

Steele School Accountability Committee (SAC) Meeting - 9/19/22

Attendees:

Maggie Couper
Emily Gray
Jessica Warren
Terry Spotts
Jessica Gemm
Michelle Secor

Kris Frye
Elizabeth Harris
Kim Roberson
Meg Ford
Rhonda Toombs
Michelle Patchen
Ryan Capp

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. SAC Orientation

- a. SACs are a state requirement for all schools: Overall accountability and partnership on key areas:
 - i. OnePlan - goals for the year
 - ii. Curriculum, professional development, testing
 - iii. Budget
 - iv. Enrollment and staffing
 - v. Parent/guardian engagement
 - vi. 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.
 - vii. 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.
 - b. Who participates? 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.
 - c. Your role? Ask questions, listen, share with other parents/community members what you learn about how things work, and advocate for our school's needs with the school board and district leadership. 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.
 - d. We meet monthly on 3rd Tuesday, usually stick to 5-6pm. Agendas shift for each meeting with suggested topics that are timely and what is important at Steele.
 - e. More background: **District-led SAC training Thursday 9/28 6-8pm** at Tesla Professional Development Center (2560 International Cir, Colorado Springs, CO 80910 room 116/129). 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.) The Plan itself is written for D11 and state purposes, rather than as a communication tool for parents.

a. **Steele Goals for 2023-24:**

- i. **Literacy growth** - benchmarking at beginning of year (then in Dec and April). Saw good growth last year, but then some fallback winter to spring. Data from last year is from grades 2-5.
 - ii. **Reduce student disruptions** - not frequent issues at Steele compared to other schools ("referrals" to the principal), so looking at the next level down: teacher conversations with parents, what records do we have of those, how are we following up. Developing a system to track and follow-up. How can we get better, learn what will work.
 - iii. **Maintaining high academic outcomes during IB implementation** - huge implementation effort this year with IB. Want to make sure we don't lose pace with other things like newer math curriculum (2nd year of full school implementation on that, had started K-2 before that).
 1. IB work: each teacher developing 3 units of inquiry during this school year. Investing in using IB language during the day to build it into the culture.
 - iv. OnePlan also outlines specific strategies to address each area, describing what success will look like, and the rationale behind the strategies.
- b. How will we keep track of progress to goals? Set measurable ways to know for each area. District checks in a few times per year on how things are going.
- c. Q: How can we manage the huge IB implementation lift, strategically think about what we might not do, or not focus on as much? Mr Capp: Trying to negotiate the extra work load in a few ways. Spanish addition has given teachers an extra planning period, which is new, and does help give more space. Professional Learning Community meetings on Tuesdays, and grade level meetings on Thursdays about IB implementation. Some of the work from last year around arts integration is not required now, though as it's a helpful tool some teachers use it. Also Mr Capp can push back on some requests the district makes, or delay them, or do them a different way, try to understand what's behind the district's asks.

4. **IB Implementation Update** (Rhonda Toombs, IB Coordinator)

- a. Whole staff did 2-day training on IB in August to get things started
- b. Grade-level meetings happening every week with teams of teachers to help them write units of inquiry (toward the goal of writing 3 units and teaching 2 this year). Some of that is going fast, but much of it is slower; starting to work itself out, see how the pieces fit together. Did a similar process last year with a blueprint unit, but that process doesn't entirely mesh with IB standards and formats, so they are adapting that.
- c. Monthly, have a combined staff session to write lessons together, including specials teachers, Michelle Patchen, Meg Ford, Lisa Korte. Goal is to integrate as many viewpoints into lessons as possible - e.g. music and art as part of a social studies unit. Include socio-emotional learning in everything as well.

