

Directors' Report

CCS Board of Education Meeting, December 13, 2021

Collaboration Update Since Start of Roles

Moving forward, we will title this “Both Programs” section of our report as “Collaboration Update.” We both feel that we have been working very hard to encourage and support collaboration. We recognize that there have been, and continue to be, many opportunities for collaboration, and there are also several areas where collaboration isn’t possible, helpful, and/or meaningful. We would like feedback from the staff and board about what they would like to see moving forward. What are our school’s goals, intentions, visions about how we collaborate? How does the collaboration impact students first and staff second? What would success look like?

Our weekly meetings (Annette and Holly) have been incredibly valuable. We collaborate, problem solve, vent, celebrate, provide support, and connect about a variety of topics!

Both programs are incorporating some fun Secret Santa activities between staff members!

The School Climate Committee is planning some fun stuff that involves both programs. We are also looking at how both programs can be involved in the PTO. Staff members from online were also at the Spaghetti Dinner, and online contributed a “Flatsket” to the auction.

Communications have shifted - on Facebook, posts specify whether the photo is of “seat-based” or “online” students, for example, which sends the message that we are one school with two programs. School communications that are relevant to both programs go out to “all our families” such as the Spaghetti Dinner invite, book fair, and Holiday Open house.

New Facebook Campaign - recognizing one seat-based and one online staff member every weekend!

We’ve been communicating regularly about the Learning Lab, staffing, student attendance, etc. and working together to problem solve.

This year, we applied new pay scales to continuing and new employees. We made clarifications in agreements and the staff handbook regarding duty day and core hours, and changed a few job descriptions with involvement from the board. We’ve both been following the updated Hiring Process, and including each other in interviews/hiring decisions that impact both programs.

We are sharing resources from the FCC Emergency Connectivity Fund, which reimburses some technology purchases. We are working together to develop systems and processes around technology purchases, shipments, and setup.

We had great attendance at all 3 open houses at the beginning of the school year - one at the Crosslake school building (180 hot dogs were served!), and two virtual open houses for online students/families.

All-Staff Meeting was held during Welcome Week, where we focused on collaboration and “who we are” as ONE school. Staff learned more about what it means to be a charter school, our relationship with our Authorizer Osprey Wilds, the charter contract and the renewal process. Staff discussed our mission, vision, statutory purposes, and student/parent satisfaction in virtual breakout rooms and brainstormed ideas for how we can consider these critical elements of our school in our day-to-day work! We also reviewed staff responsibilities such as committee participation and the staff handbook. Another all-staff meeting was held on 10/28, primarily led by the Collaboration Committee and focused on getting to know each other! The December all-staff meeting is planned for 12/15.

We facilitated the staff vote on modifying the board bylaws. Staff overwhelmingly voted yes, and the proposed revisions were adopted immediately. We had representation from both programs for the teacher and parent members.

The Osprey Wilds site visit on October 5 was a success! Their representatives spent a day in the building and online, visiting classrooms and viewing live and recorded online sessions. They spoke with a variety of staff members, parents, board members, and students.

All online and seat-based families were surveyed regarding their priorities for how CCS should spend the ESSER dollars we are receiving as a result of the pandemic. Their feedback was incorporated into our ESSER applications, and was closely aligned with staff and administration’s ideas.

A group of seat-based and online staff attend 8 sessions of MTSS training through CAREI at UMN. This will help us implement a truly school-wide MTSS program so that we are better able to meet the needs of all our students. Staff will be trained and updated as we learn, and we will be putting together a 3-5 year implementation plan.

Continued growth means increasing staff. With the increase in our staff, we find the need for a full time HR director to work onsite in Crosslake. We are at approximately 75 staff and counting; all with questions, possible issues, the need for onboarding and other work related topics. Multiple questions and issues could have perhaps been prevented or resolved within the past year and a half had an HR person been in place (including a large savings in lawyer and CFO charges). These duties and responsibilities are vast but will include payroll, employee benefits, all components of the hiring process, discipline, etc. The job description is currently being formulated, there is more than enough work for this position as we re-delegate office staff responsibilities as well.

We are collaborating with some staff positions in special education. We will have a shared special education teacher, which not only improves collaboration and communication in this

area. The online program will benefit from the elementary expertise of this individual, and the seat-based program will benefit from additional ideas and experience in serving special education students virtually if distance learning needs arise. We also have a special education paraprofessional who will be working with both programs.

We developed an All-Staff Connections List for everyone to list their roles, contact info, committee participation, and areas they would like to collaborate/connect with others.

We will need to work closely together as we move towards an updated World's Best Workforce and Strategic Plan, as well as responding to Osprey Wilds' initial contract feedback that we expect to receive in January.

