



**REPORT OF THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND DISTRICT
INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The Student Achievement and District Instructional Performance Committee met on Friday, February 5, 2021 at 2:00 PM via the Blue Jeans Video Conferencing Tool.

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES

Student Achievement Committee Members

Chairperson Pamela Bowers, Eve Bolton, Ben Lindy

Administration/Staff

Laura Mitchell, Superintendent; Tianay Amat, Deputy Superintendent; Robin Brandon, Director of Facilities; John Chambers, Principal, Walnut Hills; Justin Leach, Director of Testing; Paul McDole, Director, Human Resources; Shauna Murphy, Assistant Superintendent

Community Members

Kimberly Keman and Katie O'Brien, Literacy Program

Young Activist Coalition

Ruth Debona, Owen Derico, Luke Early, Bella Gordo, Kayla Reidy, Yousuf Ahmed Munir, Sophie Papp

Election of Committee Chair

Committee member Bolton nominated Committee member Bowers to serve another term as Chair of the Committee. Committee member Ben Lindy seconded the motion. Ms. Bowers accepted the nomination and was elected Chair of the Committee for calendar year 2021.

Approval of 2021 Meeting Schedule

The Committee agreed to conduct their meetings on the first Friday of each month at 2:00 PM.

January	NO MEETING	
February	02/05/2021	2:00 p.m.
March	03/05/2021	2:00 p.m.
April	04/02/2021	2:00 p.m.
May	05/07/2021	2:00 p.m.
June	06/04/2021	2:00 p.m.
July	NO MEETING	2:00 p.m.
August	08/06/2021	2:00 p.m.
September	09/03/2021	2:00 p.m.
October	10/01/2021	2:00 p.m.
November	11/05/2021	2:00 p.m.
December	12/03/2021	2:00 pm

Review 2021 Committee Workplan

Ms. Bowers advised the Committee to review the proposed plan and provide feedback at the March 5, 2021 Committee meeting.

The District's Instructional Leadership team will also review the plan to ensure that it aligns with the District's Strategic Plan.

Community Presentations

Literacy Program

Ms. Kimberly Keman reported that her goal of the literacy program is to:

- Give children opportunities to apply the skills that they have been taught through exposure to print;
- Build children's confidence by helping them understand how our language works;
- Help children make connections by becoming familiar with consistent characters; and
- Provide educators and parents materials that are simple, purposeful, and specifically targeted to skill being taught.

She also reported that her program is aligned to the District's Initiative: "Every Child Reads by the End of First Grade."

Ms. Keman informed the Committee that her literacy kit contains books and activities that reinforce children's focus skills. Each kit emphasizes a foundational skill and focus skill.

"Ned and Patrick," are consistent main characters throughout the series, building familiarity in motivating students to become engaged readers.

The books are designed to be used in a sequential order, building on simple skills to more complex or for reinforcement.

The books are decodable and contain multiple exposures to sight words with which children often struggle

Ms. Keman asked if the District would be interested in using her Literacy Kits for reading specialists to use as station work with CPS students. She would also in the future, like the kits to be used in classrooms and at student's homes.

ACTION: The Committee will refer Ms. Keman's program to curriculum, the Superintendent and the Performance Leadership Team for their review of the program.

ACTION: The Committee will also refer the request to General Counsel to determine if there is a conflict of interest due to Ms. Keman's working relationship with the District.

ACTION: The Committee will address the request at the March 5, 2021 Committee meeting.

Young Activists

Mr. YouSuf Munir stated that the “Fix our Schools” campaign was started and aimed at making sure that student voices are heard in decisions being made at the schools, as well as building a new restorative system to not punish, but to heal using restorative practices beyond black and brown students.

He also stated that the group was started due to his personal experiences, research that has been done on police presence in schools, and the use of punitive discipline used over restorative practices.

The Young Activist presented 2017-2018 *Civil Rights Data Collection* for black CPS students from the U.S. Department of Education in the following areas:

- Total District Enrollment
- In and Out of School Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Referrals to Law Enforcement
- National and State Statistics and Trends
- Intersection of Police and Ableism
- How to Keep Students Safe
- How to Prevent Harm
- Defining what is Restorative and Transformative Justice
- The “Better Relationship” Argument
- Ways for an Equitable CPS

A copy of the full presentation is available upon request and in the Board office.

