

North Andover Public Schools

Date: September 24, 2009

Present: Members Allen, Burzlaff, Limpert, Nobile, and Rhoton. Also present Superintendent Hottel, Assistant Superintendent Hutchinson, Mr. Grant, Ms. McQuade, Mr. Cushing, Ms. Rogers, Mr. Gilligan and Ms. Laundre.

Location High School Library

At 6:00 p.m. Chair Limpert called the meeting to order.

AYP

Dr. Hutchinson gave a presentation regarding AYP. Ms. Rhoton requested that the presentation be posted on the district website. In response to questions from the Committee, Dr. Hutchinson discussed how AYP determinations are calculated and how it is determined if subgroups will be reported out in schools. He also discussed performance cycles and the composite performance index. Dr. Hutchinson and Ms. Kline discussed the importance of having our own common assessments.

After the presentation Dr. Hutchinson asked the principals to report on what each school is doing to address needs.

High School

Mr. Grant stated that the aggregate at the high school does pretty well and even though subgroups are not reported out we still need to look at the scores of the students in subgroups. He stated that the high school needs to focus on special education and low income students. The trimester schedule has provided the high school with an opportunity to focus on remediation for those students that need it and the student management system, PowerSchool, has improved the high school's ability to track attendance for all students. Ms. Allen noted that it is anticipated the free and reduced numbers will climb and the high school should be aware that the increase may make the subgroup large enough to report out on in the future.

Middle School

Ms. McQuade discussed the intervention the middle school put in place last year to target students in subgroups. She stated that last year they had someone to assist in running data and that resulted in targeting students who needed extra help. She discussed the 4 week intensive program that was put in place just before MCAS. She stated that targeted students had the choice to attend an after school program or be pulled out of one related arts per week to have intensive help in reading. Unfortunately, NAMS did not have the resources to mirror that program in mathematics. Ms. McQuade also stated that PowerSchool is helping the middle school to address attendance issues.

Atkinson

Mr. Landry was unable to attend the meeting but Dr. Hutchinson shared Mr. Landry's statement that he wants to replicate the successful model from last year with flexible grouping in 5th grade math and bring the model to 4th and 3rd grades as well. Mr. Landry understands that Atkinson is under the gun this year in both ELA and mathematics and they will be looking at each child at risk to make sure they are provided the additional attention they need.

Mr. Nobile asked that the administrators look at the students impacted by redistricting as their own subgroup.

Franklin

Ms. McCarthy was unable to attend the meeting but Dr. Hutchinson shared Ms. McCarthy's statement that although Franklin is rated very high, this year's performance was identical to last year's and they are at risk of plateauing. Ms. McCarthy and the Franklin staff will be looking at subgroups to raise the aggregate. In response to a question on why Franklin does considerably better than other elementary school Dr. Hutchinson stated that the number one indicator is socio-economic and the number two reason is special education numbers.

Kittredge

Mr. Cushing stated that he and his staff would be reviewing this year's scores and last year's scores. He stated that even with the space crunch at Kittredge he has found three areas in the building where they will be pulling students out to provide intervention. He discussed the special education population at Kittredge.

Sargent

Ms. Rogers stated that the staff and data teams are gathering assessments and putting each grade level in order of scores to look at the neediest students and that with proper intervention Sargent should not have a problem. She did note that MCAS is just one snapshot measurement of a child and parents need to keep that in perspective.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Hottel stated that the administration would look at the October 1st enrollment to determine if any schools would experience a change in subgroup report outs.

Thomson

Mr. Gilligan stated that the first thing they did last year was work with standards based system and essential standards which were really helpful in having a cohesive curriculum. Second piece is common planning time for teachers. As a result of these things staff could determine who needed intervention. Mr. Gilligan noted that Thomson struggles in subgroups and has many students move in to the district throughout the year. He stated that this year he and the guidance counselor would be doing intake interviews to determine needs and placement for new students. He stated that Thomson would be developing intervention blocks by grade level to assist those students who are struggling and to challenge those students who need it.

Ms. Burzlaff expressed concern about the need for more parental involvement in the education process. The administrators and Committee discussed ways to help parents become more involved including the possibility of having a parent liaison and possibly offering English instruction classes, GED classes, homework help clubs, providing assistance in completing free and reduced lunch forms and educating parents about other benefits that they may be entitled to if they qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Mr. Nobile asked what the administrators want parents to know about MCAS.

The responses included, understanding that this is about growth and development, this is a journey and MCAS results only represent one indicator, they do not represent a destination for your child.

The Committee continued discussions on ways to assist parents who may be struggling financially and Mr. Gilligan stated that the district has to be careful in how assistance is approached. Outreach to parents must be sensitive. We need to think about programs that can help students and also think about providing transportation if help is offered after regular schools hours.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the elementary science program, the principals briefly discussed the program acknowledging that the program is good but there is some difficulty in organizing the kits so that they are replenished on schedule.

Chair Limpert stated that the School Committee is interested in using SFSF money to fund things that will support MCAS, AYP, and curriculum initiatives. He asked the administrators to think about some things that they believe could be put in place to improve MCAS scores. He noted that SFSF funds are one time monies and we can't put something in place that we cannot sustain.

The administrators discussed possible technical support including hardware and software, professional development, a consultant to provide research and development on available programs, listening stations for the literacy program and classroom benchmark assessments. The Committee discussed the importance of coordinating any technology issues with Matt Killen. The Committee also discussed a possible working relationship with Merrimack College to provide education students to assist administrators.

Mr. Hottel stated that the SFSF advisory subcommittee would be meeting next week to further discuss these issues.

Chair Limpert thanked the administrators for their time.

Adjourn

At 8:31 p.m. Ms. Burzlaff moved to adjourn. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.