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Curriculum Connections Medina CSD

EXEMPLIFY EXCELLENCE IN
EDUCATION

Winter 2016

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie...

Many of us are familiar with this circular tale by Laura Numeroff. A boy gives a cookie to a mouse, who promptly asks for some milk to go with it. He then requests a straw, and so on and so forth. We can think about the implications of the mouse and his actions in a variety of different contexts. Literacy Coaches at Oak Orchard used this text to consider ways to teach the idea of cause and effect. Science teachers may use the terms "action" and "reaction"; math teachers "input" and "output". My own children are well-aware of the, "natural consequences" that I have referred to no less than every time an argument begins in the back seat of the car and ends in tears. No matter the reference, the cause is **why** something happens, and the effect is **what** happens.

The Diagnostic Tool for School and District Improvement (DTSDE) process is often thought of as the "what" that has happened to schools and districts who were not making adequate progress on state measures of student achievement. If you're on the list, this is what happens to you: Your administrators go to Albany, you have strangers descend upon your district and building, and there is a pile of paperwork that must be done to comply with state expectations. Stress levels rise astronomically. I know this is what happens!

And believe me, I understand it. But we can't lose sight of the **why**.

The DTSDE rubric looks at leadership, curriculum and instruction, teacher practices, social emotional development, and parent engagement. The rubric is designed to help schools identify **why** they are not making the progress that the state expects. And let's face it, our own expectations for Medina students go far beyond those of the state.

I have the daily privilege of working alongside of a dedicated teaching and administrative staff that doesn't quit. I constantly field questions and emails from everywhere in the district. Teachers and administrators call to bounce ideas around about helping a student, ask for clarification on a data analysis, and seek feedback on curriculum. Our mission begins with "Educate to inspire all to reach beyond the expected..." and it starts with our staff who are reaching for better every day.

The DTSDE rubric has forced us to look at why we found ourselves on the list – what was missing from our systems and practices - and as a result we continually make a collective effort to critique and build upon what we do in order to improve. The impact of this questioning and energy has resulted in enhanced systems and practices. Student

achievement is growing. Momentum is building. Take stock and be proud of this.

In the story, the mouse ends up right back where he started. The lessons we have learned in the past three years of the DTSDE process have shown us what it takes to be successful and how to continue to move forward. So long as we stay the course and not let up, our fate cannot be like that of the mouse. Your perseverance is appreciated, and will continue to be needed as we reach beyond the expected towards our next achievement. Thank you for all you continue to do for the students of Medina.

DISTRICT GOALS:

Literacy Instruction

Build a solid foundation in literacy PK-3 and continue to improve reading and writing instruction PK-12.

Page 2

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

Ensure rigorous, well-rounded, vertically aligned curriculum and assessments and differentiated instruction K-12.

District Cohesion

Align district and build vision, mission, core beliefs and priorities.

Page 3

Superintendent's Conference Day

Page 4

Literacy Instruction

Build a solid foundation in literacy PK-3 and continue to improve reading and writing instruction PK-12.

In our first year of strategic planning and goal setting, the committee identified the following target goals for PreK-7 literacy achievement:

Performance Measure	2014	2015	2018 Target
% entering Kindergartners ready to learn	85	71	92

Ongoing Work: The Brigance screening assessment was purchased, and training was conducted for pre-K staff in the fall of 2015. Plans are in place to administer the Brigance this spring to students in order to guide instructional planning.

An Extended Day grant was recently submitted for approval that would provide for additional pre-K programming during the summer months. More information will be forthcoming as we receive status updates on the success of this submission.

Performance Measure	2014	2015	2018 Target
% K-3 achieving year-end literacy benchmark	-	-	TBD

Ongoing Work: Teachers in Oak Orchard (and beginning at Wise) have been trained in conducting a running record. Further training in the analysis of the record, and use of the [Balanced Literacy Continuum](#) is forthcoming in February. Literacy Coaches continue to share ideas and best practices using [Great Habits](#), [Great Readers](#), and teachers are doing data dives to identify goals for “flex” groups. Running Record data is being tracked through an on-line system. Individual student goals and progress are being tracked via RtI.

