

Superintendent's Report
April 15, 2019

District Leadership Team/School Improvement

Included with this report are the minutes from the latest District Leadership Team Meeting. During my evaluation in the winter of 2018 we discussed as a board/superintendent team how we needed to shift focus to student learning and development as the District's fiscal stability continues to improve. This came at an opportune time as for the first time school accountability and funding become interlocked via evidence based funding and the new state elementary and secondary schools act (ESSA) plan. Follow is a brief summary of highlights in terms of district/school improvement that has taken place:

- A District Leadership Team was formed consisting of a cross section of teachers and administrators.
 - The DLT learned the new state ESSA plan and how it would impact our schools.
 - The state Quality Framework was studied and ranked/prioritized as to where our District and schools fit within the framework.
 - As a result of the Quality Framework review two district (and thereby school) improvement areas were prioritized 1.) Culture & Climate 2.) Student Learning & Development. The Board approved the District Quality Framework Rubric.
- During the summer of 2018 Staunton Elementary was identified as underperforming for students from low-income homes and Staunton JH was identified as underperforming for students with special needs. It is important to note that the designation of "underperforming" does not mean the school as a whole is underperforming. Instead, it means there is a specific subgroup or subgroups of students who have been identified as needed extra resources and supports.
- Staunton Schools are only funded at 58% of capacity to educate our students. This is after receiving two years of evidence based funding.
- As a result of declining revenue the District cut personnel and resources for over a decade. Dollars were insufficient for recourses, class sizes were increased, personnel were reduces such as elementary teachers, librarian, HS language arts, Title I teacher, Special education teachers, etc.
- Student data was analyzed and reviewed.
- The District received an \$45,000 in Title 1003a federal funds for school improvement. Additionally, because of the District's low adequacy percentage and additional \$45,000 was allocated through the EBF formula.
- Learning partners to assist the DLT were interviewed. American Institute for Research was recommended to the Board and contracted to assist in the area of student learning and development.
- The DLT continued to meet monthly with a rep from AIR. Monthly minutes summaries have been shared with the Board.
- The Board approved the District work plan.

- All staff were trained on the Quality Framework and began setting structures in place to form Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) for all students K-12.
- School Leadership Teams (SLT) were formed and meet monthly with a rep from AIR.
- Individual school quality frameworks, work plans, and goals have been approved by the Board.
- The District Improvement Plan (goal set in January of 2018) will be presented and recommended for approval no later than June 2019.

There is much detail, time, and work that goes into the highlights above. I must commend our principals and teachers who have been eager to engage in school improvement work. They have simply “rolled up their sleeves,” and have got some hard work done.

Moving forward, the DLT will now engage in curriculum alignment, leadership, and instructional coaching for student learning and development. Plans are underway to have an intense three days of work prior to the start of the year where the Illinois Learning Standards will be deconstructed and the process of aligning what must be taught, when, and to what degree will begin. This work is long overdue.

Secondly, the DLT will expand to include multiple voices from groups such as the Board, community, families, students, etc. This will be done 3-4 times per year.

In the area of culture & climate, as the Board is aware, much work has been done over the past three years to learn and understand Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Practice. The District has is in year two of a three year process to become a “Trauma Informed District.” Teachers have expressed that they feel like they understand the issues at hand but now need training and practical strategies to use in the classroom. As a result the district has evaluated an additional learning partner, the Flippen Group, who will assist the District in training and providing ongoing supports for teachers to use relational strategies within the school setting. More information on this to come.

Career & Technical Education/Science Technology Engineering & Math Equipment

Through state appropriations for CTE funding Staunton, Carlinville, Southwestern, Bunker Hill, and Mt. Olive are collaborating to add opportunity to access for CTE programs and to increase student skills. At SHS we plan to use our portion of the funds for equipment and professional learning that will enhance student’s skills, knowledge and provide more students opportunities and exposure to career pathways. We will form a STEM Lab and/or place equipment in two-three areas to maximize student opportunities. This is an exciting opportunity to enhance opportunities for students! More information on this project will be provided in the near future.

Staunton Education Foundation Mini-Grants

The Education Foundation recently met and approved mini-grants applications for Staunton teachers! More information will be provided in the future about how these grants will impact classrooms and students but I want to be sure to recognize the Foundation right away. Their support of our schools is very much appreciated and of high value!

