10:00 a.m.   May 28, 2015   District Office

Members Present: Stuart Long, Robert Runge, Janelle Liermann

Others Present: Louise Blankenheim, Deb Sixel, Dawn Mueller, Andria Peterson, Sheila Lefeber

Call to Order   Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Gifted & Talented   Dr. Sixel and Andria Peterson shared the criteria used for acceleration of students. Once students are identified a plan called "DEP" Differentiated Educational Plan is created and put into skyward and updated on a yearly basis.

Andria shared the different types of acceleration:

1) Compacting – Students pre-test out of skills for a specific unit and work on above grade level skills during that instructional unit.
2) Telescoping – Students move through curriculum at an accelerated rate. Students can complete 1.5 to 2 years of curriculum in one year.
3) Whole Grade Acceleration – Student moves to next grade level permanently, which reduces the number of years the student attends school.
4) Single Subject Acceleration – Student moves into the next grade level of curriculum based on showing proficiency in the current grade level skill using:
    a. Online curriculum
    b. Attending the above grade level face to face class
    c. Within classroom with current grade level teacher

Tools used to determine acceleration include:
  ➢ COG-AT is used as part of the process for multi-subject or grade level acceleration. This is a cognitive abilities assessment similar to an IQ.
  ➢ ASPIRE is utilized for determining the most appropriate gifted and talented services or single subject acceleration (one above grade level testing option).
  ➢ Iowa Acceleration Scale – used with child study teams when considering whole grade acceleration.

Andria prepares a full profile report on the student and then meets with the full review team consisting of: an administrator, school psychologist, GT coordinator, one grade level teacher and one above grade level teacher.

Andria shared the process and student data that drives student acceleration. The process for identifying students includes: STAR benchmarking data. If the data shows the student should be a grade above, then Andria will look deeper into the data. Students are given an end of the year test to see if they know the curriculum. She utilizes the ACT Aspire results for grades 3-12 and the CogAT Form 6 for younger students. There are 30-day assessment periods and then the group may reconvene with the parent. Extended services are part of telescoping and Target services are full grade level advancement.

This process is currently being utilized at the elementary and middle school. During the 2015/16 school year students will be screened for acceleration through 9th grade. The high school English department asked Andria about the possibility of freshmen students being able to skip freshman English. Andria is concerned that there is not good screening data at this time to implement this change. For some freshman English would provide a review of things learned in 8th grade. If some students have the ability to move to sophomore English as a freshman this would provide them with more flexibility to take AP classes, etc sooner. Sophomore English provides more indepth writing skills for upper level classes. Also looking at the option of skipping ILS for science.

G/T is more about services provided than a label. There are no additional costs associated with student acceleration. What is the quality of online courses?? Online and AP courses have to be the right fit for students. Not all students will succeed in these settings.

Literacy and Math

Dr. Sixel and Mrs. Mueller updated the committee on K-12 Math and Reading Progress. Local assessments include: AIMSWEB for grades 4K-5th; STAR Reading and Math for grades 1-12. The AIMSWEB program measures reading and math fluency, and measures skills highly predictive of overall reading and math skills. These are timed assessments. STAR measures math problem-solving, vocabulary and reading comprehension. It is also a timed assessment and is computer adaptive.

Benchmarking is done 3 times/year. This benchmarking seeks to see if 80% of our students are responding to core curriculum. If not, what supports or interventions might be needed?

Dr. Sixel and Mrs. Mueller shared the fall and spring test results for all grade levels. There are areas of growth and areas that need improvement. Teachers are currently reviewing the data and determining those students who need additional supports. The administration will look at instructional practices to see if adjustments are needed.

Moving forward teachers will continue to work on common formative assessments, multiple data points, and personalized learning (goal setting, learning targets).

Mrs. Mueller reviewed the growth percentiles for STAR and AIMSweb. 60 SGP shows growth. The committee discussed the value of having psychologists. They understand the data, interpret for teachers, know what needs to happen, big part of RtI process and keeping students out of special ed.

Some benefits to programming include:
➢ Teacher coaching
➢ Data
➢ Behavior
➢ Providing teachers with more knowledge base

Committee members would like to share at a future board meeting, the need to invest in staff to benefit students. Review initiatives from 2014/15 and share the positive impacts of these changes/additions for our students (ex: where were we……where are we…..where are we going. The how and why. Need to share the impact to special ed programming without interventions. This needs to come from staff.

Future Meetings   Just the board members will meet during the summer months to set goals and develop a report to the full board.

Next Meeting   Thursday, June 18th at 10:00 a.m.