

Minutes
Watertown Board of Education
Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting
Monday March 25, 2019
Watertown High School
Lecture Hall

Members Present: Cathie Rinaldi, Chairman of Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Josephine Cavallo-Rosa, Committee Member
Cindy Eastman, Committee Member
Leslie Crotty, Committee Member
Janelle Wilk, Committee Member

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Tom Lambert, Board of Education
Cheryl Albino, Board of Education
Rob Makowski, Board of Education
Dr. Rydell Harrison, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Janet Parlato, Assistant Superintendent

1. Convene Meeting

Ms. Rinaldi convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Dr. Parlato.

2. Review and Discuss the State Accountability Index & Math Update featuring IReady

Dr. Parlato – Good evening. Each year the state Department of Education provided each district with accountability information and that takes in a wide variety of factors. They crunch a lot of numbers and come up with our score. The first page shows the year over year score in each category. You can see it has 16/17, 17/18, and the target, set by the Department of Education. Ms. Parlato then went over some of the chart and explained the numbers. She also broke out what criteria “high needs” students fall under: students who received special education services, students eligible for free/reduced lunches, or English language learners. This is for grades 3-8 and grade 11. “Growth” means over a year’s time. More weight is put on growth by the state for the overall score, as it is over time. We went up in performance but down in growth. The state also looks at chronic absenteeism which is when a student misses more than 10% of the school year. You don’t want to go up in that. In high school they measure CCR (college and career readiness). It shows who takes AP or ECE courses or if they are taking technical courses. You have to take two in order to partake in the measure. On track to HS graduation means that a student must earn 5 credits in their freshman year. Postsecondary entrance is the number of

students in the graduating class that enters either a 2 or 4 year institution. Physical fitness passing test has a very complicated formula as they say how many of your students should participate and then figure out how many have passed by the numbers you turn in. Arts access is having the opportunity to take visual or performing arts in their high school year.

	2016/17	2017/18	Target
English/Language Arts – All Students	71	72.0	75
English/Language Arts – High Needs Students	63.7	65.2	75
Math Performance – All Students	63.4	64.7	75
Math Performance – High Needs Students	56.4	57.3	75
English/Language Arts Growth – All Students	61.1	64.7	100
English/Language Arts Growth – High Needs Students	58.7	63.6	100
Math Growth – All Students	67.2	63.5	100
Math Growth – High Needs Students	66.1	58.7	100
Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	6.3	11.5	<5
Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	11.4	16.4	<5
Preparation for CCR – Percent Taking Courses	53.8	53.4	75
Preparation for CCR – Percent Passing Exams	38.5	40.1	75
On-Track to High School Graduation	92.5	89.9	94
4 Year Graduation – All Students	96	91.7	94
6 Year Graduation – High Needs Students	85.7	84.5	94
Postsecondary Entrance	75.7	74.9	75
Physical Fitness Passing Rate	53.3	56.7	75
Arts Access	61.4	61.0	60

Overall the district rating score slipped 1.6 points from 16/17 to 17/18 and in our DRG we moved from 10th to 20th. There was strong performance in English/Language arts, math for high needs students, and both English/Language Arts and Math growth for all and high needs students. Chronic absenteeism is what has really lowered our district rating. In the district accountability index report shows the 24 towns in DRG D. We are ranked 20th for 17/18. That is down from 10th in the last year. The bar for the state is 88, we are at 76.3 Overall index in ELA is 72.0 and 12th in the DRG, and ELA for the high needs students is 65.2, 5th in the DRG. For overall Math performance, we placed 20th in the DRG with a 64.7 and for high needs we placed 12th with a 57.3. ELA growth shows 64.7 and 6th in the DRG in growth (a year's growth