Committee member Lindy inquired about the workings of CPS’s “Speak Up Speak Out Group.” Superintendent Mitchell reported that the group is limited to a few students and that she will be doing a presentation about the group at a Board meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Murphy reported that the group started last spring and consisted of student representatives from each of the high schools. Other students will have the opportunity to join the group as well.

The group gives African American students opportunities to share their experiences surrounding racial injustice and inequities. It’s also a place for Cincinnati leaders to hear them and discuss how the youth can be empowered to effectively create change. <https://www.cps-k12.org/families-students/raising-student-voices>

Committee member Bolton highlighted data contained in the report around Black male students experiencing learning disabilities and recommended that Mr. Munir reach out to Aiken Principal Lisa Votaw about creative measures being used at the school that decriminalize the behavior.

She also recommended that Mr. Munir review not only CPS police data, but to also look at data for Charter and Parochial schools in support of his request for police to be removed from CPS schools.

Ms. Bolton reported that the Student Achievement Committee has addressed Mr. Munir’s concerns in past years and that the District has used data from the U.S. Department of Education’s Civil Rights Division to assist in addressing racial issues.

Iowa and Walnut Hills Entrance Data

The Administration provided an overview of the Walnut Hills Entrance Exam, reviewed Fall 2020 exam Report Card data, and student supports once they are accepted into the program.

Mr. Leach updated the Committee on the Walnut Hills exam in the following areas:

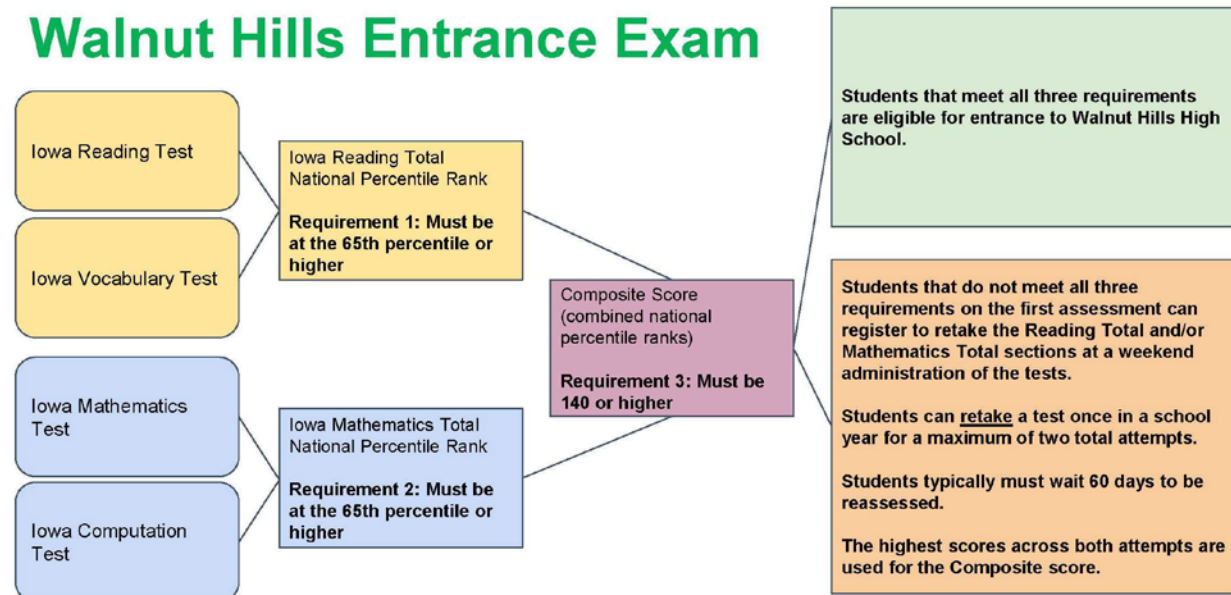
Ohio Whole Grade Gifted Screening

- Ohio requires that public school districts provide whole-grade screenings in the areas of:
 - superior cognitive ability
 - specific academic ability reading/writing
 - specific academic ability mathematics
- Students test once during the K-2 grade band and once again during the 3-6 grade band
 - CPS elects to conduct this testing in 2nd and 6th grade
 - CPS also assesses in the areas of science and social studies
- The fall testing meets the ODE requirement but the results are also used, depending on grade, for entrance criteria to the Gifted & Exceptional programs at Cheviot School and Spencer Center and the Special College Preparatory Program at Walnut Hills High School

Gifted Assessment

In Spring 2019, Cincinnati Public Schools conducted a Request for Proposal (RFP) for gifted assessments, due to the expiring contract with Data Recognition Corp (Terra Nova) at the end of that school year.