Pilot teachers in grades K-4 have been continuing with Lucy Calkins Units of Study

in Writing. Training and dialog continue to be ongoing.

1:1 Tablets are being piloted in Oak Orchard with Katie Toub’s 3rd grade class. Information is being collected on the use of e-books for guided reading, and apps and strategies to increase writing production are also being introduced.



CLASSROOM TEACHER QUOTE:

“Using these tablets has turned (*student name*) from someone who avoids writing tasks into a creative and motivated author. Watching him work on his stories with the enthusiasm and joy he now possesses for writing has been the most gratifying part of this experience so far.”

KATIE TOUB
Oak Orchard Elementary e-book Pilot Teacher

Performance Measure	2014	2015	2018 Target
STAR ELA % proficiency: Gr. 2-7	-	48	65

Ongoing Work: In addition to the work at Oak Orchard, 4th grade teachers are exploring ELA modules, while 5th and 6th grade teachers are re-experiencing and adjusting ELA modules through their 2nd year of implementation. Many adaptations, additions, and deletions have been made and will continue to be discussed as data identifies needed changes.

7th grade ELA is considering the purchase of new textbooks and digital platforms and has been reviewing available materials.

AIS reading teachers at Oak and Wise have adjusted their schedules in 15-16 to provide push-in time in addition to pull-out time. Data on the success of this structure change is being collected and reviewed to ensure we are maximizing our resources to meet the needs of students.

All teachers are continuing to receive training opportunities to better familiarize themselves with the data and reporting features within STAR that will guide instructional focus.

The improvement of reading and writing instruction in the high school is not explicitly measured within the Strategic Plan data targets. The high school measures center on continuing to increase graduation rates, reducing dropout rates, and supporting students in their efforts to complete rigorous coursework and co-curricular activities. To achieve these goals, a focus on literacy instruction is required.

Ongoing Work: AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is steadily becoming a school-wide initiative that is finding success at Medina HS. The philosophy of AVID is, “Hold students accountable to the highest standards, provide academic and social support, and they will rise to the challenge”. This goes hand-in-hand with the aims of the district strategic planning committee. Focus for 2015-16 has been emphasized building-wide in the areas of higher-level questioning strategies as well as the use of interactive notetaking to synthesize and solidify student understanding of new information.

Medina HS teachers have also been collaborating on the new Regents Research Paper requirement. While the craft of writing a research paper will continue to be taught and developed by English teachers and the School Librarian, the topics of research will be generated from content area teachers throughout the high school and self-selected by students. This cross-curricular effort is being led by Elizabeth Dickhut, ELA Department Chair.

HS Special Education teachers will be provided with the opportunity to participate in a 2-hr session on the use of apps for reading and writing with Special Education students at an upcoming Conference Day. This session will be facilitated by Erie I BOCES.

Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

Ensure rigorous, well-rounded, vertically aligned curriculum and assessments and differentiated instruction K-12.

Ensure: How will we ensure curriculum? We will articulate, in writing, the concepts and skills that are taught and assessed for all subjects and grade levels throughout the district. This is an ongoing, long-term target.

2015-16 Goals: All teachers will have a working knowledge of the terms consensus, projected, and diary maps. A district-wide inventory of curriculum maps that we currently have and curriculum maps we will need to construct in the future will be developed.

The HS staff is well on its way to achieving this goal. All staff are utilizing Office 365 as a repository for their curriculum work. They have been working collaboratively to identify current status of department maps and next steps. K-7 teachers will have the opportunity to participate in a mapping introduction at our upcoming Superintendent's Conference Day.

Rigorous and Well-Rounded:

Professional Development and coaching this year has included but is not limited to:

- AVID Strategies
- CCLS curricular materials exploration/piloting
- 21st Century technology tools
- C3 Framework and the new SS Inquiries (training on 2/12)
- Engineering is Elementary resources (training on 10/26)
- Guided reading to meet student interests and skill levels

All teachers in the district will participate in training regarding Proficiency Scales on February 12th. This workshop will help to highlight the differences between knowing/not knowing vs. the ability to demonstrate degrees of understanding/mastery of a skill. Proficiency Scales will be identified based on our prioritized standards, and will lead to our continued work with assessments that target identified skills.

