



Date: September 4, 2024

To: Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee of the Granby Board of Education

From: Jennifer M. Parsons, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Subject: September Monthly Update

Academic Achievement and Instruction

Summative assessment results are officially in for the 2024 testing window. Schools received a sneak peek over the summer but all results statewide are now verified and staff is working to analyze student performance at the student, class and grade level. A comprehensive report will be provided to the full Board on September 18th and individual parent reports will be sent home to families following curriculum nights on September 20th. Superintendent Burke and I will be meeting with each building principal in the coming weeks to review their full analysis and action steps for the year.

Curriculum

This summer teachers volunteered to participate in over 1,000 hours of curriculum updates alongside their department chairs, content area specialists and coaches. These updates entail fine tuning assessments, aligning standards, reviewing core learning experiences and documenting the work for others to access. I am currently meeting with teams to review their work. This year I will share with you a curriculum review cycle that will utilize the K-12 vertical teams to prepare and present to you on the status of various content areas on a rotating basis over several years. This year will have an unofficial English focus with the 9th and 10th grade English curriculum revisions being presented in November and the proposed K-3 Reading Program being reviewed in December.

Learning Environment

Our new teacher evaluation plan and rubric will be a tool to leverage the work we have done the past few years around creating physically, socially and emotionally safe learning environments where students feel safe to take risks and positive teacher to student and student to student interactions are encouraged. Additionally, this school year as we shift to incorporating restorative approaches into our work we have three goals. These goals are to have our Student Support and Social Emotional Learning Team create a training plan for all staff that will begin in the winter; for teachers to strengthen their relationships with students; and for students to feel an increased sense of belonging in school.

Professional Learning

This summer we held three “retreat” days for administrative planning and collaboration to prepare for the upcoming school year. Some of the work completed in those meetings involved planning for leadership teams and committee work to support achievement and communication goals. Central Office also hosted three “Lunch and Learns” for twelve month staff around the topics of communications, human resources and supporting student behaviors. New teachers joined for two days of orientation before school started including a review of Board goals, a bus tour of our beautiful town and a panel presentation from last year’s new teachers. Lastly, all district staff gathered for convocation to celebrate our theme of “Connect. Believe. Achieve.” and hear remarks that brought this theme to life by our Superintendent, Board Chair, GEA President, GEF President and our Teacher of the Year.

Policy and Legislation

Policy implications from the last legislative session are currently being reviewed and the annual policy memo will be shared in November. Of note this year are revisions needed to Title IX, technology and disciplinary practices including bullying and restorative approaches. We welcomed 84 Kindergarten students this past week. With the shift in entry age to September 2nd instead of December 31st, we had about 10 students apply for early entry to Kindergarten and all students were approved. Teachers worked this summer to create forms and documents for operationalizing the new Educator Evaluation and Growth Plan the Board approved last spring in accordance with state legislation. Teachers received an orientation to this plan on September 4th.

Hiring and Staffing

This summer we were engaged in several hiring processes. We welcomed eighteen new certified teaching staff to the district. Of those 18, three are officially 1st year teachers however all of these educators have previously worked for us in the district as teaching assistants! Additionally we saw several grade or building transfers throughout the district and have a few experienced teachers trying out new content areas. We also welcomed many new non-certified staff and our new Dean of Students at the high school. We are in the final stages of hiring for the open Assistant Principal position at the high school and have two certified openings remaining in middle school French and secondary Special Education.