

Our Path to First Choice
Update No. 4

Everyone,

Update No. 4 is here already. The time is flying. It is hard to believe this is the fourth week of school.

Our Path Topic

This week's topic is about our Comprehensive Plan (CP or Comp Plan). The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) set the CP process for the purpose of facilitating communication and collaboration, to promote shared practices and resources, and to ensure that every stakeholder is working toward common goals. Also, the CP is to assist local education agencies as school districts, charter schools, area vocational technical schools/career and technical centers and intermediate units to create and manage a continuous, comprehensive plan to submit to the PDE in order to maintain compliance with state and federal mandate.

The CP is a single plan made up of six areas: Profile, Core Foundations, Assurances, Needs Assessment, Action Planning, and Plan Submission. The plan spans over three (3) years. Every school district must resubmit every three years. The State requires the plan in order to provide each school district with a Clear and Shared Focus, High Standards and Expectations, Effective Leadership required to implement change, High Levels of Collaboration and Communication, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards, Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning, and Focused Professional Development.

Last week we looked at our 10 Focus Points. Those are key areas where we hope to do some work and make accomplishments throughout the 2017/18 school year. Our CP is more of a long-term plan. Over time, we will always do the required CP, but will do a yearly strategic plan. Our focus points for the year are sort of taking the place of the strategic plan for now. These approaches will eventually all work together to provide WASD a direction and a plan of how to achieve the direction.

Let's look at our Comp Plan. As we learned at our Opening Day, WASD's Mission is "*Educate and Empower Students for Future Success.*" The mission is what is about what we do. It is about what we are trying to do.

WASD's summarized Vision is *Educational Opportunities, Students to think critically, problem solve, accept responsibility, and demand exemplary citizenship, Connect School to Career, and Graduates prepared for Success.* Our Vision is where we want to go. It is about what we want to accomplishment as an organization.

The District Values are what we believe in that are important. These are things we believe are valued in WASD. The Comp Plan says that WASD values *Students are Unique with an Ability to Learn, Provide a Diverse Curriculum, Research-based Engaging Teaching Strategies, The Use of Emerging Technology,*

Families are Essential to Student Success, Early Childhood Education Preparation, Community Involvement, Our Schools are a place for everyone, and A Safe and Secure Environment.

Our CP also has listed several Concerns that were raised by those involved with the CP planning process. Here are those concerns. *Increase student access to technology to enhance achievement, Professional Development to meet changing needs, Safe environment, Increase communication within stakeholders, Decrease Truancy, Increase Graduation Rate, Disseminate District information to the Public, Establish a Data Team to Analyze Data, Perpetually renew the curriculum and audit process, Increase access to social services through a social worker, Allocate financial resources on District needs assessment, and Parent education on assessments and educational programming.* There is a lot there. If you look at our Ten Focus Points for 2017/18 School Year, you can see some alignment. It is not perfect, but it is our first year working toward aligning our strategic approach. Over the next few years, we hope to be more strategic in our planning approach as an organization.

Systemic Challenges were also listed in our Comp Plan. These are systems in our organization that need to be improved in order to reach our vision and goals. Here are the four (4) challenges listed in the CP. *Technology for Achievement, Focused Professional Development with fidelity, System to assure effective instructional practices, and Assured use of standard-aligned PA Standards Assessments.*

Finally, here are the goals that were developed in the Comp Plan. Again, these are summarized.

- 1. Establish a system to ensure a consistent implementation of effective instructional practices.*
- 2. Establish a system that fully ensures Professional Development is focused, comprehensive, and implemented with fidelity.*

When you look at our Focus Points for 2017/18—Communication, Relationships, Curriculum Development, Strategic, Integrity within Systems, Student-Centered, Fiscal Responsibility, Effective Quality of Staff, and Technology, you can start to see some connections, some integration, and some alignment. Again, we have a long way to go to be completely aligned as an organization. Nevertheless, we are starting our journey to being more focused and purposeful as an organization.

Next week we will look at some terminology. We will discuss stakeholders and others that are a part of making WASD successful for students. Soon after that, we will look at how this organization will run through being more systemic and process-oriented. For now, the Comp Plan is enough to have to get through without a lot of caffeine or chocolate to keep you going!

Reminder

There will be another survey coming out. It will ask a few questions in Leadership, Strategy, Customer Relations, Measurement/Analysis, Workforce Relations, Operations and Results. This survey is longer than the First Day of School Survey, but it is also much more involved. It will give us something to measure ourselves by each year. We will issue this survey in September, and then in the spring. After that, you'll only receive the survey in the spring of each year. Your feedback is important, so your time

to take the survey is appreciated. Hopefully, the questions on the survey will provide you with a sense of what we hope to learn from the survey results.

This Week's Events

There was a School Board Meeting on Tuesday Night. The Board is working to update some policies. The policies approved were 204 (Attendance) and School Organization (802). The Board also wanted an update with the window covering at the middle school. This was covered through the email I sent out a week or so ago. If you still have questions, please see your supervisor.

Remember the 19th is a 2-hour Delay. The 22nd Secondary Progress Reports are distributed. The next board meeting is September 26th.

Piece of the Puzzle

This week we are recognizing Tiffany Geesaman and her nursing staff as the Piece of the Puzzle. Tiffany is the WASHS and Hooverville nurse and nurse content leader. Tiffany has done an outstanding job of keeping all of us informed about our students' medical needs. It has been a challenge to keep the nurse's offices covered with the loss of personnel but Tiffany has worked diligently with a positive attitude. Her positive leadership is apparent in daily work of our amazing WASD nursing staff! Well done, ladies!

Final Thoughts

"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."

— Sun Tzu

"The best CEOs I know are teachers, and at the core of what they teach is strategy."

— Michael Porter

"There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all."

— Peter Drucker

"Strategy is not the consequence of planning, but the opposite: its starting point."

— Henry Mintzberg