Vertically aligned curriculum and

assessments: We began this fall with a look at how priority standards are identified for ELA and Mathematics. As our curriculum maps are systematically articulated in writing, we will be able to engage in collegial discussion regarding skill instruction as it develops from one grade to the next and one course to the next. Assessments and resources will become a collaboration focus in subsequent work sessions as we review how our current assessments target identified skills. Curriculum maps are the starting point for this conversation.

As new reports based on 3-8 state assessments are released, teachers will continue to use this data to drive and adjust instruction as needed.

Differentiated Instruction (DI): How do we provide content, processes, and expectations for products based on individual student needs as they relate to CCLS? Our DI coaches at Wise will continue to explore this question and plan for needed resources to solidify the learning at Wise this year. Future DI planning will be forthcoming.

District Cohesion

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Our third goal as outlined by our strategic planning document is to, "Align district and build vision, mission, core beliefs and priorities." While communication is a significant factor in establishing common ground, having a unified and shared purpose about which to communicate is likewise important. One of the systems that I oversee in the district is Response to Intervention (RtI). Several questions come to mind as I consider the fact that student data, as well as teacher and leader feedback, indicate that this process is not working as effectively for students as it should.

In his book, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (2011), Simon Sinek challenges his audience to think about **why** we do something. Why does this process exist? Why should anyone care? As we take stock of our current RtI practices and have conversations around the district about our RtI system, we must collectively answer these questions. For some, the RtI process is avoided because the time and energy invested is not yielding the desired gains. In the very next breath I'm told that we want different outcomes for students, and that something needs to be done. This tells me that the "why" of referring students to committee still exists. The RtI process exists to invite all staff who work with an identified student to come together to solve the puzzle of why he/she is not learning at expected rates despite classroom instruction modifications and small group support.



The "what we do" and "how we do it" are the next on the list for consideration. I have been and will continue to be working with building leaders and those who are responsible for RtI oversight to review the district protocols for pre-meeting documentation review, conducting the RtI meeting, and ensuring follow up towards committee established goals and recommendations for students. Building leaders are responsible for making sure that what we do is following district established guidance for conducting RtI meetings.

The "how we do it" is in need of upgrades as well. The general trend is to bring data to the table in the form of scores, percentage of completion, reading level, and grade reports. We need to dive deeper into the reasons that the scores exist. An analysis of the data is expected. What observable skills/behaviors do we notice, and what are the suspected causes for a child to perform in this manner? As a team, we need to address the reasons for the behavior, not just the symptoms that are displayed. This may require multiple meetings and data points to truly rule out and identify the root of the issue. Only then can we put a plan of action into place and monitor it regularly for effectiveness. As I continue to visit RtI teams and teachers referring students to RtI I look forward to working with you to consider these questions and collectively exploring the answers that will make our system stronger.

