

Educational Excellence Committee Meeting – December 9, 2013

The committee met with the Administrative team to get highlights of our educational strategic planning process. In each case objectives and goals were laid out and discussed.

In K-3 – Jim Pritchard established a goal of 75% proficiency in all grades in math and English as measured by AIMS-WEB benchmarking. In K-1 he will specifically work to increase early numeracy skills by emphasizing counting and measurement. In 2nd and 3rd grade he will work to improve math comprehension and skills. For ELA, he will work to improve reading comprehension skills and increasing fluency.

In 4 through 6 – Tammy Ivan is basing her goals on the state exams working to improve test scores by 5% over last year. Tammy is working to identify kids with high needs so she can assist them with programs such as after school clubs and study halls that provide extra help working on additional skills in ELA and Math. Tammy emphasized the need for one additional AIS position to assist in the process.

In 7 and 8, the middle school – Eric Attleson attended the Middle School music program, Sarah Latimer reported.

Eric is also basing his goals on the state tests and foresees a 5% increase in Math and ELA. Eric is working to put his students through more timed tests to acclimate them to the new common core format. 8th graders in particular are facing a battery of tests this year that is going to be difficult to manage. There is a new common core test, the “old regents” test and the 8th grade math test all being given within 2 months. The state has not indicated how the new common core test will be administered or graded making the process that more difficult. Sarah emphasized the need for additional AIS in the middle school. There is a waiver that was applied for at the state level, which would help all NYS students with the Grade 8/Acceleration dilemma.

In 9 – 12, the High School – Terry Heller established goals of improving test scores by 5 % in 4 core areas; math, English, Science and Social Studies. The state has established new state proficiency rates that to me seem arbitrary. Terry recommends that we as a district work to bring the bottom up to improve overall test scores. AIS is a band aid to the situation, Terry emphasized the need for two additional teachers; one in Social Studies with an English certification and the other in Math with a science certification.

We need to look at making investments in the short term to meet the new standards set by the state and the common core and we need to make further investments in K-3 and 4-6 to better develop the base from which children learn.

I recommend that the board take the requests made by the principals seriously and consider them during our upcoming budget deliberations.