

Oregon School Board
**Vision Steering
 Committee
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Update on Visioning for the Future



“...helping students acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to achieve their individual potential...”

From Oregon School District Mission Statement



DREAM



ENGAGE



LEARN

Vision Steering Committee Update

Submitted by Steve Zach, Board Member

The Visioning Steering Committee was established by the Oregon School Board to implement and oversee initiatives consistent with the policy mandate set forth by the Board in its “Visioning for the 21st Century” position paper. The Committee is comprised of two community representatives, three Board members, the OEA president and four District administrators. The Committee meets once a month and reports regularly to the Board.

Currently the Committee is overseeing the work of five different task forces/committees examining the District’s curriculum, graduation requirements, at-risk population, assessment standards and teachers’ job description. The Visioning Committee coordinates these initiatives, moves them forward and assimilates them into a cohesive strategic plan for the District.

At the same time, the Visioning Committee is examining the next strategic steps the District will need to take to move the District into the 21st Century. As part of its work, the Committee is reading “Disrupting Classes” by Clayton Christensen which analyzes how technology and virtual classes will impact the current model of curriculum delivery. Christensen states the case that parents and students will increasingly be able to access alternate curriculum delivery outside of current school models which will allow them to better structure learning to the student’s individual needs. Overtime this will fundamentally disrupt the current delivery model.

The Committee is examining the possibility of the District starting its own Virtual School. It has met with parent groups in the District who currently utilize virtual schooling and discussed the potential of those groups working with the District to create a unified virtual school option in the District. Committee members have traveled to Appleton to study its virtual school and are researching delivery options with the goal of implementing some form of virtual school by September 2009.



ANALYZING



REFLECTING



PLANNING

Curriculum—Curriculum Update

Submitted by Jane Peschel, Director of Instruction

The work that was done in the past with Outcome Based Education produced an aligned curriculum that was the best work for the time. However, over time, we have learned that we need to constantly measure our success and revise and realign our curriculum to meet the best practices of today. Therefore, work has begun to evaluate the district's curriculum documents in all subjects over the next two years. This process will involve a realignment to the State Standards, study of best instructional practices and identification and agreement on what we believe "Proficient" means in each subject area.

The work is being done with a process designed by Dr. Doug Reeves called "Making Standards Work" and training from the Center for Performance Assessment of the same name.

"We direct the Administration to...review our curriculum process and bring such recommendations to us which will ensure that our curriculum is relevant to all students and prepares them for a changing world."

Oregon School District—Visioning For the Future, June 2007

This year, the work is focused on updating the four core subject areas of:

- Reading/Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Grades K-4 have focused primarily on Reading and Math which has included updated training on Everyday Math

and on Balanced Literacy. In addition, they are working to collect data on student achievement through the use of common assess-

ments at least three times per year.

Grades 5-12 are nearing completion on the Math curriculum along with updated training in Everyday Math for grade 5-6 and Connected Math 7-8.

Teachers of Science have met and analyzed ACT test questions to determine if there are some strategies they can incorporate into their curriculum while they wait for updated Federal Standards.

Grades 5-12 have been working on the Social Studies and English alignment.

All subjects will be able to identify the link to the state standards by grade level and will have identified common assessments for measuring student proficiency.

All of these identified grade levels have a June 30th deadline for completion.

Curriculum—Response to Intervention

Submitted by Candace Weidensee, Director of Special Education

RtI or Response to Intervention has its roots in No Child Left Behind as well as in the IDEA, 2004. The intent of RtI is to use data to ensure adequate instruction and provide systematic intervention and progress monitoring of the interventions for all students who are having difficulty achieving.

RtI is a tiered system which emphasizes meeting needs of students at a universal level (at least 80% of students should achieve at Tier I) or with supplemental interventions at Tiers II (15% or less) and III (5% or less).

The concept of RtI was introduced at the elementary buildings. Approximately 60 staff members and administrators, representing all buildings, attended an in-service in August, 2008. The in-service featured George Batsche, a Psychologist from the U. of S. Florida and renowned speaker on RtI. The district also had 26 members of the staff, administration and Board of Education attend the Midwest Leadership Summit held in Rochester, MN in September, 2008. A district level leadership team has been developed to guide implementation of RtI at the building levels.