The following chart shows how the scores for the assessment are utilized for the exam.



Concordance Study (Iowa v. TerraNova)

A Concordance Study was conducted in 2019-2020 to provide a comparison point between the previous Walnut Hills Entrance Exam (2011 normed Terra Nova) to the newly adopted exam (2017 normed Iowa assessment).

Walnut Hills Entrance Exam – Fall 2020

In the Fall of 2020: October 12- November 20, while in Blended Learning, second and sixth grade students had the opportunity to take the exam. He also reported that the exam is administered at each school building.

The report also includes test completion rates, exam achievement data by ethnicity and school and retest data.

Mr. Leach reported that students are referred by parents, guardians or staff members to take the exam. Families also receive communication about the exam being offered.

Deputy Superintendent Amat updated the Committee on Walnut's Report Card for school years 2016-2017 to 2019-2020.

Chairperson Bowers expressed concern about a decrease in African American students in neighborhood schools not being eligible to take the exam.

Ms. Amat reported that a strong rigorous curriculum is the key, early learning, early college prep work in grades five and six, and access to grade level content.

In conjunction with the Student Achievement Committee, she reported that over the past three years there has been a heavy focus on math. Science will also be included.

Walnut Hills Student Success Center (SSC)

John Chambers, Principal for Walnut Hills updated the Committee on the SSC and reported that the Student Success Center (SSC) has been critical in lowering attrition rates and in finding additional ways to support struggling students. The SSC is an invaluable asset to the junior high program, as well as the tutoring program that supports all students in grades 7-12.

Mr. Chambers reported that a three-year grant (Accelerate Great Schools) was written and awarded and used to hire three teachers to run the SSC.

A full report about the SCC is available upon request and in the Board office.

Committee member Lindy inquired about having an admissions policy for Walnut Hills that would align with the District's Anti-Racism and Equity Policy. Ms. Amat reported that the Administration currently has a data-base and currently looking at admission policies across the country on how to have inclusive entrance requirements. She will share the information with Mr. Lindy.

Graduation Progress

Deputy Superintendent Amat reported that 82 percent of students graduated school year 2019-2020 and 70 percent of students are currently on track to graduate for school year 2021-2022.

She also reported that individual plans are being developed to ensure that students have enough credits for pathways to move forward in graduation.

A copy of the Walnut Hills Entrance Exam-Fall 2020 Update Report is available upon request and in the Board office.

Cheviot Marquee

Facilities Director Robin Brandon reported that the school name has been added to the marquee located on Harrison Avenue for the Cheviot School.

Other Business

Superintendent Evaluation Date/Numerical Measures

Chairperson Bowers informed the Committee that the Superintendent's final evaluation is due March 1, 2021, and that Superintendent Mitchell will update the Board on her progress at the February 22, 2021 Regular Business meeting.

Committee member Bolton reported that the Treasure's final evaluation is on the same March 1 timeline as the Superintendent's.

Committee member Lindy is asking to move her March 1 evaluation after the academic year in order to use student learning data as a measure.

ACTION: The Committee had extensive discussion about the request and will have the Human Resource Director research the legalities in revising the Superintendent's March 1 appraisal date.

ACTION: The Committee recommended discussing the Superintendent's evaluation in an Executive Session.

Courses

Ms. Bolton inquired about which schools are teaching African American History. She also stated that there may be year after next, an AP (Advanced Placement) African America History course from the College Board.

She also stated that the community has asked for a "life course for high school students, and to also have the Administration look into more civics education.

Ms. Bolton reported that the Homeland Committee and the House of Representatives are discussing having hearings on expanding school curriculum to include holocaust education and digital literacy.

ACTION: Ms. Bolton would like to have more discussion about her above three educational opportunities.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Student Achievement Committee

Pamela Bowers, Chair
Eve Bolton
Ben Lindy

Staff Liaisons

Laura Mitchell, Superintendent
Tianay Amat, Deputy Superintendent
Shauna Murphy, Assistant Superintendent