

Special Education Parent Partnership Committee Meeting Minutes
10/28/2022
1:00-2:00 pm

Members Present: Corinna Graner, Molly Meyer, Ali Howe, Erin Murrary, Dr. Aaron Ruhland, Jillian Froelich, Jessie Stratmann, Erica Swenson, Ann Werdel, Erica Lammers

The meeting began with a welcome to all by Molly Meyer. Introductions by all, followed.

Dr. Ruhland gave an introduction about the history of the Special Education Parent Partnership.

The Mission statement was read: "We are committed to facilitating a coordinated approach in the development of all children with disabilities".

We appreciate the feedback and this is a safe environment to ask questions. We value your participation and input and commitment. It was noted that this is also a confidential partnership. This helps facilitate the purpose.

Molly Meyer updated the staffing changes this year. New staff roster was shared. Paraprofessional positions that are open were also shared. Hiring challenges were noted.

Dr. Aaron Ruhland: It is a challenge to hire people right now and a lot of neighboring districts are very challenged.

Corinna Graner thanked the group for attending and reminded all members to reach out if they have questions, concerns, or need support. Corinna added explaining that although staffing is a challenge, standards remain consistent and appreciate the partnerships with all. The staffing changes were shared for this school year.

Dr. Aaron Ruland explained the process of the Continuous improvement plan for SY 2021-22 student achievement data. There are unprecedented challenges to this, due to the pandemic. Teachers performed admirably, but we are still recovering from that. We have reasons for hope and resilience despite these challenges. Test scores are being monitored. The field of education is not alone in facing challenges. Lingering effects are happening all over (airlines, housing). It wasn't about just the kids getting ill, it was the staff, and a lot of factors contributing to the overall data. The increase in opt-outs of standardized test taking are a contributing factor to overall results. Because of the opt-outs and disengagement from the high school kids and additionally, grades 3-8 - opt-out rates were very similar. Orono compares itself to other high performing schools. We asked our teachers for feedback and statements from teachers were shared. We see an indicator by these statements that our teachers are really committed.

Organization purpose: What matters to the organization? The mission of Orono schools was shared. We see this as opening doors for students with as many opportunities as possible. The profile of an Orono Graduate was shared. Three goals were shared:

Scholarship, Character, and Relationship. The continuous improvement slide was shared including a model by Victoria Bernhardt. Contact with students post graduation has really driven improvements by surveying past students that participated in the special education program.

Standardized Achievement Data for 2021-22 was shared including Reading, Math and Science Proficiency for all grades tested.

Erica Lammers shared that in her work as a social worker language previously used (Cultural Competence) is changing to Cultural Awareness to reflect the continuous learning that is needed and one is not ever going to be fully culturally competent. This was in reference to the Continuous Improvement model shared. Erica was thanked for her input.

Dr. Ruhland noted that he would explain the Standardized Achievement Data for 2021-22. Principles for Data Analysis begin with the end in mind, use of multiple measures, trend comparisons, contextual analysis, hallmark comparisons (schools and standards), system and student level implications, continuous improvement, collaborative analysis and inference, all student analysis, subgroup analysis, programs and schools. Aaron noted that the public data includes all students, but subgroup analysis is done at the school, program, and team level, and reviewed. A slide was shared that showed data of the three-year history of Orono's post-secondary college statistics.

Advanced placement (AP) courses in Orono Schools was explained. The benefits were noted and goal of increasing opportunities and opening doors to all students. Specifically, 91% of Orono seniors participated in post secondary opportunities. Engagement in AP coursework slide was shared. The pass rates was 85%.

Current AP exam rates were shared. Comparison schools and the AP course pass rates were compared, as well as number of kids.

Erin Murray shared insight about testing at the HS level and explained some of the differences in test taking accommodations between high school and college level for students on IEPs.

Dr. Aaron Ruhland explained the Achievement and Integration plan for Free/Reduced and minority students and how it expands scaffolding for AP courses to increase participation in taking these courses.

Dr. Aaron Ruhland shared the graphs of Orono's MCA graphs with trends. The trend graph was shared for reading proficiency and the trend line and the performance was shared. Mathematics was shared and the trend was discussed. The high school reading proficiency graph was shared. The trend of a large number of students opting out of testing will affect the overall result. This affects Orono's ratings and we are hopeful that a more concerted effort will change this. Nearly 90% of students that opted-out were proficient on a previous MCA exam. Science graphs were shared. Middle school reading proficiency and math graphs were shared and the trend is up for reading, math, and science. Elementary reading proficiency was shared, and Orono is right along with top-

performing schools. The trend is rebounding. Fountas and Pinnell instructional levels graph was shared. % of students earning strong proficiency rates. Our teachers worked very hard to bring the students back on track and rebounded with student achievement. It will take time to fill gaps and support kids.

Leadership messages were shared: Pride in our work and commitment to continuous improvement. We have strong intervention and enrichment and team building and structures. Resilience: Grace, Gratitude, and Hope.

Jillian Froelich asked about comparing Orono on a national level. Aaron shared that the ACT is a national level test, but not all tests are nationally based. She also asked about the teacher survey, and does the district survey the students? Dr. Ruhland noted that the Minnesota student survey has been done, but the results have not been completed yet for analysis. The question was raised if all students participate in teacher surveys relating to the tenure process and the answer was that yes, all students are surveyed using grade level appropriate or developmentally appropriate surveys.

Corinna Graner thanked all for attending and exited the meeting.

Dr. Ruhland and Molly Meyer asked if they could answer further questions. Molly thanked the group for their partnership.