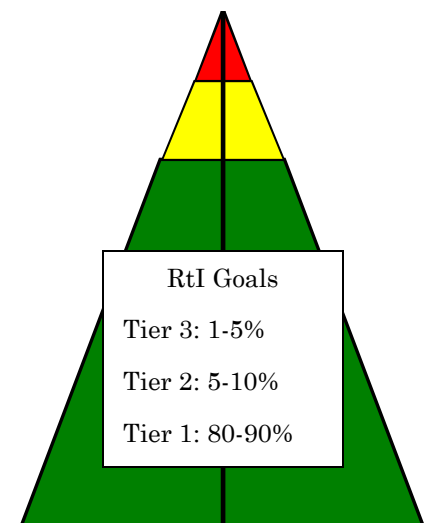
The implementation process of RtI varies at

each of the buildings with the most concentrated implementation at the elementary level. Currently, school wide teams exist at the elementary buildings and at RCI. The focus has been primarily on reading achievement. Universal screenings are occurring 3 times per year to determine growth and progress toward building level reading goals. Monthly assessments of students who are performing below benchmarks occur to monitor growth and plan for instruction.

At the middle school, universal screening occurs 2 times per year and additional assessments are determined based on data from the screenings and other student records. Reading has been emphasized with the use of Jamestown Navigator and the development of a book room at the middle school. Staff development has focused on vocabulary development, use of the book room and content specific reading strategies. The high school's emphasis on reading in the content area addresses the universal tier. The expansion of the focus team structure at the ninth grade level allows for implementation of some aspects of RtI. Implementation of SRI testing for Read 180 and Jamestown Navigator at the high school helps to address the needs of students with lower reading and fits the RtI model as do

alternative options such as Achieve, GE-DO2, OASIS and PLATO.

The next steps for implementation plan includes timelines, intervention strategies, progress monitoring tools and parent communication. Staff development will include RtI related policies, procedures, interventions, strategies and assessment.



Curriculum—Elementary World Languages

Submitted by Kelly Yapp, Michelle Blomquist, Kathryn Hartung, World Language Teachers and Dan Rikli, Netherwood Knoll Elementary Principal

During the summer of 2008, Michelle Blomquist, Kathryn Hartung and Kelly Yapp spent a great deal of time developing a curriculum map for year one. They attended the Summer Language Leadership Institute sponsored by WAFLT (Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers). They learned a great deal and made revisions to the curriculum map based on what they learned. They also ordered resources for their classrooms—books, supplies, posters, etc. with the purpose of making all three learning environment very similar. In August, they met with the elementary administrators and shared the work they had done in preparation for the 2008-09 school year.

When the children returned to school in September, they were buzzing with excitement about Spanish class. Open house nights proved that the students' energy was contagious, as parents showed an overwhelmingly positive response. Thus far, instructional delivery remains in step with the original curriculum map with only minor adjustments. They are learning how to best handle schedules, particularly when there are 50 minute instructional periods instead of the regular 25-30 minute classes (this adjustment is due to swimming in PE). Lastly, there is an assembly program planned for May that celebrates the Hispanic Culture.

Michelle, Kathryn and Kelly are currently working on assessment portfolios for each kindergarten student who will follow them throughout their elementary Spanish program.

Materials purchased over the summer have been sufficient, though it has proven prudent that part of the budget was reserved for small purchases throughout the year. Supplementary materials will be purchased for the second year of implementation, as more advanced topics of study will be included in the year two curriculum map.

One of the most valuable instructional resources is technology. Because student learning is often focused on people groups around the world, internet resources are often utilized for photos and video clips. Children are able to travel and immerse themselves in sights and sounds of new cultures without ever leaving the classroom. Moreover, technology helps present language from native speakers.

Looking forward, monitoring student learning to determine how much language students learn this school year will be utilized to continue work on the curriculum map. Michelle, Kathryn and Kelly acknowledge that there is a lot of work yet

to be done to continue implementation of the program into year two. Over the summer of 2009, they will be mapping out a program based on the students' abilities and the content learned this year. In addition, there are plans to continue creating assessments and portfolios for each student (starting with the kindergartners and following them through fourth grade). This will help create appropriate outcomes and a framework to report to parents via the report card beginning with kindergarten and first grade in the 2009-2010 school year. One grade will be added to the report card each year thereafter. In addition, there are plans to expand the integration of technology, with the possibility of partnering with schools in other countries as long-distance pen pals through the use of Skype.

Finally, Michelle, Kathryn, and Kelly are hoping to expand their knowledge and skills by attending conferences focused on how to differentiate instruction for students of all abilities.

