Teaching and Learning Update November 2012

Curriculum/ Materials Adoption- Our four building "Technology Learning Facilitators", John Johnson, Perry Calabrese, Warren Westerberg, and Sharon Bussler along with Beth Marshall in the high school library continue to do a phenomenal job helping with the iPad rollout. Over the last month, the TLF's and myself have learned an amazing amount about the iPads and their functionality as it applies to the classroom learning environments. We have learned how to successfully install free apps, purchase and install paid apps and how to manage the iPads efficiently via a program called a "configurator". We can now change settings, access, wireless connections, passwords and many other detailed functions in mass. We have purchased and installed "Office2 HD" and "Notability" on all iPads district wide. These two applications allow teachers and students to have a "Word" suite and a presentation software program which enables all current classroom functionality requests.

We have also created an on-line "app request form" that is linked to the staff page of our website. This allows teachers who have found a specific application that they would like for use in their classroom to submit the request electronically and have it reviewed by our team.

We will be making a final review next month of the writing assessment we began last year. We will be obtaining copies of instructional materials needed to fill gaps in our K-8 curriculum identified over the summer by our staff. Those materials will go through the usual approval process with the IMC committee and then finally to you for approval.

We will begin the 4th year curriculum review of our math program next month. We will be meeting in the K-8 Library on 12/12 @3:15 to create a plan and a calendar to complete this work. I will invite representation from the community and parents to work with our math professionals in this review. If any board member is interested in this process, you are invited to join us! This work is designed to review the current adoption for holes or missing pieces that create challenges for us to meet the new state Core Standards or the district's learning objectives. This is not about reviewing other curriculums for adoption to replace ours as that review process that might result in a change of curriculum will occur in another three years.

Professional Development- We will be offering our fourth round of "iPads for educators" class in January. This will be the last opportunity for teachers to acquire an iPad for use in their classroom via this program. So far we have 63 of 81 teachers haven taken advantage of this opportunity. In addition the TLF's (technology learning facilitators) will be conducting a series of six 30 minutes classes during December around the use of specific application in the classroom.

Next we are forming a book study group around the book "The Explosive Child". This will be a face-to-face book study as opposed to the more recent versions that we've done via "moodle". The meetings will occur through the month of January. This excellent book provides a window into the inner workings of many troubled children whose behaviors disrupt their learning and that of others. Anyone who is interested in joining us is welcome just let me know.

ELL- Scott Lincoln and I conducted interviews last week to fill the second classified ELL position created by this year's increased enrollment. Melissa Flatt has been recommended to Dr. Mansell to fill this position. I am very excited about what Melissa would bring to our team and her previous work over the last 6 weeks which has inspired a number of our middle school students to work very hard!

Career and Technical Education (CTE)- Work in this area currently revolves around tying our curriculum in our two new classes, Bio-diesel and Power/Energy, to an established state framework so that on-going CTE funding can be received for these two classes. This is primarily a paperwork process but it will benefit us in helping to identify next step opportunities for our students after their graduation and subsequent to their success in these two classes.

Title I/LAP- Program review is complete, budget review is complete and recommendations for fairly substantial changes have been made. We are primarily looking at ways to increase the time that Colleen Wing has to spend working with and mentoring her para-professional team in ACE (Accelerated Club for Education). Increased contact time will provide, oversight, professional development and collegial opportunities for the team, which we believe will have a direct impact on student learning and accelerating student's progress through and out of the program! We continue to evaluate summer school and we have made changes in the structure and process for completing dibels testing which we do three times per year.

Highly Capable- Our elementary Science Olympics Team just concluded their season with a first and third place showing at the county championships at Clark College two Saturdays ago. We were the only team with 3rd grade students as competing members! Thank you and congratulations to Kris Sawyer, Julie Smith and Sharon Bussler for their hard work with these students. We are planning a party/celebration for the students during the week after Thanksgiving. The highlight of the party will be OSMI bringing their traveling lab to share a learning opportunity with the students. We are now in the process of getting the after school chess club back up and running and we are reviewing and planning for multiple field trips for this group as well.

Testing/Assessment- Nothing new to report here!

Thanks, Dave.