



...from the February 14, 2017 Board of Education Meeting

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Shining Star Recipients

Congratulations were extended to the Latest Shining Star Award Winners! The purpose of this award is to recognize those employees who have made significant contributions to District or school culture; improvement priorities; professional accomplishments; or otherwise have gone above and beyond the "call of duty" to serve students, parents, the community, or the education profession. The following District 205 employees were honored by the Board of Education:

Vicki Kalnins – Instructional Assistant at Conrad Fischer

Nominated by Dawin Strelow, Kim Thompson and Sharon Emmi-Iovinelli

Vicki is dedicated to serving the students at Conrad Fischer and spreads her joy of learning throughout the building. When the staff watches Vicki work with children from grades K-5, she is always enthusiastic, joyful and focused on student learning. The positive climate she sets is definitely contagious. She goes above and beyond every day as she seeks out ways to help the teachers and students. There is never down-time for Vicki. She begins early with the breakfast program and then proceeds to fill her day with personal connections and meaningful learning opportunities for students. She is a truly remarkable person and staff member.

Donna Lynch – Math and Science Materials Manager for the District

Nominated by David Beedy

Donna exemplifies initiative and hard work with every goal she accomplishes. She is the first one to volunteer when a new project needs support. Specifically, with the adoption of the new ELA materials and the Eureka math pilot, she has taken on a leadership role in the warehouse to ensure that the materials are moved to the schools and into students' hands as quickly and efficiently as possible. She listens to the teachers and makes sure they have the science and mathematics tools and resources they need consistently throughout the year. She is efficient in her work, consistently learning how to do tasks more quickly and effectively. She truly is a "Shining Star."

Instructional Rounds

Mary Baum, Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Teaching, along with the secondary principals – Erin DeLuga (York), Jacquie Discipio (Bryan), Gina Pogue-Reeder (Churchville) and Linda Fehrenbacher (Sandburg) – presented a report on [Instructional Rounds](#).

What are Instructional Rounds? They are based on the medical rounds model. Small groups of administrators walk through classrooms and gather information on current practice, tied to a specific goal (learning targets, for example). Outside of the classroom, the administrators share what they observed and document the evidence.

How Instructional Rounds are implemented in District 205:

- Focus on Student Achievement Objectives
 - Balanced Assessment
 - Student Engagement
- Data collection without teacher names or other identifiers
- Analysis of data
 - Current State
 - Collaborative planning for next steps

Our student achievement objectives address rigor and student engagement. Without system-wide agreement and understanding of what this looks like at the classroom level, we are not likely to see widespread and systematic improvement.

Shared definition of Learning Targets: Statements of *intended learning based on the standards*. Learning targets are in kid-friendly language and are *specific to the lesson for the day and directly connected to assessment*.

Mrs. DeLuga said "This deepens our concept of best instructional practice. It also makes us visible, which gives us that unified team perspective – working together toward a common goal. It enhances communication and credibility."

Churchville first hosted Instructional Rounds in District 205. York High School will host a visit on March 10.

Principal Pogue Reeder shared an important question they asked: Was the learning target focused on student learning or on student doing? "At Churchville, we found there was cause for celebration, and staff was eager to plan for next steps."

Rounds improve instruction by:

- Providing valuable information on professional learning needs
- Deepening the understanding of instruction for our leaders, allowing them to more effectively lead instructional improvement in their schools
- Bringing coherence to the system as we build a shared understanding of instruction
- Moving the system toward the attainment of our Student Achievement Objectives

"This has helped our leaders become more similar in expectations. It brings coherence to our system as a whole. The definition of rigor should be the same across the District," said Ms. Baum. "This is really helping our leaders clarify what best practice looks like in instruction."

Jim Collins commented that it might be a bit intimidating to have four administrators observing in the back of one's classroom.

Karen Stuefen said "Yes, it's really important to have the clear communication up front – what we're doing, why we're doing it and that it's really about professional development, and continuously reiterating that so our staff knows this is collaborative and what the larger goal is."

Ms. Baum noted that "The key is being very transparent with the data. Nothing is individually identifiable. The information is shared on a school-wide level. Once teachers see the data that takes the nerves down a bit. It takes trust that the data really will be used to better support all teachers.

“Our elementary schools have moved into a secondary round, centered on rigor. One of the categories is looking at the type of discussion going on in the classroom, looking at exemplars along that line, which will help drive professional learning for our leaders. We see this as progressing toward looking at student engagement as a whole,” she said.

