EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FOR THE SHOREWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL BOARD

Topic: Virtual Learning Reflections and Next Steps
Date: June 23, 2020
Prepared by: T. Joynt, S. Coleman, J. Harris
Board Policy Reference: OE-11

Recommended action :   _X_   Information only
                            ___   Presentation/discussion
                            ___   Discussion/action by board of education
                            ___   Presentation/action next meeting

Curriculum & Instruction

Engagement:

Predictably, we saw engagement in Virtual Learning wane as the school year progressed and the weather became nicer. We handed out devices to students that first didn't have a device, second didn't have wifi, and third had more people than devices in their household. With a limited number of devices, this ensured that those that would struggle to engage without a device received them in a timely manner.

Utilizing a "communication log" between teachers, AP/Deans, and Principals, we were able to log engagement concerns that any teachers had. From those communication documents, we can see that less than 200 students district wide had an engagement concern in at least one of their classes at some point in time during our Virtual Learning experience. This approximates to slightly less than 10% of our student enrollment.

Surveys:

Lastly, we have sent out Virtual Learning surveys to staff and Parents/students that are still collecting data as this report is being written on June 17, 2020. Currently we have had over

250 parent/student responses and just over 100 teacher responses. An initial look at the data points to two common themes:

- Provide a more consistent Learning Management System (LMS) for students so that the learning/work necessary is clear and the way to access that learning/work is consistent from teacher to teacher
- Provide some synchronous or "in person" opportunities for students to learn (specific time and place).

While these are initial and general themes I saw from the surveys, we will do a deeper dive with our two "Reopening" workgroups to pull out additional common themes that need to be addressed should we need to go back to virtual learning at some point next year.

Equity

- Teachers, support staff, pupil services staff, and administrators have demonstrated exceptional responsiveness, flexibility, and professionalism during these challenging and uncertain times in their approaches to supporting the needs of all students and families.

- Autonomy, innovation and creativity have allowed for powerful, meaningful, and relevant learning experiences offered to students across grade levels and schools. Particularly, many teachers demonstrated bravery and sound judgment in their ability to recognize and include current events and subsequent emergent themes (public health, identity, justice, racism, empathy, advocacy, government etc.) in learning opportunities for students.

- It is critical to align, improve, and communicate practices for collecting and analyzing data regarding student engagement, leveraging and implementing best practices. This will improve our ability to sustain student interest, maximize student participation, and coordinate support rendered by directors to teachers and principals.

- Inquiries and feedback submitted by parents through the online portal indicate a need to anticipate frequently asked questions. This will help proactively address questions and make answers to those questions (actual and anticipated) available to parents and students through various methods and in strategic locations (school and district webpages).

Recommendations for future practice:

When applicable, common expectations across grade levels and schools should be established and clearly communicated to ensure the following objectives are implemented with equity as a key focus:

- Ensure data collection and analysis of student engagement is conducted with accuracy for the purpose of leveraging and improving practices to support relevant and rigorous learning for all students and specifically for students who have traditionally been marginalized by and within our systems

- Prioritize strategic coordination and collaboration between teachers, counselors, special education staff, multilingual teachers, and specialists to ensure all students are substantively engaged in learning, enrichment, and wellness opportunities.

- Proactively consider various methods of communication to and with parents to ensure we (district and school staff) understand ways to partner with parents to support virtual learning for students at home. This includes ensuring communications are available in multiple languages and that phone numbers and email addresses for families are accurate/current in Infinite Campus.

- Render timely and appropriate support in the form of resources, professional development, and consultation to general education teachers, counselors, special education staff, multilingual teachers, and specialists to ensure all staff have the confidence and technical skills to facilitate virtual learning opportunities for all students

- Encourage and strongly recommend communication among educational staff, support staff, and administrators to share ideas and strategies to provide universal and targeted support to students. This includes improving communication between schools and grade levels for students who are entering intermediate and/or secondary school.

- Routinely discuss and report data, trends, and findings with teachers and to the school board for the purpose of understanding the ways we are effectively providing virtual learning opportunities and to identify opportunities to improve our practices for rendering virtual learning opportunities.

- When designing and planning for virtual learning priorities and objectives, it is recommended that opportunities are created to collaborate with students and parents to ascertain information and perspective to inform the ways in which virtual learning opportunities are provided. A suggestion might be to leverage and include PTO and student organizations in conversations about planning for virtual learning .

Special Education and Pupil Services

The health and safety of our students, families and staff has been our top priority during the school district closure due to COVID-19. During this time, all special education teachers and related service professionals focused on connecting with students and families and documented their efforts that were being made in good faith. Due to a variety of factors, several of our students with disabilities have been either limited or unable to participate in a meaningful way during virtual learning lessons and/or activities. Therefore, all special education teachers were asked to recommend students who would benefit from a service that we are calling COVID-19 Impact Services. These services will be designed to assist students with disabilities by providing services either during the summer or in the fall to help address the impact of limited or lost learning opportunities. Some students will require face-to-face instruction and intervention while others will benefit from ongoing virtual learning plans.

We are still in the process of determining the best approach for all students referred for COVID-19 Impact Services in order to provide opportunities that will meet the needs of all of our learners in a safe and healthy manner. At this time 22% of our students with disabilities have been referred for additional support services due COVID-19.