



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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TO: Members, Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Carol L. Kelley, Superintendent of Schools

RE: Superintendent's Report

DATE: September 10, 2019

Last month, I had the opportunity to share reflections with the BOE based upon our SY19 results; one of the areas we want to address this upcoming year is *challenging and engaging all learners*, which is one of the objectives in our five-year vision plan.

Working under the leadership of our Sr. Director of Equity, Dr. Carrie Kamm, each school has been asked to support a strong implementation of "Tier 1" or *classroom-level* strategies by providing guidance and support to staff on topics related to equitable discipline practices, emphasizing the District's commitment to restorative justice. In doing so, we hope to achieve the district's vision of *creating a positive learning environment for all students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child*.

This evening and throughout the school year, I plan to use "*the superintendent's report*" to provide examples of activities our schools are doing to *build and sustain a positive culture & climate* between our students, staff, families, and community. Our first feature schools will be our two middle schools:

Julian Middle School - Dr. Todd Fitzgerald, Principal and Ms. Gina Harris, Positive Culture/Climate Coach
Brooks Middle School - Ms. April Capuder, Principal and Ms. Lauren Olsen, Positive Culture/Climate Coach

Pillar 1 - Equitable Access to Rigorous, Responsive Instruction

- A school wide tardy system with clear student expectations and teacher responsibilities has been created. It includes having students do a reflection, and problem solve around how they can be on time for class.
- We now have clear school wide expectations and a behavior matrix that has been taught to all our students.
- Administrators met with each student grade level the first few days of school to share the "Why?" behind our expectations. This focused on creating a culture and climate that is safe, warm, and welcoming for students.
 - Here is our Julian Student Expectations: [Behavior matrix](#)
 - Here is our [Brooks Student Expectations](#).
- Teachers are completing Behavior Intervention Records for Level I, II, III, and IV behaviors. This data will be used by our culture and climate team to address areas of concern throughout the school year. There is a feedback loop from administrators included in this process so teachers know how level II, III, IV disciplinary situations have been addressed
- A step by step process or guidelines has been created for how teachers should respond to Level I classroom behavior. This was done in conjunction with my building union reps. so there is now a consistent approach for how teachers respond to student behavior.
- A clear T-chart with leveled behaviors has been shared with the staff. This has been created based off of what is included in the Effective Student Behavior Handbook.

- The school has developed a school-wide system and structure for hall passes (provided when students are out of the classroom).

Pillar 2 - Strong Relationships with Family and Community

We are excited to support staff and provide additional resources necessary to foster a sense of belonging through our new partnership with DePaul University. As a result of this partnership, we will be able to offer up to four TIER II mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) groups in the fall of 2019 and four MBCT groups in late winter of 2020 via DePaul Family and Community Services (DePaul FCS). Specifically, please note the following about these additional resources:

- Each MBCT consists of 12 sessions, typically provided on a weekly basis.
- We anticipate serving 8 students in each of the groups for a total of 32 students during each 12- week session.
- This amounts to 64 students receiving TIER II services.
- We anticipate delivering two “sessions”, one beginning in September 2019 and one beginning in February 2020.

Additionally, during our “Lunch & Learn”, which are student focus groups we hold annually each year to capture student feedback about our actions to improve their learning experiences in our schools, we have repeatedly heard a call for additional adult supervision in our middle schools, especially in non-structured spaces (e.g., hallways, locker areas, etc...). The BOE approved the additional positions last spring; and this school year, we were able to add six *Hallway Supervisors* to our middle school staff (three at each middle school).

Also starting this school year, each of our middle schools have implemented “*Away for the Day*” expectations as it relates to cell phones.

In summary, both middle schools had a very positive start to the school year. Many thanks to the BOE and community for your support of our schools. These actions and your support will enable Julian and Brooks’ staff to create a positive and safe learning environment for our students. Please look for additional updates from one of our elementary schools in my October report.

Additional Notes from our Middle Schools

Here is a [video](#) created by Julian students focusing on our extracurricular activities that was shared with students during welcome week.

Here is a [student video](#) created by Brooks students (Speech, Drama and Debate) about upcoming extracurriculars taking place at their school.