



LEAN INTERMEDIATE MIDDLE SCHOOL

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

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OIMS BLT MINUTES

Monday, June 6, 2016

Present: Jerry Trietley, Helen Button, Maureen DiCerbo, Sue Kallenbach, Nichole Gonzalez, Stella Gonzalez, Kim Kruse, Angela Mest, Lacey Hill, Giovanni DiCerbo, Jennifer Mahar

Mr. Trietley welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to this last meeting for the 2015-16 school year. The group reviewed minutes from the previous BLT meeting, as well as minutes from recent Springboard, Math, CIAC, ELA and Report Card committees.

Discussion on Springboard Topics:

- Student use of cell phones in the building
 - If teachers wish to have students bring cell phones to class and use them for educational purposes, they must be sure students return the phones to their lockers before moving on to other classes.
 - Students have been seen using their cell phones in hallways and the cafeteria when the devices should be turned off and put away in lockers for the day.
- Laptop Distribution
 - There has been discussion about putting laptop carts in each 6th grade classroom next year rather than assign individual student laptops.
- Morning Program
 - After 7:30 a.m., any students in the building should be either participating in the morning PEP program (walking in the gym) or be in the cafeteria for breakfast at 7:45. Students should not be congregating in the red chairs in the main foyer waiting for school to start.
 - Mr. Trietley said the PEP program has grown significantly; he has spoken to Maria Brooks about adding another staff person or two due to the number of students who are now participating. She said she is looking for someone interested in helping. Mrs. Dexter was told when she had 25 students that there would be another adult, but this hasn't happened. Jen Mahar mentioned there is money available to pay a person; however, if we can't get anyone to help supervise the kids, the program numbers should be capped.

NYS Science Assessment:

- Only had a hand-full of opt-outs for the Gr. 4 Science test, and only 3 makeups to do. This test seems more palatable for students and parents – it's not as rigorous as the Math & ELA State Assessments. Parents have commented, "The kids like this one – they think it's fun."

Discussion on Math Committee Topics:

- Sue Kallenbach said she attended the presentation on RTI and, although the content was good, she felt the time frame was much too short (only one class period).
- The Math Committee is looking at the criteria used in assigning students to advanced math classes and including more components than just a student's average going into 6th grade such as teacher input about the student's work ethic and level of interest, state test scores, local assessments, etc.
- Discussion ensued about the direction the state is going with standardized testing and the benefit of a student who is going into advanced classes taking the Math test to show that they sat for it, regardless of their score. Nichole Gonzalez asked what percentage of current 6th or 7th graders in advanced math opted out of the state assessment this year (statistics unavailable).

Discussion on ELA Committee Topics:

- The group discussed how teachers have been inundated with modules, new programs, IRLA, etc., and haven't really had time to settle in to a groove. IRLA seems to be a good program.

Discussion on Report Card Committee Topics:

- The committee has developed a new standards-based report card for grades PreK through 5. If the Board approves the format, the next step is to get teachers comfortable enough to use it and educate parents to understand it.

6th Grade ELA/IRLA:

Mr. Trietley updated the group on next year's plans for implementing the IRLA reading program into 6th grade classes. It's difficult for teachers to teach their core programs and also do all of the steps and parent contacts, etc., that come with IRLA when they have 75+ students to track. A concern has been how to get everyone involved in the program and properly trained. All of the 6th grade teachers will be doing an ELA class and then have the same kids for an IRLA group. They'll be scheduled to teach 4 sessions of their core class plus 1 ELA class and 1 IRLA class. This allows some flexibility in planning time to complete IRLA modules.

Kids to College:

Stella Gonzalez shared that her experience at Houghton College with the 6th Grade during the Kids to College day was positive. Mr. Trietley commented that many students have never seen a college campus. This activity exposes our 6th graders to the concept that no matter what your situation is, no matter how much money you do or don't have, college is an attainable goal. Stella also shared that the program is not just about the field trip to Houghton – students spend a lot of time preparing for the day by completing packets and engaging in activities geared toward getting the most out of the visit. Nichole Gonzalez proposed that St. Bonaventure's doors are open if the District would like to consider bringing the Kids to College program to SBU.

OHS Class of 2016 Walk-Through:

Even though it took a lot of time and organization, having the OHS Graduates come do a brief walk-through in our gym was a huge success. The seniors are still talking about what a great experience it was – they loved that people cared. Maureen DiCerbo suggested adding a community component to it by inviting parents and demonstrating what walking across that stage at graduation can mean to their children. Mr. Trietley added that in order to make the time involved in getting everyone to the gym more valuable, we could combine the walk-through with another type of assembly. Regardless, we hope to host the graduates again next year.