Superintendent's Conference Day February 12, 2016

Time	Audience	Presenter	Topic	Description
8-10	Oak Orchard and Wise Teachers	Jeff Flygare	Developing Scales - Overview	Common understanding among all staff of the difference between knowing and understanding, and how to quantify degrees of understanding
8-10	HS Teachers	Jeanne Tribuzzi and Denise Stappenbeck	Curriculum Mapping	With guidance and support following your department specific plan, review curriculum maps to identify refinement areas within: horizontal alignment across the map, actionable skills, explicit assessment measures
8-10	Counselors, Nurses, Teacher Aides, Associates	Darryl Tonemah, PhD	Impact of Trauma on the Ed. Environment	Learn and understand about the role of trauma and the potential effects on student behaviors and needs. Part I of III
8-10	7-12 SS Teachers	Greg Ahlquist	Social Studies changes	Information and big picture perspective regarding the changes to SS Curriculum will be explored. As the day continues, explore the integration of content and skills to take practical next steps towards mapping and revising current units and evaluating content choices. (Continued 1-3)
10-10:15	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:15-12	HS Teachers	Jeff Flygare	Developing skills and scales	Teachers will have priority standards and measureable skills documented within curriculum maps
10:15-12	K-7 teachers (pilot teachers)	Jeanne Tribuzzi	Lucy Calkins units of study in writing	TBD based on group needs. Input required at time of selection.
10:15-12	Wise DI Coaches	Jeff Linn, PhD	DI	Continuation of work and conversation based on group needs and goals.
10:15-12	K-7 Math teachers (including AIS)	Jessi Toepfer	Problem Solving	Resources and guidance in mathematical problem solving received from recent NYSED work session will be shared.
10:15-12	K-7 teachers	Greg Ahlquist	Social Studies	Greg Ahlquist, 2013 Teacher of the Year for NYS and SED liaison for the SS department will be on hand to introduce teachers to the toolkits and provide guidance and strategies for using them for SS instruction
10:15-12	K-7 teachers	Mike Amici	STAR assessment	Want to be able to use STAR reports to identify target areas of need and plan for instruction? Use STAR to help with supporting struggling learners and RtI? Come to this session!! Familiarity and understanding of the reporting features of STAR, as well as how to read and interpret the data provided.
10:15-12	K-7 teachers	Denise Stappenbeck	Curriculum Mapping overview	For any team considering writing or revising curriculum maps this summer, and overview of formatting expectations will be reviewed (as shared with HS faculty on 12/7). This will not include information regarding the review process for curriculum maps due to time limitations.
10:15-12	AIS Reading K-3	Self-directed	RtI/M reporting	Update documentation in RtI/M as determined by grade level meetings held 2/2-2/10.
10:15-12	Counselors, Nurses, Teacher Aides, Associates, Any K-7 interested teachers	Darryl Tonemah, PhD	Impact of Trauma on the Ed. Environment	Continued from above. Part II
10:15-12	K-7 teachers, Admins	Brian Richards	Outlook 201	Deep dive on calendars, mail rules, contacts and groups, messaging (Skype) integration, and phone/tablet use (feel free to bring your device!)
10:15-12	K-7 teachers, Aides	Jeanette Sheliga and Julie Granchelli	Office 365	Get to know the basics of O365 file sharing and group functionality. Also explore the Mix feature of Microsoft Power point for added pizzazz to your presentations.
10:15-12	K-7 ELA Teachers (Inc 4-7 AIS Reading)	Sandy Gabrys	ELA Work session	Review of 2015 ELA Assessment results 3-8 by group and/or individual students following provided protocol. 50% of questions have been released.
12:10	Teacher Aides	Brian Richards	Copier Training	Meet in the Conference Room at Central Office. Tech staff will divide the group and walk through the ins and outs of the copy machines prior to your break for lunch
12-1	Lunch On Own	Lunch On Own	Lunch On Own	Lunch On Own
1-3	K-7 classroom teachers and AIS Reading	Jeff Flygare	Developing skills and scales	Teachers will have priority standards and measureable skills documented within curriculum maps
1-3	All	Jeanne Tribuzzi*	Curriculum Mapping	Mapping review teams will begin using the protocol for map review with teachers that are ready to share their written product
1-3	8-12 Mathematics	David Gersch	Access Math	Experience a Rich Task and create one of your own to implement immediately.
1-3	Lifeguards	Mary Dooley	Lifeguard Certification	Review and extension of training provided on 10/26.
1-3	Counselors K-12, Nurses, Any interested teachers	Dr. Darryl Tonemah	Impact of Trauma	Continued.
1-3	HS Special Education, All	Mike Amici	Tech Apps	Using technology apps to differentiate instruction for struggling/reliant students. Bring your tablets!
1-3	HS SS Teachers	Greg Ahlquist	SS Changes	Review of the new standards, upcoming changes, and guidance on moving forward with adapting instructional practice
1-3	All	Kristen Phillips and Jennifer O'Toole	Office 365 - Interm./Adv.	Beyond the basics of Office 365 to revolutionize your productivity and classroom management. One Note and Class Notes will be explored.
1-3	Math AIS	Jessi Toepfer	Math Review	Strategies presented at a recent NYSED work session will be shared to support spiraling curriculum concepts.