

# **Goals Meeting**

**January 17, 2017**

## **Strengths**

### People

Community, Staff, Parents, Board

### Thing

Technology, Innovative Teachers, Strong IT Department

### Initiatives

Academic and character initiatives

UE- Organizations to deal with respect

Look at need and come up with initiatives

### Key Hires

Opportunities to transform district

### Strength of Staff

Reach diverse population of students, especially K-8

### Ability to gel

In time of need – HS staff stepped to assist administration during difficult time

Come together in time of need

### Attitude

Pulling together vs. bickering, working together

### Staff

Huge strength, caring people, do best for students

Awesome parents and community support

Help us on day to day basis, community members assist

### Dedication

Board members, staff, administration. Dedicated during day and evening, if available

Meeting attendance

Communication

Positive output of communication has improved

Highlighting building opportunities

People

District employees, caring, respectful and tolerant. Accepting of others, special needs, well-behaved and respectful students. Shows parents are doing the right thing. Compliment to district.

Strong core of students starting in Kindergarten

Homey

Comfortable and employees are proud, caring. Great place to be.

Workable school district

Willingness to take on something – collaborate toward a common goal

Administrative team communicates and works well together

After discussion, conclude on same page, same goals

Pleasure to work here – people first instead of paychecks first

Supportive staff

Many graduates stay here to work, staff sincerely care about students and their safety.

Staff sends home food and gifts for needy

Hold to our values, encourage respectful behaviors

Coming from Rockford, it's a world of difference in our district. Our students and parents are amazing. Many parents are supportive of administration. Referrals are less, kids are different.

Culture – people are proud that they graduated from NB. Do not have to teach pride.

Solid financially

Running Start

Number of programs offered to students – provide a number of opportunities through CEANCI, Running Start, such as nursing and automotive programs. Find ways to accommodate students.

## Schools are Safe

Could be more safe – construction of buildings

Neighborhoods are generally safe

Parents generally feel kids are safe at our schools

At HS – faculty does a lot for students in need. ELL, Life Skills, basketball program, students in community.

Parents interested in vocational internships here

## **Challenges**

### Staff Retention

Finding HS specialized teachers is difficult. Losing a teacher after 2<sup>nd</sup> year is a huge loss.

NB losing staff to Harlem, Belvidere, Woodstock. Belvidere loses teachers to suburbs - pay is enough to attract, not enough to retain.

Teachers saying salaries aren't that big of an issue – the family insurance is the issue.

Some teachers leaving for more money, however we are attracting some to NB for a less stressful student base.

Grow our pools for teachers, bus drivers, TA's

Difficult to make teachers complete online exit interviews

Lot of staff who do not live in our district. How to attract staff to live in area?

Wish we could implement a vocational education program. Would serve the students that are not college bound.

### Homework completion

#### K-12 issue

High failure rates in past – how can we handle differently. Student's change – find new ways to engage kids. Tough for teachers by putting rigor on students, but teachers not receiving homework back. Difficult balance. Work collaboratively to find a way to engage students.

Not every student needs to do homework to do well in the class. Elementary teachers can assess progress on daily performance. Changing classes and teachers – process becomes more difficult.

Research behind summative based grading.

## Outdoor facilities

Athletic and PE facilities should be accessible to all students, including special needs

Do a better job of accommodating special needs students

UE – timeframe of lunch 10:30 and 1:15 lunch hours. Long walk between buildings, icy, potholes. Challenge that administration and parents are concerned about. Not an easy fix.

Stuck at academic benchmarks for too long – Board should make a priority

Begin to see movement after this

PARCC scores don't necessarily reflect students

HS – not enough collaboration time. Elementary has same issue. Have detailed outlines and determine the focus. MS has grade level team time – gives opportunity to collaborate on student needs and curriculum.

Difficulty with intervention time. We currently pull students out of other classes. Noticed it is a challenge. PGE has twice as many students that need intervention, but have 1 Reading Specialist and 1 Math Interventionist. Teacher vs. Aide Interventionist will impact scores. Not enough support at PGE. What is philosophy behind Rtl, etc. Need to look at this, not just number of support staff, it's all tied together. Intervention piece needs to be revamped.

Reading specialists – need common philosophy. Identify where intervention program should go. Use proven best methods.

Invitation to sit in on CES data day. Can see first-hand growth.

HS – could use incentives if classes reach expected growth. A change from the norm.

How do we know what students can achieve if we haven't given them the opportunity. What can we put in place to help them try.

