

Steele SAC Meeting - 9/20/22

Attendees:

Terry Spotts
Marika Gillis
Elizabeth Harris
Tyler Cornelius
Amanda Walls
Mona Cousino
Maggie Hart
Jessica Gemm
Ryan Capp
Maggie Couper
Alli Klein

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. **SAC Orientation**

- a. SACs are a state requirement for all schools
 - b. Main focus areas are OnePlan (curriculum, professional development, testing), budget, enrollment and staffing, parent/guardian engagement. This is a place to learn more about what goes on behind the scenes, and make sure our school is doing what it needs to serve students.
 - i. PTA hears high level updates on many of these topics, but we have a chance to go deeper on background and next steps. We also work to coordinate with the PTA.
 - c. Who is here? Mostly parents/guardians; principal, school staff representative, community members. Ideally great for people to commit to 2+ years to get the context even if you can't attend all the meetings.
 - d. Your role? Ask questions, listen, share with other parents what you learn about how things work, and advocate for our school's needs with the school board and elsewhere. Contribute to the agenda if you'd like.
 - i. SAC members are representatives of the families at our school - share what you are seeing, what kids are experiencing.
 - ii. Generate ideas toward our OnePlan, participate in symposium at the end of the school year to build that if interested.
 - e. We meet monthly on 3rd Tuesday, usually stick to 5-6pm. Agendas shift for each meeting with suggested topics that are timely + what is important at Steele.
 - f. More background: **District-led SAC training 9/29 6-8pm** at Tesla Professional Development Center (2560 International Cir, Colorado Springs, CO 80910 room 116/129) and via WebEx. Email Trudy.Tool@d11.org to RSVP. These trainings happen quarterly and are a great way to get district-level perspective.
- ### 3. **OnePlan update:** OnePlan is a way of combining plans that are required by both the district and state, rather than creating multiple plans. (Formerly called USIP, or school

improvement plans.) District has made it easier to combine efforts. The Plan itself is written for D11 and state purposes, rather than as a communication tool for parents. Mr. Capp and Ms. Patchen are working on a simple overview of the goals that is more accessible.

- a. Symposium updates: Development of the working plan with a group of teachers, SAC members welcome too. Takes place the last week of May. Identified specific goals for Steele to rally around for this school year; goals are drawn from review of last year's data and progress.
- b. Coming out of the pandemic, during 2021-2022 school year, we chose to focus highly on literacy as a goal - using intensive tutoring groups, focused professional development days on related topics - to fill gaps that emerged through Covid years. That seems to have paid off - the number of READ Act kids (identified as needing extra reading support, which brings some state funding for tutoring) decreased significantly during last school year.
- c. **First goal for 2022-2023:** Improve critical thinking in students through "blueprint units" - teachers will start building units that engage kids in different ways, integrate several subjects, focus on standards that take several weeks to cover and practice. Introduces depth and complexity. Some elements would work for all grades, some for just some grades. District staff from curriculum & instruction department are coming in to train and support teachers in this process.
 - i. Why this goal? Evidence from 5 Essentials Survey last year, teacher trust and cooperation activities, academic press, meeting multiple modalities needs. Also want our educators to feel challenged and learning - make it exciting to stay in this work after several tough years.
 - ii. Possible examples of what this might look like: grade levels working together on a project, combined unit between music and PE. (Last year was very hard to cross-pollinate between groups because of Covid.)
 - iii. How does math fit in? Likely as part of some of the units - science (relevant uses for math). New math curriculum this year for most teachers (in place for K-3 in some way the last year or two; 4/5 teachers are spending a lot of time training on it). Focuses on teaching number sense and what it means to break things down in different ways, actually practice understanding how math concepts work vs. memorization.
- d. **Second goal:** Social-emotional learning/development (SEL). From 5 Essentials survey last year, saw kids decrease in connection with the school, and their self-perception of their own social-emotional regulation - how they can stay calm when pressed or anxious. About 52% of our students rated they could self-regulate, which is actually quite high for the district; school staff rated 82% of students could self-regulate by the end of last school year. Want to work on closing the gap between those ratings, help students have more confidence in self-regulation skills and tools.
 - i. How is the school board/administration receiving this goal - in terms of spending time on SEL? Mr. Capp's supervisor knows this is a goal, and the district staff who work with Steele have engaged with this for 6+

months. Dr. Gaal (new superintendent) seems to message that it's an important topic, and also that it's not always clear where the board will go. Since our scores are strong, we may have more leeway to maintain this focus.

- ii. Acting Right curriculum is one piece of this work, already further along in implementation, in the first stage - developing a sense of place in the group, practicing skills to self-regulate. Will work later on cooperation, creating tableaux. Idea is that the kids will lead much of this work themselves later in the year.
 - e. Keep track on progress to goals through a variety of ways - Panorama survey, assessment surveys on the first goal (more discussion is needed to figure out how to capture progress, show learning depending on where the kids' skill level is). This will be a topic of discussion at upcoming professional development day 9/23. Would be valuable to have the narrative behind the data as well - how these things are working from teachers' perspectives.
4. **Testing results** (CMAS - annual state test for grades 3-5, how kids are doing against state standards)
- a. Came out publicly in September. Great results overall. Steele results are consistently a little higher than district/state scores - impressive given all that teachers had to overcome with Covid-related challenges.
 - b. Last several years had different grades take different tests due to Covid, so we can't track the results from one year to the next in terms of progress. Best to look at the data from the perspective of how things worked last spring.
 - c. English Language Arts (ELA) data - slight increase overall from pre-pandemic to last year.
 - d. Math data - held steady overall.
 - e. No data was provided for Science tests last year (only taken by 5th grade).
 - f. Our participation rate is very high (95%); overall points earned informs plans with the district, and our points put us at the "Performance Plan" designation, which is the top-performing category. (When points are lower, it can trigger performance improvement, or turnaround status that can take away some school control, and require certain approaches for schools with that status.)
5. **Enrollment and staffing updates**
- a. Lost about 40 kids over the summer, gained about 44 kids - that's a big turnover for Steele (typical turnover is more like 20 between school years), lots of new kids. Primary reason of the shift is moving that's still pandemic-related (families left to move all over the country), housing market issues.
 - b. Current numbers are about 254. Still another 15 kids away from getting another teacher added back.
 - c. Ms. Toombs has gotten the 4/5 class in a really good groove this year. Also have several additions to support these two grades: assistant in the 5th grade classroom, extra math section taught by North math teacher. Ally Ogren

continuing teaching science. Potential for more parent volunteers this year could also help support these two grades.

6. Parent engagement

- a. Will learn more at SAC Training next week about the District/board priorities in this area (last year was focus on rolling out PowerSchool)
- b. PTA working on more opportunities to get together, for free. More reminders to teachers for big events to make sure parents know closer to the events. Movie night next Friday 9/30 - free popcorn, food trucks for purchase. Consider spreading the word to families with preschoolers in the neighborhood to show off Steele's community.
- c. Considering ways to engage parents who are working - coffee talks have good potential but not necessarily great timing.
- d. Opportunities for more in classroom volunteering.

7. Next meeting: 10/18 5-6pm