of just having the let-down lead to a regular day of school, a building-wide indoor activity to take the place of the game should be planned and well-communicated in advance so everyone is prepared in either scenario.

Jerry commented that PTO participation level is small -- Char Dwaileebe is looking to do another sale to try and build up the coffers, but she has to compete with the other groups holding their fundraising sales. We never had the PTO in Grades 6 to 8, so it's hard to know what will happen with that.

The group discussed the coordination of some building-wide activities to increase student interest and reward everyone for the daily struggle. Spirit days were suggested, perhaps after state testing to

decompress and the week leading up to the Exceptional Track and Field Day – not to raise money, but just to have some fun and pump up the kids for the big day. Jerry invited the group to look for assemblies we might bring in to engage students and provide an entertaining break once in a while. Some of the money set aside for Great Rewards at the end of the year could be redirected to pay for an assembly without diminishing the reward to students. The group suggested we do a survey to find fun building-wide activity ideas. Some suggestions for activities were Valentine's Day chocolate bars, Halloween cookies, and a theme day every other Friday.

Sue asked if there was any way Olean would ever become a busing district, citing the difficulty some students experience in just getting to and from school, especially during inclement weather. Would attendance improve if we bused all the kids? Jerry offered that it was unlikely.

The next BLT Committee meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 3rd, 2017, in the LGI Room at OIMS. Members are encouraged to recruit other interested parties to join us.