



DATE: March 2025

TITLE: Academics and Administrative Services

TYPE: Information

PRESENTER: Katie Baskin, Executive Director of Academics and Administrative Services

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Teaching and Learning oversees curriculum, instruction, staff development, and Federal Title programs for the district.

The Human Resources Office is responsible for employee recruitment and orientation, contract negotiations for all bargaining units, employee relations, student and employee data practices, and staffing with building/program administrators.

Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment

- **Principal Professional Development:** During the month of February, principals continued their learning work on PLCs. This month principals learned about and discussed Question 5: “Who benefited and who did not benefit?” This continues to be learning work to move toward the implementation and enhancement of the PLC+ model in our buildings. We also continued our work on culturally responsive leadership reading and discussing a case study about task forces and including the voices of families in schools, aligned with our work as a DLT. We also spent time doing some planning work for the school improvement plans for next year. This was an opportunity for principals to look at learning work, implementation and standard work across the system and discuss system alignment.
- **Teacher Mentorship:** During the month of February, year 1 teachers focused their learning on the SIOP and best practice strategy of building background. Our year 2 teachers continued learning about differentiated instruction, specifically looking at how to differentiate using content, process, and product. We looked at strategies such as Venn Diagrams and choice boards. Year 3 teachers continued their learning on higher order thinking strategies. Learning focused on designing open-ended questions, thinking, not retelling, and student self-assessment.
- **Strengths Development:** On March 17th, multiple groups across the system will continue their Strengths personal development work with Bethany von Steinbergs. AHS staff and District staff will engage in strengths focused leadership development, PLC leaders at Ellis, IJ, COOP and the CLC will work on their capacity to build trust in their teams, and District secretaries will engage in communication development.
- **Human Resources Dept. Audit Implementation:** HR is working with hiring managers to implement consistent practices in hiring practices, interviews, and staffing that honor the applicants and promote the district in communication of our incredible benefits.

Packer Profile for all learners

- **Grow Your Own:** The Grow Your Own student club continues to meet and recruit students. In the last month, the program coordinator worked with high school teachers to nominate students that they thought might be good teachers. Ms. Owens went and personally met with the students to invite them to attend the club

meeting. This effort provided positive results with a greater number of students attending. Students attended the AI Professional Development event at the Southeast Service Cooperative and have been working on projects with the public library. The GYO club/program will be represented at the Career Fair at AHS in March and they are planning a college visit to Winona State to visit the education village.

- Packer Profile Implementation: Students are continuing to work on soft skills, academic skills, and lessons in SchoolLinks through the Packer Profile Course. Many of our students have added multiple items to their portfolios. We hope you will consider joining us again this year for a review of portfolios. Students have also continued to have weekly speakers on different careers. Additionally, we are seeing strong data that supports growth in our students. Wednesday, March 5, 2025, we will have our profile day at AHS. The 9th graders will attend an educator panel during this time. 10th – 12th graders will attend the career fair at AHS and work to complete various activities in SchoolLinks connected with careers, colleges, scholarships, and so much more!

District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners

- MTSS Implementation: We continue to build our MTSS handbook, specifically focusing on Chapters 4 and 5, Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making. We are taking advantage of the CAREI supported work sessions, where they can guide and answer questions as we develop our handbook.
- READ Act: Preparations for 25-26 have begun with the focus on completing Phase I training and training the Paraprofessionals. During February 17th Professional Development Day, the staff completed their second live session reviewing Chapters 4-6 with our local trainers. Staff are on the last section of the OL&LA training with their final live session on 4/21. The Instructional Coaches are planning how to keep the learning alive focus on the bridge to practice next year. The District Literacy Team met in January to review the mid-year benchmark data and received an update on the Functional Phonics & Morphology Pilot across the elementary schools. We continue to review the feasibility of implementing this curriculum during the 2025-2006 school year.
- EL Program Review: The EL Leadership Team will be reviewing the final draft of the LIEP Plan for implementation during the 2025-2026 school year. The revised plan coordinates our services PK-12 making sure that students who qualify for EL services have language support and opportunities for electives in secondary schools. Providing secondary staff with strategies to support ML students in general education settings will be a focus during the spring PD sessions and next fall in combination with their PD on the HITS.
- Math Program Review: During the February professional development day, 5-12 math department leaders worked with department members to review cross-walk documents between the current standards and the new standards to begin to understand the changes in scope and sequence in math programming and better understand the learning that students will need to do. New standards are still in commissioner draft and not a final document yet. To have students fully prepared for the new Math MCA IV, we will need to start to implement some of the changing standards next year. K-4 Grade Level Meetings continue to focus on recommendations from the Math Audit. During the meetings, guidance on how to grow number combinations and fluency is a focus as well as how to provide small group opportunities for math discussions. Unit assessments, now aligned to the Math Standards, will be reviewed and revised after implementation during this school year.
- GT Program Review: Students in grades 2 and 4 have completed the CogAT testing. The advanced academic teachers at each site, instructional coaches and grade 2 and 4 teachers did an amazing job of completing the testing. We will now start to review the data collected to make decisions about identifying students for next year. Advanced Academic teachers have also been working on developing a newsletter to better communicate with families.

Excellence in Resource Management

- Teaching and Learning: During the month of February, we met with departments going through the curriculum review cycle (Art, PE, Health, and Music). Health teachers met to review current standards and program alignment. We also met to review 3 curriculum options for the APS health curriculum grades 7-12. Art, Phy. Ed., and music departments have been working to curate lists of materials and curriculum for purchases during this curriculum cycle. They will be reviewed in the months of March and April. The elementary PE, Music and Art teams continue to work through their curriculum needs. The Music team has determined that a combined focus on instrument repair and replacement as well as updated curriculum materials will best serve their

students. The PE department is looking to provide opportunities to share equipment across the district in order to ensure that all students K-4 have similar experiences. The Art department is looking at a combination of updating curriculum materials to enhance what they already use as well as updating resources with culturally relevant artist representation.