If we don't give homework in case they fail, then maybe we are too easy on the students.

Until we have curriculum alignment, collaboration cannot happen effectively. Senior teachers have worked on this, then thrown out, worked on it, then dismissed, etc.

This is manageable. We have the people, dedication. Still lacking something foundational. Have our own in-house assessments/data.

Never had a curriculum person. We don't have instructional coaches. Moving in the right direction.

Some students have not experienced failure. Do they have a consequence when they fail, or are we helping them too much? We are doing all the right things when they are young, but it isn't preparing them to be college bound. College expectations. How do we teach students to motivate themselves?

A lot of parents want to insulate them from failure, so they aren't exposed to losing. Teach accountability. Could stop socially promoting students.

Considerable effort from HS teachers and administrators to educate student about ramifications of not graduating.

Help educate parents that it is ok to have their student challenged. Help coach from home. Have tried to hold parenting classes, etc., but consistently have low participation numbers. Lots of outreach, but not reaching target audience.

6-8 students from each graduating class don't graduate on time.

Lots of effort focused on the lowest percentile. See value of programs, but at the expense of higher performers.

Teaching the 'middle' can leave the high performers bored.

Failure to align curriculum between schools and grades

Haven't addressed needs. Stop jumping on math and English program of the week. Spend money on things that have a lifespan. Molly is working on this. Encourage teachers to use their strengths for the greater good. Freedom to teach with their own style, not their own subject matter.

Do we have a culture that cultivates collaboration? People need to be willing to work together. Ensure good structure to collaboration time. Have ELA maps, but need to get people to work together and agree on best practice. We could do a better job of carving out time to collaborate. Investigate which programs get better gains. Have MAP and PARCC data, but it is difficult to determine which methodology worked best. #1 factor to student growth is feedback. MS gives quiz, can get immediate feedback via technology and address incorrect answers to focus instruction. John Hattie research. Gives a lot of direction to teacher. HS teachers can use target teaching/testing. HS math department has experienced turnover.

Are administrators spread too thin?

Implement a program that starts in kindergarten, where a student can hold a teacher accountable to find a way to reach / teach the student. Every student is teachable. Encourage students to talk to their teacher about understanding subject matter. Students need to take some responsibility for their education.

Tablet program is another tool to teach. Help students be advocates for themselves. Ensure teachers are approachable.

At HS – many students take advantage of the activity bus. Students can get extra help. By the time a teacher may figure out a student isn't understanding, a student may have been lost for 3 weeks. Could see a significant increase in student achievement.

Checking for understanding. Adjust next lesson plan if students didn't grasp lessons of that day, etc.

The older the students get, such as by 4<sup>th</sup> grade, it becomes less acceptable by their peers to ask questions.

Teachers, parents, students, administrators all own a piece of this problem.

We have educated a lot of students that are now successful adults. We are doing ok, but could do better.

How much collaboration on institute days?

5 hours

Grade level collaboration will be discussed at next institute day.

Built around SLO, etc.

Some elementary teachers have common plan time at grade level at Capron.

Poplar Grove does not have common plan time.

Manchester does not have enough sections to collaborate at grade level.

Share music teacher at elementary - MS. Music 2-3 days per week at CES & MES.

If elementary schools had PE, art and music classes all day, that would help.

Room to work on fine arts.

PGE/MES share PE. MES PE starts at 10:45.

Keeping students motivated, especially on standardized tests

Finding ways to keep students motivated

Media and social media big drawback. Lack parental support on PARCC.

Losing 4 instructional days on test.

Tech class is working with students on computer skills.

May testing doesn't have results – even in January of following school year.

Asking 9 year olds to sit for 7 hours to take tests. Asking a lot of small children to sit so long for tests.

PARCC takes PGE 4 weeks to test. Fault of test – not school.

Students don't feel college ready to test, as they are exempt from the final due to good scores on state tests.

Which tests do we value? Should District's growth be gauged by these tests?

Ensure students are valued no matter how they perform on test.

Difficult to get kids to buy in.

NGESS has a lot of tech built in.

Crystal Lake South – master manager – tie every assessment to specific targets.

Challenge to find financial resources to ensure technology assists in classrooms.

## Finances

Not sure we are out of the woods.

## Technology rotation

How to phase in additional grades?

Starboards and Smartboards – not working as they used to. Six week repair time for large units of tech. Necessity – not necessarily a small support piece.

Ensure we have a budget to support the large tech equipment pieces.