in a year's time) and for the high needs students for ELA growth we are 4th in the DRG with 63.6. Math overall growth is 63.5 and 13th in the DRG and for math high need students we are 58.7 and 8th in the DRG. The next slide speaks to chronic absenteeism, where you don't ever want to be number one, and we are with 11.5. You want to be last and less than 5. That means that 11.5% of our students have 18 or more absences. We are thinking about it consistently and working on it. It is the high school that has the most issues. It is on our building improvement plan and we are having several meetings with different people that we are addressing consistently. At what point are we calling or sending out letters? These are all protocols that we are more firmly establishing. We want to make sure we use Powerschool appropriately. Powerschool will automatically send letters on the 8th absence. We also want to more consistent per department on consequences for missing classes and how credit is being given or taken away. We also want to note these numbers include medically excused absences, suspensions and even in Kindergarten where it may be "not a big deal" to miss a few days. Both ends of the spectrums. There are so many ways to increase communication and strategies to have come kids to school. You can see in physical fitness in the DRG we are at 11th with 56.7 and in arts access we are in 4th which is a strong placement with 61.0. In summary, we used to be at 23rd or 24th in the DRG. You can see we are working hard to increase and we continue to improve. There is impact to our efforts. Let's segue into Math now.

We have divided that up into three areas. The first is data and how we are identifying and using difference measures of achievement. We are looking at curriculum and instruction which is what we are teaching across the classes and the way it is being taught. And then we are looking at coherence and how are we ensuing from grades K-12 that students are building their knowledge of the standards over time and what they are learning are grade level appropriate.

In the elementary level, we have purchased excellent resources in grades K-6. We have exemplars (problem solving tasks) that we use to gauge their problem solving across the year. We are using IReady in grades 2 – 8 and using online student fluency management program for measurement as well. Ms. Baldwin and Ms. Archibald have modeling for the teachers when you have a set of assessment, how do you talk about where they are struggling and where they are doing well. We are also working on creating comprehensive student profiles so what they need from K-12 and how do we know they are increasing over time.

The way we are building out math is outstanding. Things don't happen overnight and the more carefully we build the better. The math specialists are working with teachers and coaching them. They may watch the lesson, they may co teach the lesson and then give feedback. They realize they must build a relationship first with their teachers. They are doing extensive work in the professional development world and we have common planning time for people to meet together, to which Ms. Baldwin and Ms. Archibald use that time to look at assessments, help to understand, look for ways to teach a topic in the best way, and many other items. Schools at the top of our DRG have fewer challenges than we have. We are also looking at common assessments along certain courses so that the teachers and coaches can look to see what went well and what they can do differently. Same questions and same scoring will bring better results. The math program is now Investigations in K-5 and it is consistent. We have a new program in grade 6 and will move forward in grade 7 & 8. Potentially, next year, we will have a consistent

program K-8, which we have not had in over a decade. We also have pacing guides for K-5 so we start and finish the correct curriculum by June. We are making sure the transition from grade 5 to grade 6 is streamlined, as that is a large leap. We are making sure that the units are aligned. We are also visiting outside districts to see what this looks like being taught in other classrooms to see what the teachers are doing. This is what went right, what I wish I did different, and what I feel could be better. We are also having community outreach and math nights at the schools K-8.

In the middle and high school we are doing some of the same things, but one thing we are working on here is having a comprehensive student profile to get all of their scores together.

One of the big points at the high school is the pacing guide to make sure they are all doing the same thing at the grade levels. This is a giant task that we are doing.

Part of this is making sure teachers know what students need to know and do by the end of the course and building the units from there. We need to make sure the K-12 math flows appropriately and that there is a logical flow and logical sequence.

We now have IReady in grades 2-8 and we will get first grade next year. Students will take a bench mark assessment three times a year. It then kicks out where that students falls on the test which is aligned with the smarter balanced test and it also tells us where their greatest strengths and weaknesses are. It helps with classroom instruction and then for each student tells a teacher what the teaching and lessons the student needs per area. This is a very personalized report for each student. It does it for several different areas and helps the teacher provide the best pathway for the student. This product provides so many resources to both students and teachers.

IReady also provides results at a school level. It shows where they have gone from one tier to another and breaks down several needs analysis. They then discussed each school's results.

3. Adjournment

Ms. Rinaldi adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

She then called for a motion to adjourn.

Subject: Motion to Adjourn

Motion Presented by: Mr. Makowski

Motion Seconded by: Ms. Crotty

Motion Passed

Respectfully submitted by,

Mindi Davidson

Recording Secretary