Dr. Moyer pointed out that “We’re trying to provide some consistency in the language and use resources that have objective criteria. Those rubrics are based on the [Rigor Relevance Framework](#), which comes from the International Center for Leadership Education. This is related to a lot of the other work we’ve been doing and you’ve been hearing about over time in other presentations.”

Margaret Harrell said she found the presentation on instructional rounds very insightful and requested that the Board receive continuing updates on this process as it proceeds.

Learning and Teaching Committee Report

Chairman Jim Collins, along with Ms. Baum, reported that the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting, held on January 30, focused on three topics: Eureka Math, Instructional Rounds and Standards-Based Reporting. To view the minutes from that meeting, please [click here](#).

Standards-based reporting moves away from traditional grading and reporting methods and focuses on standards-based reporting that aligns with current best practice and curriculum that is driven by the standards. Students shift their attention away from attaining a specific grade and instead focus on the learning needed to progress to the next level. Parents find it provides more detailed information than a single letter grade provides. A pilot of standards-based reporting will take place at two elementary schools next year with full implementation in the 2018-19 school year. Once elementary is fully implemented, standards-based reporting will advance to the secondary level. However, typically a hybrid of standards-based reporting and letter grades is used at the middle and high school level. There will be a full report at the March Board of Education meeting.

Eureka Math Pilot

Dave Beedy, the District’s K-12 STEM Coordinator, explained the differences between the rigor and depth of content in Eureka Math as compared to our current math resource. The math our students need to understand and be able to apply has changed. Future Ready employees and entrepreneurs need more real-world problem-solving skills and experience. All students can achieve the highest levels of mathematics learning. And we needed better alignment with Illinois State Math Standards.

District 205’s overarching math goals are:

1. Students make sense of never-before-seen, “messy” problems and persevere in solving them. (#1 Complex Problem Solving)
2. Students construct viable arguments involving mathematics and statistics and critique the reasoning of others. (#2 Critical Thinking)

Background information regarding Eureka Math:

- Most widely-adopted math resource in the Common Core era (57% of elementary teachers report using Eureka Math, according to a recent Rand survey)
- Highest rated K-5 resource on Edreports.org for Focus & Coherence, Rigor & Math Practices, and Teacher Usability
- Chosen among a number of competing resources by over 50 Elmhurst elementary and middle school teachers from every grade, K-8

- An open educational resource that is shared by many school districts across the country
- Extensive professional library of videos and documents for teachers and parents in support of student learning
- Strong emphasis on building number sense, using multiple representations and problem solving

Each K-8 school in District 205 has early adopters using Eureka Math. Among those teachers are: Valerie Baxter, 2nd grade teacher at Field; Heather Bolur, 7th grade teacher and math chair at Bryan; Erika Bradley, 3rd grade teacher at Emerson; Laurie Giblin, 5th grade teacher at Field; Sandy Laszkiewicz, 5th grade teacher at Jackson; and Erin Wedell, 5th grade teacher at Lincoln – several of whom presented at the Board of Education meeting.

Their comments are as follows:

Ms. Bolur – We did not start at the beginning of the pilot, but jumped in with module 3. We wanted to try out Eureka. Overall, our students are persevering much more than I have ever seen. Our 7th graders are solving equations that they haven't done before; it's definitely been a lot more challenging and our students are working really hard. It's exciting to see what they are learning.

Mrs. Laszkiewicz – I'm having a continuing argument with one of my students who doesn't want to show his work. 'Why won't you just draw the picture?' asked someone with a lower competence level, who then proceeded to show the other student how to do that. The students who previously felt like they didn't have math ability are feeling like they have some tools to tackle the problem. This program challenges our students, but I don't have parents complaining. The exit tickets are great and help students and teacher see what has and has not been learned. It's a perfect fit for the fifth grade. This is a totally different ball game.

Ms. Wedell – When we first started looking at this curriculum, I was a little apprehensive about all of the pictures. I can't say how happy I am that I did the Eureka Math pilot. My students have so much confidence in the math they are doing and truly understand the concepts. It's a great fit for a variety of students – all of them. We're implementing it as more of a workshop model, with students setting goals for themselves and working at their own pace. It's a day-by-day process, very individualized and a great way for them to take ownership of their own learning. No matter how you use the resources that are provided, kids are achieving phenomenal things. All of the problems are multi-step and are very complex. It's very strategic and concrete.

Mrs. Baxter – In second grade, switching to Eureka has been transformational for me and for the students. Students I know would have struggled with Everyday Math are succeeding. We work on number sense. The problems are mixed up now so that students have to figure out how to solve the problems. We have learned many hands-on ways to demonstrate the concepts. Why do I borrow? When do I borrow?

