



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

260 Madison ▪ Oak Park ▪ Illinois ▪ 60302 ▪ ph: 708.524.3000 ▪ fax: 708.524.3019 ▪ www.op97.org

TO: Members, Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent
SUBJECT: Response to Public Comments
DATE: December 20, 2016

Type of Report: Informational

Budgetary Impact: \$0

District Key Vision Term Aligned with Report: Equity

Preview of purpose and content of report:

During the Board of Education's meeting on December 6, 2016, the administration was asked to respond to the following questions that were shared during public comment:

- *How does district balance necessity v. luxury items?*
- *Why reallocation of the Title I funds to middle schools?*
- *Does district have a plan/ability of tracking and curriculum equity?*
- *District should have a racial impact policy plan – akin to CAP EX*
- *Free and after school support in all schools – Powers of Partnership like Holmes*
- *How does district supplement loss in the Title I financing?*
- *How are Title I funds spent – does District have plans for the short fall?*
- *What is the PD plan to teach staff about inclusion, implicit bias, etc.?*
- *Measurement criteria for all of the new D97 vision plans*
- *Is there community wide parent engagement plan?*
- *Does the district have a consistent discipline practice?*
- *What is the district's PD on cultural competency?*

Below are the district's responses to these questions. They were drafted by the district's administrative team during its meeting on Monday, December 12, 2016. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

How does district balance necessity v. luxury items

We tie what we spend back to student achievement. There are several questions we ask ourselves when deciding whether to invest money into a program, project, initiative, etc. These questions include, but are not limited to:

- Is this something that is necessary?
- Will it improve instruction?
- Will spending enhance student learning outcomes?
- Are we holding onto something from the past or is this spending aligned to achieve the school's goals?

At the school and district level, we have aligned our processes to be more thoughtful and purposeful in relation to our use of time and resources (e.g., teachers now need to submit applications to attend a workshop or training to show how the experience will help student outcomes).

Why reallocation of the Title I funds to middle schools?

The Title I consultant who was assigned to us by the state told us that the money we received from the federal government in conjunction with this program had to be allocated to all eligible schools. The eligible schools in our district include our middle schools.

Does district have a plan/ability of tracking and curriculum equity?

Our vision is focused on creating equitable learning environments for every student. Most of our schools are currently engaged in efforts to address equity concerns in their buildings.

District should have a racial impact policy plan – akin to CAP EX

We agree, and are making this a priority going forward. Since the district does not currently have an equity policy, the superintendent plans to present the board with policy language that will address this important issue.

Free and after school support in all schools – Powers of Partnership like Holmes

All 10 of our buildings offer free after-school support programs. We have included information about each school's programming below. We have also identified several barriers that have impacted the expansion of this programming:

1. Lack of funding for transportation
2. Inconsistency in the availability of funding from school to school
3. Brooks – there aren't activities that "speak" to the students of color
4. Whittier – there are other after-school programs that take students off school grounds at dismissal

We hope to address these barriers by including money for additional supports in our referendum analysis that will be used to strengthen our Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for each D97 student.

Please see the information below, which was provided by each building principal:

Beye – BOOST (*building on our strengths together*) after school math and reading support for third, fourth and fifth graders; Cats & Dogs Homework Club for K-5

Brooks – after school lab that is funded by Township and staffed by teachers from Brooks; before and after school tutoring funded through Title 1

Hatch – after school (1 hour 3 days/week) academic support funded by the Township for Tier 2 and 3 students that is taught by Hatch teachers; enrichment classes offered on a daily basis by the PTO, Apollo and Hepzibah

Holmes – Power of Partnerships (five days a week for grades three to five) is funded by a grant (Township) and supports Tier 3 students; Tier 3/Stars (two days, one hour) funded by a grant (Township) and supports Tier 2 students; Tier 2/Edge classes PTO enrichment activities (fall and spring, eight weeks); one hour, parent paid - scholarships available through PTO

Irving – Students Learning and Achieving through Mentoring: fourth and fifth grade Tier 2 and 3 students meet twice a week after school from October to May; receive homework support, tutoring

and activities centered around growth mindset; sponsored through a Township grant; staffed by five Irving teachers.

Julian – 10th Hour Club provides academic support for students after school two days a week; currently looking at additional options for after-school programming

Lincoln – After-school homework help three days per week for students in grades two through five; after-school skills class for math for targeted students in grades three to five (small groups, re-teaching, Moby Math and Zearn)

Longfellow – Homework Help Club two days per week for students in grades three to five; funded by the Township; staffed by two third grade teachers, two fourth grade teachers and one fifth grade teacher

Mann - Homework Club two days per week for students in grades three to five; led by classroom teachers Tier 2 or 3 students, as well as some Tier 1 students who struggle to understand some of the concepts

Whittier - Homework Helper three days per week for all grade levels that is lead by teachers and teacher's assistants; ACES program for math support to Tier 2 and 3 students (starts in January); both programs funded by grants from the Township

How do does district supplement loss in the Title I financing?

Title I funding enhances the broad support we provide to all students. During the 2016-17 school year, there was a loss in Title I funding at one school that was based upon the guidelines set by the federal government. However, all 10 of our schools use MTSS to enhance student learning in the following ways:

- Data conversations (3x/year), benchmark meetings, common cut scores
- Monthly meetings with district team to develop policies, procedures, etc.
- Branching Minds to monitor implementation of Tier 3 in addition to internal tracking systems
- Data teams regularly looking at student data

Below are descriptions of specific activities being undertaken at each school. With that said, we are seeking to strengthen MTSS across the district by enhancing the intervention materials and professional training we offer at each school, as well as improving the overall consistency of our processes.