"The World Language Program is another exemplary program for our children."

"My daughter said, I am frustrated so I am just going to count to 69 in Spanish."

Oregon Parents

Curriculum—Technology Resource Support

Submitted by Jon Tanner, Technology Coordinator

Technology on the Move!

Information Technology Literacy Teachers Enhance Learning with Professional Development

The role of technology in the Oregon Schools has grown dramatically this year with the introduction of district-wide information Technology Literacy Teachers (ITLTs).

Formerly known as Technology Resource Teachers, Velvet Holmes, Shelly Kadow, Pam Sengos, and Jeri Shumaker were limited to a small amount of time in one or two buildings. In their new role as ITLTs, they now span the district to provide an array of professional development. Topics range from multi-media production, engaged learning strategies, online collaboration, student-centric learning, to blogs, wikis, Skype, and

Moodle!

A more flexible schedule means they are available to meet with more teachers at times that are more convenient, including co-teaching and mentoring during class. This is especially helpful for participants in the Technology Integration Project (TIP) classes. Participants can apply their learning in their classrooms, and have an ITLT there to help and coach them along.

A huge benefit to this district-wide approach is the ability for classroom teachers to have access to a teacher with expertise in a specific area. Previously this would have been limited to the knowledge of the teacher in their building. The flexibility of the new system means a school can have multiple ITLTs helping teachers in different areas simultaneously.

Another benefit is that there is an ITLT available to accommodate any teacher's schedule.

As part of the Information Literacy Team, the Library Media Specialists continue to provide literacy instruction to students. Additionally, they help teachers incorporate research skills and Information Literacy into the content area.

In the first half of the year, the ITLTs have trained and mentored teachers at all grade levels in making their classrooms more engaging, meaningful, and relevant through the effective use of technology. If you are interested in joining the movement, or just want more information, check out the Information and Technology Literacy extranet site at <http://sites.google.com/a/oregonsd.net/infotechliteracy/>.

Assessment—High School Graduation Task Force

Submitted by Committee Co-Chairs Anita Koehler and Chris Ligocki

The purpose of the High School Graduation Requirements Task Force is to complete a one year study to research, develop, and recommend high school graduation requirements that are consistent with the District's Strategic Plan and 21st Century Skills. The ultimate goal is to measure whether each student who leaves Oregon High School with a diploma is prepared for his/her post-high school journey. The task force is composed of teachers, community members, parents, board members and administrators.

Our first task was for everyone to become familiar with our district's guiding documents: the Board's *Accountability Position Paper*, which includes the four C's; their position paper *Visioning for the Future*; documents from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, including the *Framework for 21st Century Learning*; and the Oregon School District Exit Outcomes.

We have begun discussion on 21st century skills and current graduation requirements for O.H.S., area schools and the state of Wisconsin.

plementation practices, grade point average, and class rank. We have and will continue to read a plethora of information and research, as well as hear the perspectives of various constituents.



At future meetings we will be discussing required courses and what goals should drive our recommendations to the Board, in addition to im-

We will bring our recommendations to the Board of Education in June, 2009.

Assessment—Grades, Outcomes, and Common Assessments Task Force

Submitted by Committee Co-Chairs Leslie Bergstrom and Jane Peschel

The purpose of this committee is to answer the question "How do we know if our students are prepared for their future." It involves tackling age old beliefs about grading processes, letter grades and issues surrounding our time with the Outcome Based Decision Making Model.

Fifteen people have been meeting since November.

The initial discussion centered on outlining our purpose, brainstorming a list of reasons for grading students and identifying the different groups who value grades.

The work plan for this group is to have sufficient time to read and discuss findings from different authors about the role of grading, grading practices, letter grades vs. outcome scores, and the need for common assessments.

To date, we have been focused on summarizing the results of readings regarding specific grading practices. Many practices stem from the past.

Some practices that were shared were

- Grading on a Curve
- Bias in Grading
- Averaging Scores
- Grading Participation
- Reducing Grades based on Multiple Attempts
- Giving Zeros
- Grading Homework
- Weighted Grades
- Weighted Assessments
- Grading with A,B,C,D,F
- Plus and Minus Grades
- Percentage Letter Grades

After collecting specific information from multiple authors, the plan now includes asking teachers, parents, and students about their perceptions of these practices. A random group of teaching staff has been asked to participate in a focused discussion on January 19th. Parents and students have yet to be identified.