Students have made these comments:

- I like how there are many ways to solve the problems.
- It's more 'funner' than last year.
- They take longer to explain it, so we understand it better.
- I'm starting to get better at this.

"I think Eureka is outstanding because my students are enjoying being mathematicians. We're going deeper with the concepts, rather than skimming over a lot of topics," Mrs. Baxler concluded.

"We are committed to being more systematic in the way we catch problems in real time and, theoretically, there should not be students who haven't learned what they need to by the end of the year," noted Dr. Moyer.

"There are ways that we can track and hand off information. I see this as an opportunity for us to look at this in the aggregate and figure out what we need to do differently to help individual students grow in the areas they need to," said Mr. Beedy.

"Next year, all of our K-5 teachers will be provided with the Eureka Math materials, both the student workbooks and all of the teacher materials (pre-assessments, exit tickets, formative assessments). Professional Learning begins at the March 3 Institute Day and will continue throughout the summer and beyond. We will also be utilizing the Instructional Coaches for that on-the-job support. About one third of our teachers are part of the program this year and will provide huge support for this adoption. The REACH pathway will not change for next year. The materials we use there (Carnegie) are very similar and are working fine for those students."

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA - CONSENT

With two members missing, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the following consent agenda items in separate votes:

- RFP #17-03 - Employee Benefits Consultant/Broker Services – Alliant/Mesirow Insurance
- Display K-8 Eureka Math Materials

The increasing costs related to employee health/dental/life benefits have substantial budgetary implications. An insurance broker/consultant plays a significant role in assisting the District in controlling these costs by analyzing claims data, reviewing levels of coverage, negotiating with vendors, recommending plan design modifications, facilitating wellness efforts, assisting with billing and by taking a proactive approach in making recommendations related to our overall insurance risk management.

As a means of ensuring that Elmhurst CUSD 205 has a knowledgeable broker to work aggressively and proactively on the District's behalf, a Request for Proposal (RFP) for insurance brokerage services for group health insurance, group life, dental, Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) and other plans was issued in December 2016.

Six companies submitted proposals in response to the RFP. Three companies were invited to interview. The interview committee included three members of the Elmhurst Teachers' Council, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, the District's Benefits Coordinator and two Board members. The interview committee performed a very thorough sixty-minute interview with each of the three companies. Based upon the information evaluated as part of the thorough proposal examination process, we have identified one company, Alliant/Mesirow Insurance, to best meet the benefit needs of Elmhurst CUSD 205. References were verified for this company.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATION

Kudos to York High School

Dr. Harrell was the featured speaker at the York High School Black Heritage Dinner, held on February 13, which Dr. Moyer attended.

Dr. Moyer has heard from many parents who were very happy with the incoming freshman night held recently at York High School. He also announced that the Girls Bowling team and one York wrestler had qualified for State competition.

LUDA Conference Update

Superintendent Moyer reported that on February 2-3, he – along with Ms. Baum, Mrs. DeLuga and Ms. Discipio - attended the annual Large Unit District Association (LUDA) winter conference in Springfield. This was the first year that LUDA offered a strand for principals.

“Mary Baum and I attended the first session on strategies for effective in-house professional development programming. Dr. Steve Tozer from the University of Illinois-Chicago presented on LUDA districts’ growth metrics, which will be released publicly soon. We also received an update on the Illinois Balanced Assessment Model.

“Senator Andy Manar talked about the Governor’s report on funding and the 14 ‘Grand Bargain’ bills (now down to ten) that are in development (principals joined us for this session). Updates were also shared on many of the financial deliberations that are currently taking place in Springfield and the new model for College and Career Readiness that superintendents are hoping will be approved by the State Board of Education,” he said. Dr. Moyer is headed back to Springfield on Tuesday to attend more meetings and hear Governor Rauner speak.

The principals also attended an enlightening and timely session on growth mindset, as well as on the impact of the principal, cultural competencies, the human resources continuum and breakout sessions by grade level.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

February 28 – Board of Education Meeting – 7:30 PM – District 205 Center

March 3 – Teacher Institute Day, no school

March 6 – Finance and Operations Committee Meeting – 7:00 PM – District 205 Center

March 9 – Learning and Teaching Committee Meeting – 6:15 PM - District 205 Center

March 21 – Board of Education Meeting – 7:30 PM – District 205 Center

March 27-31 – Spring Break, no school

NOTE: Video footage of all Board of Education regular meetings are usually posted on [205TV](#) within 48-72 hours. Audio is posted within 24 hours at <http://www.elmhurst205.org/Audio> (please click on appropriate meeting date).