

7-12 Principal's Report

January 2020

Curriculum & Instruction: Our instructional framework is the guide to our classroom structure. This year's goal is to increase the student engagement in the classroom. We must have active learners. Many days we have students who are too tired to learn and choose to lay their heads down in class instead of participating in the activities teachers have put together for class instruction. I am pushing teachers to move away from worksheets and to be more creative with their engagement activities. Strategies that are modeled by our independent consultant, Josh Flores, are tools aimed at increasing the rigor in the classroom as well as providing engaging activities for students.

I moved classes around and changed some class elective offerings in order to allow for seven different dual credit classes to be offered this semester to our Juniors and Seniors through Stone Child College. Some of the classes offered are Cree, History of American Indians in the U.S., and psychology. Edgenuity will continue to be used for credit recovery again this semester as we had eight students complete recovery credits last semester. There are fourteen students signed up to complete credits this semester.

We continue to promote our tutoring for any subject after school from 3:30-5:00 pm Monday through Thursday. Taking out the cumulative semester grade as part of our eligibility policy may cause a problem during spring semester as students are not guaranteed to pass the semester and earn credit. Student can have a poor quarter and then during their athletic season have an eligible quarter. However, the eligible quarter does not guarantee that the grade will be high enough to raise the cumulative semester grade to passing. Thus, the student will not earn credit but is still eligible for athletics. Therefore, we have made it very clear to students that to be eligible for fall sports they must pass 4 classes according to MHSA or they will be declared academically ineligible. We had a few students experience this problem this year and were not able to play basketball until semester. However, they are now playing for the team and working hard.

WIDA testing for English Language Learners (ELL) was completed for all 7-12 students identified by the state. The testing took place in December and I have asked OPI consultant, Crystal Andrews, to get us our data in a timely manner and to support us with the interpretation of the data results so that we may help our students increase their English language proficiency to pass the exam. Once a student has passed the WIDA exam they are no longer required to take it. Our goal is providing explicit instruction in the areas of weakness so that our student will have passed the exam by the end of their Freshman year at the latest.

Our Mock ACT test is being set up by the testing coordinator so that students have experience taking this type of exam prior to the actual exam. The regular ACT exam will be taken by all juniors in April.

Supervision & Evaluation: The Jr/Sr high school was chosen to pilot the new Time Clock Plus software in December. The pilot went well as we were able to find out things about the program that did not work with our district structure and made changes. My building went live with the program in January and is now completely paperless with timesheets, and requesting leave. I have also found that it has made it much easier to hold people accountable for their time and work in our building.

Since the last board meeting we have shut down all hallways in the morning until 8:20 am at which time we open the halls for students to access their lockers to get materials for their first class that begins at 8:30 am. So far this has worked well, however, containing 230+ students in the teepee area, foyer, and hall in front of the shop and art rooms does get to be quite tight. Again, this month many students are in the halls during class time. My goal is to have less than 10 students in the halls with passes during each period. Staff continue to allow students to wander the halls, but more control is being exercised. Students must use the check-out sheets provided to each teacher to document when they leave the classroom and for how long. Students need to be in class to learn and earn good grades in each class.

Culture & Language: Teepee Mondays are becoming more successful with student involvement. We have created at Cultural Club which will soon be in charge of a small activity during this time each month. The student club will determine the discussion topic/activity for each Monday. The Flag Song, announcements and STAR awards will continue to be completed at this time.

Behavior Management: Profanity towards staff, non-compliant attitudes and behavior in class continue to be a challenge; however, many have been resolved by teacher-principal-student conferences.

Student attendance is still a huge issue. Many students are tardy to school in general, clinic appointments, and parents checking students out early for the day are our three biggest problems. Students must be in attendance for the entire school day to gain the most out of the school day. Students miss enough school with the different activities that the school offers such as athletics, AIBL, BPA, Honor Roll trip, Principal's Cup, and the Spelling Bee. Therefore, they must be in attendance all day on days that do not have activities to ensure they are learning as much as possible.

Student attendance rates for January compared to December are as follows: 7th grade- 81.81% (increase: 2.25%), 8th grade- 79.06% (increase 2.14%), Freshman- 76.69% (increase 1.02%), Sophomores- 81.92% (increase 10.67%), Juniors- 71.08% (increase 1.33%, Seniors- 81.08% (increase 8.56%). All of our grades increased their attendance rates however the school goal is an attendance rate of 90% or higher for each grade. We need parent, community, and student support to turn this issue around.

Students of the month - January: Sean Gibson and Marisol Areyano

Daily Management: The SST team continues to meet looking at data from the early warning system as well as data from the identified student check-in sheets. The data is the driving force of things that work and things that may need to change to support our students in becoming successful.

More and more students are using the Infinite Campus app to view grades, assignments, and attendance. We are working diligently and getting the parent portal open so that parents can have the same immediate access to their student's information.

Parent/Teacher conferences were held January 20th. Teachers were put into teams to contact each household and invite the parents/guardians to a free breakfast at the school from 8:00 am to noon and to meet with teachers to discuss student progress. Parents/guardians were also given the option of having teachers do a home visit instead of coming into the school. Teachers completed home visits between 12:30 pm and 4:00 pm.

I attended the MHSA annual meeting with our athletic director. This is a required meeting for all school districts that belong to MHSA. We attended meetings which dealt with 8-man football and not playing the same team three times in the same season, hosting sites for different tournaments and the rotation of those hosting sites. I ran the Native American Classic meeting discussing the positives of hosting the tournament at CMR vs. Havre, what changes might be made to improve the tournament, and opportunity to invite more native teams creating a bigger tournament. Three teams attended the meeting requesting to be part of the tournament for next year. Overall, everyone had positive things to say about the NAC being in Great Falls. A proposal to make shooting shirts purchased by the school legal was passed. Prior to this vote it was against the MHSA awards rule for shooting shirts with player names on them to be purchased by the school and given to athletes at the end of the season.

I also attended the annual principal's conference. The focus of the seminars was dealing with alternatives to punishment as a means of discipline. Some alternatives that were discussed were; reflection, restorative practices, instructional practices, and relationships. A core theme throughout the different sessions was: consequences teach kids what not to do, but they don't teach kids what to do instead. Also, Dr. Andy Jacks has done a lot of research on the subject and his statement, "schools are defined by how they support their most challenging students" made a big impact and created a lot of discussion around the different discipline policies schools have in place around the state.

Current enrollment for Jr. High - 84 students, High School - 136 students, Total enrollment 7/12 - 220 students. High School basketball is coming to a close with Senior Night February 14th and the district tournament in Cut Bank on February 20-22. The junior high girls' volleyball tournaments will begin the weekend of February 15 in Conrad and Fairfield.