While we are collecting this information, we will be moving on to a review of information related to measuring outcomes and/or standards.

The goal is to have the study completed and a recommendation to the Board of Education by June of 2009.



Delivery—Teacher Job Description Task Force

Submitted by Deedra Atkinson, Board Member

The Teacher Job Description Task Force is to research, develop and recommend a job description for the 21st Century Teacher. This recommendation will be advisory to the Vision Steering Committee, the Policy Committee and the Oregon School Board.

The composition of the task force is primarily teachers. Their directive is to create a job description that reflects the best of today's practices while keeping an eye fixed on future innovations and practices.

The first meeting had the committee identifying what success looks like. Teachers were asked to share stories of the best experiences in teaching, either from a teacher they remember or from a situation they themselves were involved in. The stories produced descriptors of common themes. Examples of common themes include the following:

- There was a relationship developed.
- There was trust.
- This teacher seemed to always be reflective and continuously improving.
- Students knew the expectations and why it was important.
- The teacher had high expectations but was committed to helping the students meet them.
- The teacher was willing to make learning meet the needs of the student not the classroom as a whole.
- The teacher always seemed to have high energy, a positive attitude and was happy to be there.

This information was then compared to our current job description and to other area school descriptions. After analyzing multiple versions, the task force highlighted the wording that best exemplified a quality teacher.

The next step will be to look at the collected descriptions based on two frameworks—Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practices—A Framework for Teaching (2007)* and a document from the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality entitled *Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis (2008)*. These will then be compared to the *Wisconsin Teacher Standards*.

The goal is to have a recommendation to the Oregon School Board by June of 2009.

Delivery—Literacy Coaches

Submitted by Heather Sveom, Prairie View Elementary Principal

Beginning at the start of the 08-09 school year, a half-time literacy coach has been working in each of our six buildings with the high school literacy coach scheduled to begin in January. The teachers who are currently serving as our literacy coaches are Kim Heneman and Karen Irwin at Brooklyn Elementary, Joane Rudolph at Prairie View Elementary and Netherwood Elementary, Deanna Fischer at Rome Corners Intermediate Center, Melissa Mader at the Middle School, and Jennifer Grandone at the High School.

The coaches have two primary responsibilities: coaching and working with teachers to support implementation of balanced literacy practices, and providing differentiated learning opportunities for teachers and educational assistants. Although their specific roles vary

depending upon grade level and building, literacy coaches model best practice for teachers in their classrooms, collaborate with grade level teams and individual teachers regarding successful instructional strategies, present varying topics related to balanced literacy in differentiated formats, and assist in the development of literacy related inservice and early release training.

The coaches have also been involved with examination of the data and development of our resources for teachers to use with students. As data has been gathered on students, the literacy coaches have joined the discussions about student growth and next steps for our students. At the elementary level, grade level teachers have created data walls to look at an entire grade level in the school. We have also been looking at resources and the need to have the necessary materials

to teach a balanced literacy framework. Development of book rooms has been a priority at the building level (K-8) and our coaches have been instrumental in participating and leading this initiative with reputable publishers and leveled texts both fiction and non-fiction.

The coaches are committed to continuing professional development in the area of literacy in order to maintain their expertise and to provide district level leadership in the area of literacy. Currently the coaches are participating in a year long university course designed specifically for teachers in a literacy coach position.

Delivery—Maintenance Referendum

Submitted by Andy Weiland, Business Manager

The Oregon School District has over \$101,000,000 worth of insurable assets in over 793,000 square feet of space. All this space is covered by approximately 680,000 square feet of roofs. There are over 988,000 square feet of asphalt and concrete hard surfaces on district property and approximately 85 acres of green space surrounding our buildings, sidewalks and parking lots. All of these areas need to be properly maintained in order to provide a safe environment for our students, staff and community.

Since the 2001-02 school year, the Oregon School District has been allowed through a referendum override to spend an additional \$300,000 each year for capital maintenance purposes over our revenue cap allocation. This authority was approved on an April 4, 2000 referendum question and expires after the 2009-2010 school year. We are indeed fortunate that the elector-

ate of the Oregon School District voted on November 4th, 2008 to approve an additional ten years of capital maintenance revenue cap override authority. This time the Board of Education asked for \$400,000 per year in order to help maintain the purchasing power of the approved funds. The new authority will last through the 2019-2020 school year. These funds will be used to maintain our school building roofing assets, flooring, mechanical systems, parking lots, as well

as address any safety and energy efficiency projects that may be identified.

