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TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent of Schools

DATE: July 31, 2021

RE: Questions Raised at the July 20 Board of Education Meeting Regarding
2021 Summer Learning Opportunities

Please find below answers to questions raised at the July 20 Board of Education meeting.

1. Is the Pre-K, K-Readiness Program at BES and KES?

- Yes, it will be at BES and KES. Students will attend in their new school to become familiar with the space.

2. Summer Academy for Exiting K, 1, and 2 students-- How was it designed?

- The original plan was for 4 weeks in July. However, there was concern that it conflicted with the timing for Extended School Year (ESY) programs that run in July. Staffing ESY is a challenge and it was felt that running another program in July would add to the staffing problem. Also, offering a program in August provides a jump start to the new school year.
- The design is for a focused morning of reading and math. We want students to have sufficient consecutive days to review and take on new learning. Fridays were not part of the design because teachers and administrators felt there would be a drop in attendance.

3. Questions Regarding iReady for Students Exiting Grades 3-8

A. Why was 3-8 not in-person?

- Summer school can be effective if students attend all or a significant number of sessions. However, in the experience of the administrative team, attendance in summer school can be very challenging, and therefore, not cost effective nor beneficial with sporadic attendance.
- The District targeted younger students in K-2 for in-person instruction because that's an optimal learning environment for them developmentally. It can be challenging for them to learn remotely without direct parent involvement. Students in grades 3-8 attend to asynchronous learning and have greater independence; technology was one way to reach them.

- It was challenging to hire teachers to work in the summer, particularly after their experience during the 2020-21 school year. (It should be noted that the District had to hire one “outside” teacher who is not a member of RSD17 staff for the Summer Academy.) Staff shortage is a very real reason why the program could not have been more extensive.
- In-person summer programs require a nurse. Finding nursing coverage was a significant challenge this summer, even when recruiting beyond the district nursing staff. The District is still struggling to find coverage for both of the weeks in August.
- Administration began planning for summer learning programs following the winter data retreat. At that time, data indicated there was a greater need for intervention in grades K-2 as it was more difficult to teach foundational skills remotely. RSD 17 winter data indicated students in grades 3-8 were on track to perform as they typically do, or close to it.
- We are using other strategies to approach learning recovery for these students beyond summer programming. The District is using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) to hire additional reading and math interventionists, K-5, and a math interventionist 9-12 for the 2021-22 school year.

B. How many teachers are in the 3-8 program?

- There are 3 teachers each monitoring about 30 students. Two teachers monitor students for math and one teacher monitors students for reading.

C. Is the program only 45 minutes per week?

- The program is research-based and is effective with 45 minutes per subject, per week. Some students have reading, some math and some both. During the summer, many students are doing much more than that if they have the time. We have one student doing almost 45 minutes per day for reading!

D. What does teacher monitoring mean?

- Teachers log into the iReady portal and look to see how much time students are spending on the program, which lessons they have completed and their lesson pass rate. Teachers are providing weekly emails to parents and students about their progress. Teachers include feedback about lessons completed as well as messages of encouragement. If a student seems to need additional instruction or support for a lesson, the teacher schedules a Google Meet with the student to provide that support.

E. When were the invitations sent?

- Initial invitations were sent on May 13 as “save the date” notifications. A Google Registration form was sent on June 3.

4. What were the reasons that families gave for not sending their student to a program?

- Reasons given were as follows: transportation, summer camp, vacation, or the student needed a break.

5. Credit Recovery

A. What were the reasons that students did not attend?

- One response was for transportation, several were for vacation, and some wanted a break.

B. How were students graded?

- Students received a pass-fail grade on their report cards. Pass/fail grades are not counted in calculating a student's Grade Point Average (GPA).
- The purpose of the Credit Recovery program was to provide an opportunity for a student to pass a course, earn credit and advance to the next course in the sequence or meet a graduation requirement.
- This information is in the HKHS Student/Parent Handbook on page 25 under the heading—**Summer School / Credit Recovery:**

A student is eligible to earn course credit through administrator-approved summer school programs if the student has earned a passing grade (60 or higher) in at least 50% of the course(s) failed. If the course is a full year course, then the student must have passed at least two quarters; if the course is a semester course, then the student must have passed one quarter. Students will be notified by their counselor of their specific eligibility for gaining credits due to failure through summer courses. Grades earned through summer school will count towards credit for graduation but will not be calculated in a student's GPA.

C. Did the District promise Year 2 of credit recovery?

- No one mentioned there would be a second year option. However, if needed, the intention is to offer the option.