Teaching and Learning Update November 2013

Curriculum/ Materials Adoption- I will have a couple of books from high school social studies and middle school reading for your review at this workshop. The IMC committee has approved both of these books.

The math review is in full swing. The high school has reviewed 5 different sets of materials from 4 different publishers including a set that was exclusively on-line. They have determined their top two finalists and have set Wednesday, 12/18 at 8:00am as a time for parents to come in and review those selections. A group of students will be doing the same thing the Tuesday afternoon before on 12/17.

The middle school and two groups at the elementary, K-2 and 3-5 grade bands, are about half way through reviewing a number of sets of materials for those levels as well. Once they have determined their finalists, those groups will be following the same procedure of getting parent and student groups to review and give input on those selections.

As a final step we will get all of the groups together to evaluate transition issues that might appear between material selections. Once those issues are addressed, if necessary, a recommendation will be made to the Instructional Materials Committee. I would hope to have the materials in your hands by the February workshop with approval asked for at the March meeting.

Professional Development- Making Thinking Visible book studies have begun. We have 28 teachers and paraprofessionals participating in the live face to face, traditional book study and 25 more signed up to participate on-line. My hope is that these two book studies will spawn a number of peer groups who will work together moving forward to improve their classroom environments around cognitive demand and our learning model.

Our next focus in professional development will be to bring the district's learner competencies back into focus and work to connect those with lessons across the district.

ELL- Nothing new here outside of our enrollment has risen to 29 which ties our all time high.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)- With our first parent advisory meeting under our belt, we are now focused on working with the student services center to create as many mentorships, internships and job shadows in the vocational trades as possible. Our advisory group as well as our staff identified this as a need.

Title I/LAP- We have completed the hiring of our additional staff for the LAP program with the welcoming of Kate Denney on board for the remainder of the school year. Kate will be working with a variety of teachers and small groups of struggling students across the K-8 campuses. As part of Kate's responsibilities, she will be creating additional learning opportunities outside of the normal school day. This will be done between 3pm and 5pm with the help and coordination of FCRC. Kate's primary focus initially will be in math.

Highly Capable- We just completed our first parent advisory meeting with a group of parents from the elementary school involved in the highly capable program. We have not taken this

approach of having a parent advisory group for this program in the past. The success we have had across the district with stakeholder meetings, advisories and linkages would indicate that this would be successful in this program as well. Since there will be significant changes in both the focus and manner of delivery of services moving forward, parental ownership and support will be critical.

Testing/Assessment- We will have a short breather in assessment over the next couple of months. There is nothing on the horizon until mid January when we do the EOC and HSPE retakes at the high school.

Home School Academy- Our enrollment is up 2 students this month to 17 students! We continue to learn and grow as we go and everything is working out quite well!

Library- We have had two district library meetings over the last month and have set a number of goals to work on over the remainder of the school year. One of the K-8 library goals is to create the most welcoming environment possible. We have talked a lot about the secrets of success that Disney uses at their theme parks and how those might apply in our environment. Another goal K-12 will be to do a trial of a program called "Overdrive" which allows students to access electronic books on school owned or personal devices. We received a community foundation grant a year ago to implement this goal with the hope of attracting more of our reluctant readers. (Boys ages 12-16!)

Dave.