Reports and applications submitted include:

- Osprey Wilds Renewal Application
- ESSER III - FIN 160
- ESSER III - FIN 161
- Title I Initial and Revisions
- Title II
- Title IV Initial and Revisions
- Digital Equity
- Annual Report/WBWF Report
- Annual Assurances
- Osprey Wilds Academic Data Request
- PELSB Teacher Licensing Report
- WBWF Summary (to be submitted by 12/15)
- COVID Grant application

Online Program

Current total online enrollment as of 12/9: **294/330** (89%)

K-5: **26/40** (65%)

6/12: **268/290** (92%)

Right now, of our students (not including supplemental/FLEX students) we have 23 students on 504 plans (8%) and 58 students on IEPs (21%). These numbers are steadily increasing. We are seeing an unprecedented number of our students with diagnoses of anxiety and depression, and increasing mental health needs. We purchased a Social-Emotional Learning curriculum portion of Edgenuity that we will roll out in semester 2, and we are exploring options to bring additional mental health resources to our students.

The last day of Semester 1 is January 7. During the week of January 10-14, students in grades 6-12 participate in J-Term, to allow teachers time for grading and for enrollment into second semester classes. (K-5 is "business as usual," as their courses are year-round.)

- 6-8 students will work on the Math STAR during this time, as well as some Social-Emotional Learning activities facilitated by Amy Miller, Social Worker.
- 9-12 students participate in activities on the MN Career Information System (MCIS) website as facilitated by Natalie Swiler, School Counselor.

We have expanded our Math and Reading Intervention services, with our Intervention teachers providing targeted coursework, office hours, and one-on-one support. Students are identified for these services in our weekly “Support Squad” meetings, and daily, targeted Math office hours are open for students who need additional math help and support.

Hiring updates since last board meeting (many had already happened but didn’t make it into the board packet):

- MaryKay Moe was hired as Science teacher 1.0 (NEW)
- Christy Kuefler was hired as Student Records & Admissions Coordinator (NEW, 30 hours/week)
- Megan Rogosheske was hired as English Language Arts Teacher/Learning Coach (NEW)
- Elissa Talsma (para) resigned, will be replaced by Lisa Young - paraprofessional moving from seat-based. Lisa may continue working with seat-based at some level.
- Tory Beasley from seat-based will be joining the online program as .5 Special Education teacher, she will continue .5 FTE with seat-based.
- Mitch Swaggert is submitting his paperwork for Tier 1 licensure, to teach Construction Careers during semester 2 at a .2 level. That will replace a portion of his coaching duties, which will be filled by our new coach, Megan.
- We may need to add approximately .5 FTE additional coaching staff in second semester, but I am waiting on that for now to see where we are at with the semester change. I’m also still looking for a Spanish teacher to be at approximately .2 FTE (no applicants yet). Even with these additions we are still under the FTE total additions approved by the board, and I don’t foresee adding any more this year. I will keep you posted!

We have developed some additional communications practices to provide an extra level of precaution/safety around student data - students are now referenced by an ID number in sensitive email communications.

The Environmental Ed coordinator is adding weekly “EEBits” to the weekly emails sent to students/parents by learning coaches. These EEBits will provide short EE facts, activities, etc. in an effort to continue expanding how we communicate with families about our commitment to EE.

Plans are in the works to start a student publications club - to focus on a school newspaper, possible yearbook, etc. More info will be forthcoming!

We have started closely monitoring student/staff contacts to identify the students who need extra efforts made to reach out and connect - via Google Meet, phone, texting, email. We are

looking at developing additional practices and policies around expectations for student contact, to be incorporated into next year's Student and Family Handbook.

Some staff and I met with the CTE/Work-Based Learning specialists from MDE to discuss what is needed for us to develop an approved program. We are starting the ball rolling on this, and I will keep you posted. I am also exploring options to bring college credit-granting courses into our school, some grant and state funds are available to support this as well (CIS - College in the Schools).

Seat-Based Program

We had a very successful holiday fun open house December 4 in collaboration with the marketing committee and the community engagement committee.

Staffing changes: we are making the transition of Tori Beasley to .5 online and .5 seat based. We have 'transferred' Ann Matthes (licensed teacher) to .49 SPED teacher (she received her license variance) to work with children grades k-4. Jodi Strehlow will then transfer some primary students to Ann and Jodi will receive a few students from Tory.

Enrollment is steady and strong. We have a few spots for students in grades 4-8.

We have received incredibly generous gifts from the Crosslake/Ideal LionsC, the American Legion, and Christmas for Kids

We had a very productive budget revision meeting. Many good things resulted from this day.

The after school archery program is up and running. Mr. Swanson is patiently and graciously working with middle school students to teach them this life-long skill.

We took the leadership team from the seat based program to a full day of training at Sourcewell for our High Reliability Schools certification. We are definitely moving forward in achieving this honor of certification as well as implementing this system of constant improvement and accountability.

We are working at consistent paraprofessional and all seat-based staff meetings. These are very hard to schedule as we serve on so many committees as well as PLC groups. We had a really great all staff meeting on November 24 which included our own version of wheel of fortune, secret santa kickoff, a turkey give away, as well as lots of staff information and a mini lesson regarding HRS.

On November 22, we were very fortunate to have Jackie Brickman come to our building for the entire day. She observed all classrooms, gave pointers and tips, certified a few people in Catalyst (fka Envoy) classroom management and presented a mini-workshop after school.

I enjoyed a few hours at a Regional MACS (Minnesota Association of Charter Schools) meeting in St Cloud on November 11. It was great to connect in person with Mike Swan and Eugene Piccolo, after seeing them so many times on the virtual MACS leadership meetings each Tuesday.