During the winter of each year, the maintenance department begins collecting requests from building administrators regarding the maintenance needs of their buildings for the upcoming summer construction season. These requests are combined with other known projects and then prioritized by the maintenance and business office. The Board of Education typically approves the preliminary list of projects in March in order for the maintenance department to solicit competitive bids and schedule the projects with the appropriate contractors. Please communicate with your building administrator if you are aware of any significant maintenance needs or opportunities for energy savings.



Delivery—Virtual Schools

Submitted by Brian Busler, Superintendent

The Vision Steering Committee has been researching the concept of virtual schooling since the summer of 2008. We have learned that virtual schools have become a popular choice with home schooling parents and parents seeking an alternative school delivery system for their children. According to the Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS) operated by CESA 9 in Tomahawk Wisconsin, "

"Thirty-eight percent of students take WVS online courses to make up credits, while thirty percent of their students take a course not offered at their school. Other reasons include schedule conflicts, an accelerated pace, the experience of online learning, homebound status, study abroad, special education needs, expulsion, teen parents and gifted students."

The typical virtual school allows students to take classes online that are taught by licensed Wisconsin Teachers.



There are currently 30 Oregon students attending three different virtual schools in Wisconsin: Northern Ozaukee, Monroe Virtual School, and IQ Academies in Waukesha.

These students are considered "Open Enrollment Out" and the Oregon School District pays approximately \$180,000 to the virtual schools for their tuition. The virtual school movement has made its way to Dane County as the McFarland School District is in the process of opening a school in the fall of 2009.

We are also planning for virtual school options for the fall of 2009. It is our plan to provide options for the thirty students currently attending other virtual schools, home school students, and to meet the growing demand for alternative programming to Oregon residents and students.

"Students benefit from additional delivery options"
- Teacher—Appleton Virtual School

We continue to learn about virtual schools and how this online delivery option is growing.

External—Achievement Connections

Submitted by Achievement Connections Leadership Team

In March 2008, The Achievement Connections Leadership Team (a group of community members, teachers and administrators in partnership with United Way) formed to determine root causes of why Oregon youth drop out of school and/or have high levels of truancy.

Based on research collected through United Way, there appears to be a disconnection from school that begins around 5th or 6th grade and turns into increased absenteeism beginning around 8th grade.

Through Achievement Connections and United Way, we are working to increase our understanding of these phenomena for teachers and parents. Successful inroads have included:

- Achievement Connections, facilitated by United Way, has met several times over the past year with membership that includes community, teachers, and administrators. The main focus is to increase the graduation rate.
- The “Truancy Class” which was offered last summer for Middle School and High School teachers developed goals that were shared with each building at the Back to School Inservice. The main theme resonating from this course was the need for positive adult connections with youth. The goals were then developed to provide suggestions to schools to increase positive engagement for students.

- A Parent Engagement Meeting was held last June for families of incoming 9th grade students to share information about the high correlation between parent involvement with their children and a child’s engagement in “risky behaviors” as well as the results of the Dane County Youth Survey which indicted the level of alcohol and drug use among Oregon 7-12 grade students.
- United Way supported the administration of a depression screener, Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) to all 6th grade students this fall based on data that indicates that early identification of depressions can help provide appropriate assistance for students during this phase of their life and may help ward of the helpless feelings that lead to risky behaviors.
- Schools of Hope model of providing tutors has also gotten underway with a volunteer coordinator supported through United Way funding who is working to identify and train adults interested in working as one-on-one tutors.



Middle School Tutors/Schools of Hope Tutoring Program

November 3, 2008 was the start to the Oregon Middle School and Schools of Hope Tutoring Program. Pang Vang was hired to organize the program. The overall goal is to engage struggling learners or re-engage students who feel ‘disconnected’ from the educational system.

Over the past two months, Pang has met with the OMS core teams, developed a database for referred students, surveyed staff, written a tutor handbook, sent out an email blast to recruit tutors and has already interviewed eleven people interested in serving as a tutor for our students.

In January, tutors will start working with students. They have been interviewed and given an orientation to OMS as well as instructed on how to work with students. Additional training will be provided by the Urban League and Pang will provide the tutors with additional support when needed.

We are always looking for new tutors to help our students. You can help by spreading the word to people you know who would be interest in giving one hour a week.

Volunteer forms are available at <http://www.oregonsd.org/schools/SchoolsOfHope.cfm>

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