Mann

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- MTSS/data meetings every four to six weeks with grade level to determine if growth has been made in the areas of reading and math
- Teachers are creating three to four SMART goals to track progress of Tier 2 or Tier 3 students
- Materials being used include 95 percent group materials, Treasures, Triumphs, Eureka Math, Lexia, Zearn, Reading A-Z and Explode the Code

Holmes

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Trimester benchmark meeting with grade level teams to determine which students are in need or either Tier 2 or 3 intervention
- MTSS meeting every six to eight weeks to determine effectiveness of interventions and make changes as necessary

- Interventions used include 95% for decoding; waiting to purchase LLI for comprehension needs - currently doing leveled guided reading groups as we wait for LLI materials

Irving

- MTSS team meets every six weeks with each grade level team for the purpose of benchmark or progress monitoring
- Tier 3 students have individual intervention plans entered in Branching Minds
- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year

Longfellow:

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- MTSS team meets with each grade level
- Grade levels are scheduled to meet with the MTSS team every four weeks, which allows for the implementation of curriculum and interventions, as well as progress monitoring
- Current data and effectiveness of interventions are discussed at meetings
- Students set goals with teachers; progress towards these goals are reviewed
- The MTSS team discusses error analysis of assessments across a grade level to identify troubles with instruction or curriculum and/or individual student struggles

Lincoln

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Trimester data meetings at each grade level three times per year
- Weekly MTSS meetings; grade levels meet once every six weeks
- Tier 3 students have individual interventions entered in Branching Minds
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 students receive reading support with Language Arts Specialists or reading tutor
- Students are added to or removed from LAS support based on most current data

Hatch

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Grade level MTSS meetings every six weeks to track student progress, form groups, determine interventions, etc.
- Grade level data dives after testing windows
- Weekly team meetings around formative assessment results and instructional planning
- Interventions include workshop model, small group guided reading and strategy grouping, conferring, goal setting, LLI, 95% Group, Zearn

Whittier

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Grade level MTSS meetings held every six weeks (facilitated by RtI leader and Language Arts Specialist) to discuss specific student needs, form groups, monitor progress, add and remove supports as appropriate
- Interventions include 95% Group, LLI, goal setting, Zearn, Dreambox

Julian

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Meetings held every six to eight weeks to discuss student academic and behavior data; assistant principals lead these meetings with their grade level teams

Brooks

- School-wide data dives at staff meetings three times per year
- Team leader meetings twice a month

- Super team meetings on student level data once per week led by assistant principals

How are Title I funds spent – does District have plans for the short fall?

Title I funds are used to provide tutoring for students and purchase supplemental educational resources, including technology, to support those students' academic needs. Title I parent nights are held to communicate the building plan and provide resources parents/guardians can use at home to help their children.

What is the PD plan to teach staff about inclusion, implicit bias, etc..

This year, the district's professional development plan includes a variety of sessions, activities, etc. aimed at teaching staff about inclusion, implicit bias, etc.

For example, our instructional coaches are currently participating in team book study of Elena Aguilar's book "The Art of Coaching." The author writes about transformational coaching, which is coaching that supports addressing issues related to equity and access. In addition to reading the book, the team is attending Aguilar's two-day workshop in April. From January to March, the coaches will learn about conversation protocols, and examine case studies that are related to classroom level issues of race and equity.

Our mentor teachers have included cultural competency, sensitivity, and strategies as a part of the monthly Best Practices Meetings for new teachers.

The special education team has delved into literature around co-teaching and the non-negotiables that need to exist to ensure successful implementation of inclusive service delivery models. A set of guiding questions has been provided to IEP teams to ensure that the general education setting is considered first when discussing where supports are provided. The team has also started to consider the logistics around implementation—professional development for general education teachers, how all resources can be leveraged to support inclusive delivery models, scheduling students with disabilities first to ensure access to the general education curriculum, etc.

In addition, our Institute Day topics for all district staff have or will include information or discussions about the following topics:

- Implicit bias
- Infusing Multiculturalism into the Daily Curriculum
- Developing Meaningful Relationship to Boost Achievement
- LGBTQ issues
- Journey Into Dyslexia
- De-escalation strategies
- Differentiation to met the needs of ALL students

Measurement criteria for all of the new D97 vision plans

[Metrics aligned to D97 vision](#)

This school year, each department has aligned their goals to support the district's vision plan. In addition, every building principal and school improvement team has created a school improvement charter that featured group norms around and a commitment to keeping the district vision conversation of equity, inclusion and the whole child the focus of their work with students throughout the school year. Each school also created a school improvement plan using the Pareto principle, which focuses on the fewest things that will make the biggest impact on student learning in the areas of reading, math and positive learning environment. Dr. Kelley and Dr. Warke are monitoring these plans on a monthly basis.

Is there community wide parent engagement plan?

Each school (Title I) has dollars set aside for parent meetings. The board is also in the process of launching a new standing committee that will be focused on improving/enhancing community engagement.

Does the district have a consistent discipline practice?

Our student data reflects that our discipline practices are not being administered on a consistent basis across the district.

Some of the measures we are taking to shift our culture include providing professional training opportunities for staff on restorative justice practices, implementing “peace circles,” and providing cultural competency and racial bias training for staff. We are also beginning to provide targeted, differentiated training for staff that is based on our referral and pre-referral data.

In addition, we are in the process of organizing a community event (partnering with CLAIM) and hosting a book study for our PBIS coaches and administrators (Between the World and Me) to continue the conversation about how we can rethink our discipline practices.