

Act 141 Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2023

5:00 p.m.

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Melanie Cook, Doug Thompson Leader, Michele Rolko, Dr. Sieta Achampong, Jim Thompson, Dr. Tamara Willis, Tim Wendling, Dr. Andria Saia, Christine Anderson, Darnise Anderson, Beth Light, Eugene Spells, Dr. Marisol Craig, Eric Turman (via Zoom), Dr. Travis Waters, Dr. Lori Suski

Community: Charla Plaines, Kia Hansard

Director of IT: Adam Nornhold

Dr. Waters reviewed a summary of what was discussed at the last meeting about Desired Outcome #3

Dr. Waters shared that he and Dr. Craig visited York City SD the prior day to discuss early childhood. Dr. Craig provided the following summary:

- York City modeled their program after School District of Lancaster.
- The program began in 2009.
- York has 8 elementary buildings with one (1) Pre-K class in each school.
- York is experiencing the same staffing issues as Harrisburg SD.
- Their focus is on 4-year-olds.
- 50% of students in K-5 met the criteria for academic assessment (they also use Acadience) – not sure how many of that percentage attended Pre-K.
- Using Blueprint as curriculum for Pre-K.
- They talked a lot about partnerships in York City.
- Professional development is around early literacy – now extended K – 2.
- Talked about MOU with teachers' union.
- They are using early release of students to get professional development time. Students do asynchronous work at home.
- Every classroom has an assistant.
- Libraries are focal points of the schools.
- They meet with local daycares monthly.
- They have a summer PD institute.
- They run a Plan & Learn monthly for parents of students from birth to 3 years old.
- They have a Kindergarten transition team.

Dr. Craig announced that Harrisburg SD is submitting the Pre-K Counts grant application to hopefully fund four (4) more classrooms in 2023-24. There is space at Foose, Downey, and Ben Franklin. HBGSD has only one (1) Pre-K Counts class at Ben Franklin in 2022-23.

Dr. Waters shared that York City SD also works with First 10 to build partnerships for early childhood to 10 years old. They have wrap-around services. Cost is \$35,000 per building. They are trying to sustain the partnership after ESSER funds are gone.

Dr. Craig said parent participation is a huge component of the grant.

Ms. Rolko asked if we can extend the parental supports through middle school.

Dr. Waters talked about structure in placement that often changes once a student transitions back to the regular education environment. Dr. Saia discussed a partnership with United Way as a means of adding to that. Dr. Saia mentioned that there is interest among CAIU school districts to create a regional effort to have a candidate pool using non-traditional hiring for teachers and other staff. Dr. Waters indicated that he met with Shippensburg University to discuss non-traditional paths to teacher certification. Instructional strategy trainings are recommended before people begin to substitute. Dr. Suski shared that Harrisburg SD has some retired teachers mentoring emergency-permitted teachers.

The assigned small group shared the following regarding Desired Outcome 2: Focus on Growth Paired with Attainment:

Desired Outcome 2: Focus on Growth paired with Attainment	
Obstacles: Current decreased growth throughout the year for HSD students; identification of teachers that need additional supports; historic flat academic growth historically; lack of urgency among staff; students that are struggling are more difficult to help catch up	Key Strategies: Increased use of student data to improve instruction; training staff in use of data; developing leadership capacity of principals; shift focus from overall composites and away from explicit skills, give students access to grade-level content
Measuring Progress: How would the District measure annual success in growth and attainment? Would these be measured in data reported to PDE, some other measure, or a combination?	

Dr. Suski asked about the Data Wise trainings that were introduced to the District a few years ago. The administration explained that the protocol involves looking at a problem of practice with the Data Wise team drilling down to root cause. Research-based strategies are then developed to implement. Each building had autonomy to determine focus for each building or grade level. Dr. Craig said that not all new principals have been trained. Dr. Craig said that the action plan should show the school plan and the principals should be sharing the Data Wise plan. Mr. Spells said that not every teacher has been trained – only two cohorts with a maximum of 7 people. Dr. Willis asked if the District has Instructional Coaches and if the Coach could bridge the gap between data and practice.

It was noted that some students cannot read yet report card grades don't reflect that. Mr. Thompson Leader asked how mastery vs. compliance impacts grades. Dr. Saia said that learning outcomes and targets need to be clear. The shift is from learning to read to reading to learn by Grades 4 and 5. Dr.

Willis suggested the foundations of curriculum, data, assessment and indicators that should be in place along with professional development. A common operational vocabulary is necessary. The need to “slow down to go fast.”

As the meeting concluded, Dr. Suski shared that in lieu of the scheduled February 9th Advisory Committee meeting, she was requesting that the committee members attend the February 28th School Board/Receiver General Business meeting to hear the presentation of the Mass Insight Diagnostic report that would be provided by the company.

The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.