Oilers Kids Day Baseball Game:

Mr. Trietley thanked the PTO and all those who helped plan and organize the activity. Sadly, due to the weather, the game could not go on as planned. We had many disappointed students (and adults). A lesson learned was NOT to unload all the equipment, tables, chairs & tents until the decision is made regarding the weather... Angela Mest suggested that if the game has to be cancelled in future years, maybe we could establish a “Plan B” to include a visit to the school by the baseball players and some fun activities such as a faculty vs. students volleyball game, etc. The kids come in to school with the mindset that it’s going to be a fun-filled day, and it’s hard to reel them in to conduct regular classes.

7th Grade Recognition:

The 7th Grade Recognition ceremony will be held the evening of Monday, June 20th, in the High School Auditorium. It’s an evening awards event with guests such as the Mayor of Olean, the Board of Education President, the Superintendent and the Olean High School Principal. Last year’s participation was disappointing – a lot of people didn’t show up. A conscious effort is made to spread the awards out to honor as many of the students as possible. It had been proposed in the past that we move the ceremony to the daytime; however, the survey response was not positive. In the future, we hope to improve communication to families that everyone will receive something & the awards are not given only to a few elite students. It’s a worthwhile program to attend.

The 7th Grade field trip to Darien Lake will be held June 21st. The last day of classes for students will be June 22nd (full day). The Great Rewards assembly will be held on the morning of the 22nd.

Summer School Update:

Mr. Trietley informed the group that Summer School for grades 6 & 7 will be held from July 11th through August 17th this year at Olean High School. The question was raised of what if a student fails a course like math but doesn’t attend summer school – will they be retained or advanced? Mr. Trietley said the student can be assigned to the next grade level if they’ve only failed one course, but that there is a difference between them passing to that grade and them being assigned to that grade. Retention meetings are held with all teachers involved to determine whether a student has the ability to be successful in the next grade level. Considerations are given to the student’s state assessment scores, local test scores, diagnostic data, teacher recommendation, etc. If a teacher says that a student passed their class with a 65, but could really use some help, the student can be assigned to summer school to help bolster their skills if the parent agrees.

Finding summer school teachers is a challenge – we want to hire the best teachers possible, but not a lot of veteran teachers want to work summer school. Mr. Trietley said he is fortunate to have our summer school class slots filled with great teachers this year. If not all subjects could be filled, he would have hosted just an ELA class with multi-disciplinary subject matter to help students in all areas. Jen Mahar said that the summer school staff will have access to School Pace to help them determine reading levels, etc. A 21st Century Grant has been applied for to have representatives available for conferencing with students over the summer and help support the important job of encouraging students to read over the summer.

Jen Mahar – Focus District/LAP Updates:

Jen updated the group on our status as a Focus School. In 2009-10 we were identified as a school in need of improvement based on our student economic profile. Each year we are reviewed with a rubric to determine how we are performing across different areas. This past spring the state went through a re-check. Based on the scores from 2014-15, we are no longer a District in Need of Improvement. We now are categorized as a “Local Assistance Plan” school and have a less intensive rubric to conform to with prioritized goals based on what makes sense for our next steps.

Maureen DiCerbo – STAR Updates:

Maureen handed out a chart showing what the gains look like in our STAR testing progress for grade levels. 4th grade in reading and math made huge gains this year from fall to spring. 6th grade reading is up 15% in terms of proficiency. Jen Mahar pointed out that tracking all of this data is very complicated as the goal is always a moving target, which makes our progress even more positive. Mr. Trietley said we would love to have this kind of proficiency in terms of the state assessments. However, it is difficult to compare the data when kids take the STAR assessments but opt out of the state assessments.

7th grade reading levels seemed to have dropped off. Lacey Hill said that from fall to winter, the scores go up. From winter to spring, however, they fall off. The students just don’t care – they see their achievement and drop off in effort. Maureen suggested we look at what the criteria should be for how often a student takes the STAR assessment. Sue Kallenbach was encouraged with her comparison of her STAR scores and IRLA data – the results were very close. Maureen said STAR is good at telling us who is below, at grade level and above. It is not a good tool, however, for measuring how high the levels go.

The meeting was called to a close. We look forward to continued partnership in the fall in moving forward with the OIMS BLT Committee. Thank you all!