- d. Learner Profiles - 12 specific character traits identified by IB to support this approach to learning; we are implementing one a week in the classrooms. Meg and Michelle did alignment between Random Acts of Kindness curriculum and the Learner Profiles so they work well together. Steele Stars each week are based on the learner profiles for the week, which Mr Capp says has reinvigorated that process.
 - i. Q: How are the students understanding them, how do they come alive since they are so conceptual? A: Connecting each word with lessons, and teachers have resources, books to connect what it looks like in the real world. Seeing teachers reinforcing the concepts by noting them when they see them. Morning and end of day meetings in each class are another place where they are having conversations: e.g., what did you notice about how someone was principled today? What did you do that was principled today? Even seeing kindergarteners start to grasp the concepts through exposure, repetition, weaving it into other experiences.
 - e. Q: Long-term sub (Ms Tatum) coming in to 2nd grade class, how will that work with getting up to speed on IB? She was previously in Michelle's role at another school, already gotten to know the students a bit. Have a sense that she'll adjust to IB, do it along with the rest of the staff since it's new for everyone.
 - f. Each unit aligns with one of the six IB themes that are transdisciplinary (back and forth between subjects) and conceptual. Identify lines of inquiry (what they'll be learning), concepts and learner profile attributes (more of them mean more well-rounded units), approaches to learning. Most units take about 4-6 weeks to implement. Often can start with science or social studies and then incorporate reading, math, etc.
 - g. Also doing school-level program of inquiry - seeing the big picture of how the units align across the whole school, so there are a variety of topics, and can see how learning stacks across grades. Same themes but get more complex as grades progress.
 - h. 5th graders are working on a new Steele chant that will align with IB
 - i. Also developing policies to align with IB requirements - Rhonda welcomes feedback on them.
5. **Professional Development Update** (Michelle Patchen, Teaching and Learning Coach)
- a. Goal of getting teachers meaningful time to build on professional development that's personalized to them. Every 6 weeks (3 times per year), teachers get a day to spend on professional development - with Mr Capp, Michelle, peers. Talking about self-care, doing planning with others, reflecting on how teaching is going, meeting with Ali Ogren on technology supports. Includes everyone in the building who has contact with kids.
 - b. First quarter meeting focus areas: First meet with Mr Capp to set up professional development goals for the year, which includes 3 goals (personal goal, and data-driven goals tied to math and reading). Meet with Michelle to talk about how

- to get to those goals, what resources and support they need, what modeling/coaching would help. Have two peers observe them and give feedback.
- c. Second quarter: planning to connect with an IB school to send teachers there to do some observation of schools further in implementation, able to ask questions, deepen their practice with IB concepts.
 - d. These days also include planning time, meeting with mental health team (Meg and Lisa) for student support or their own needs, and 30 minutes for them to do something specific toward their self-care.
 - e. Ask them to reflect at the end of the day on what was meaningful, what they need more or less of next time, other support needed.
 - f. This whole approach is different than just setting goals and letting them run with things. Being mindful of making sure teachers have time to have the tools they need to be successful. Extra PD funding to cover subs for these days. PTA also has some resources to cover additional teacher training costs beyond what's in the budget.
 - g. Q: Curious about greatest needs you see over the course of the year. Biggest focus areas so far are reading, math, and IB.
6. **Testing results** from CMAS - annual state test for grades 3-5, how kids are doing against state standards:
- a. Results: Improvement in math in 4th and 5th grade - specifically the growth of their skills. One concern was achievement scores in 3rd grade Language Arts, about 10 points lower than previous years. Figuring out what might have played into that - 3rd is the first year of testing. That year was also the most impacted by Covid (school shut down March of their kindergarten year, and 1st grade was hybrid much of the time). Anecdotally similar in other schools in the district. The 3rd grade team is making some adjustments to instruction to help kids get to a different place.
 - b. School Performance Framework: 6 points higher than last year, which is a great post-Covid recovery.
7. **Enrollment and staffing updates**
- a. Enrollment update so far - 270 kids, up from about 250 last year. Have 10 new kids in 4th grade, 6 new ones in 5th grade - really rare to get such a bump in those grades in elementary school. Probably in part due to the advocacy for IB, Spanish teacher, and getting the additional classroom teacher back to 5th grade. K/1 are full. Per grade numbers: Kinder - 50, 1st - 48, 2nd - 44, 3rd - 43, 4th - 42, 5th - 43.
 - b. Q: How are new teachers doing? A: Hearing great things from parents, new energy. 4th grade teachers seem really well aligned, working well and communicating a lot; Ms Clemens is partnering with Ms Mathews to make sure there is alignment as she adjusts from Adams to Steele. 5th grade - Ms Bomersbach has been in many different grades, 10 years in education. Mr Sinclair has a PhD, taught multiple grades, reading instructor. Intentional

atmosphere in 5th grade, learning each other, asking for help, understanding how things work at Steele. Rhonda has also been a resource for all of them, having taught both 4th and 5th.

- c. Q: How are the new kids/families adjusting? For the older kids, going well - helps that there are so many new kids. Did day-long 5th grade team building day to jump start the community, and a half-day in 4th grade to integrate new students. These grades also have other activities to connect - band, orchestra. Facilitating new student lunch groups to ask questions, get to know each other. Parents can help with outreach too, noticing and welcoming.

8. Next meeting: 10/17 5-6pm

SAC Meetings for 2023-24 (all dates 5-6pm in the library)

October 17

*November 14 (2nd Tuesday, combined with PTA meeting)

December 19

January 16, 2024

February 20

March 19

April 16