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**Red Clay Community Financial Review Committee
September 10, 2019**

I. Curriculum Presentation

Harold Shaw, Director of Curriculum in Red Clay, attended the meeting to present the current programs in Curriculum and Instruction. Mr. Shaw distributed a handout on the talking points of his presentation.

Mr. Shaw explained that Curriculum & Instruction is responsible for oversight of several departments. Most are straightforward in explanation. Unified Arts encompasses health and physical education, arts programming, talented and gifted, and librarians. Instructional Technology is in charge of our one-on-one initiative, along with the help of our Information Systems (technology) group. It is a large group, but there is a lot going on in a district the size of Red Clay.

Mr. Shaw took over the role of Director last year. He has been revisiting the strategic plan mission for his team. They want every educator to be an expert in pedagogical best practices and instructional content, marrying the two. We have focused in the recent years on purchasing new materials and thinking about instruction through that lens as well as the practice of teaching, finding a balance.

Our mission is to ensure all students receive high quality instructional experiences by providing teachers and administrators quality curriculum resources, systemic professional learning and ongoing support and feedback. A lot of our money is spent on the quality curriculum resources. We are in pretty good shape. Professional learning also costs a lot. Sometimes we contract with folks to provide that, and then substitutes are involved, sometimes other resources are needed to make that happen. The ongoing support and feedback piece doesn't necessarily cost us more money, it is just the challenge of getting into the buildings to assess and give feedback to their practices. It gives us the opportunity of conversations across the district in schools with building leaders and classroom teachers.

Ms. Thompson asked if Mr. Shaw was also in charge of the professional development. Mr. Shaw answered that he was and it is a huge challenge for the staff. There are many constraints with our school calendar and a professional learning day at the start of school, one in October and one in April is a challenge for the team. It is very hard when you have infrequent opportunities to be in front of the teachers. Ms. Thompson asked about an academy for teachers they can connect with. Mr. Shaw stated that there are programs out there like PD360, but many of the teachers feel those programs are disconnected to what the classroom teachers need. Working through something homegrown is more aligned to what we believe in Red Clay and our instructional framework based on Marzano's nine high yield practices. It will give some consistency across our entire system, but also autonomy in giving broader instructional practices. If he is at McKean and they have a focus on summarizing note taking, it fits into their work with AVID. We



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are not dictating every aspect of the school day. Certainly, putting in some guardrails so we know that teachers are using researched and evidence based practices.

The curriculum budget is \$3 million from local taxes mostly and a small State professional development allotment. The curriculum budget goes to a variety of projects that we support. Some of them are stipends and EPER for Tier 1 teams at schools that support students, academic and behavioral challenges and some of our MTSS teams as well. We were awarded the Reimagining Math Grant this year for \$200,000. This supports secondary math implementation. We have 2 curriculums that are in their second year of implementation, Illustrative and enVision. The professional learning for those programs are supported by the \$200,000 and it was last year as well. The money supports substitutes and some resources as well as U of DE PDC to help facilitate some of that professional learning.

The ELA grant is new this year. It supports our Ready Gen program. It is our curriculum at the elementary level. We were able to take care of the substitute costs associated with the professional learning and we hired three literacy coaches to help lead that work. We have cohorts in schools that will be receiving professional learning around the framework in literacy in Red Clay.

Mr. Shaw explained that the last portion of the handout listed the final breakout of the \$3 million dollars. These categories are Mr. Shaw's descriptions, not necessarily in First State Financial or Data Service Center descriptors. Curriculum materials is the largest one. Right now, it is Readygen. We are in the 2nd year, but he has the sense, we will be in a perpetual cycle of updating materials. Right now, they are in a very good place. Math expression is in its 3rd/4th year of implementation. Middle Illustrative is in its 2nd year and the high school level enVision is in its 2nd year. They are all highly rated programs and are aligned with common core standards. They have components that tap into our one-on-one technology. Language arts is headed in that direction. Grades 2-5 are Readygen district wide and K-1 will join next year. Ms. Floore added that Grades 2-3 are new this year. Mr. Shaw added it is new and exciting.

Mr. Shaw explained that when they did the math a couple years ago, we started at 4-5 and rolled down. One of the challenges we face is that students coming up haven't worked with the language and rigor of the new program. Teachers see that it is a little overwhelming for them. Mr. Shaw is excited about the monthly professional learning, which was missing last year from the Readygen rollout. Every month the teachers have the opportunity to be with the coaches and discuss the items they have questions about and problem solve together.

Secondary, we are deep in our collections curriculum. This is an opportunity for when we are done with the Readygen rollout to be mindful of secondary language arts. That set of materials was adopted around the time of common core standards. Our team has worked to align the curriculum to the common core standards. That is the next frontier in Curriculum materials. Mr. Matthews asked how far along are we in aligning these materials. Mr. Shaw explained that it has been completed, but he believes the materials



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are older than the standards. Mr. Matthews added that we struggle, and the Board has been presented with Smarter Balance and it is specifically concerning to him that the reading and comprehension is so low. As a sitting Board member, it is very concerning that the Smarter Balance test is criticized as being so tough and we have 10% or 11% proficiency. It is very alarming particularly the ELL students. Mr. Shaw agreed that it is concerning to them as well.

Mr. Matthews thanked Mr. Shaw for the content breakdown. He asked about ELA scope of the supervisors' role in the curriculum, their duties and responsibilities. Mr. Shaw stated it is the same as the other supervisors of the other subjects certainly in the content of the core products. What we ask and expect of them is the same. They package and structure the curriculum in a way that is supportive in the teachers' planning. It is to be thoughtful of the professional learning time and its use to support implementation of the curriculum. The supervisors are out and about supporting professional learning communities. Not necessarily in a systemic way at this point but on request. They attend faculty meetings when needed. Ms. Beard and her team do a lot of the assessment at the early grades as well. They administer the Dibbles assessment.

Mr. Pappenhagen stated looking at the assessments, what is Mr. Shaw's criteria for measuring the success of these programs. Mr. Shaw explained the strategic plan outlines some targets in those areas. Ms. Zimmerman asked when is it time to switch over to a new program in any of the areas, do you reach out to look for something new or are others coming to you with new programs. She realizes this is not just Delaware, but all states, changes are made because of demographics as well. Mr. Matthews stated that he also wonders when to change, as our students aren't progressing as far as we would like.

Ms. Floore asked Mr. Shaw to explain the selection process as it is not supervisors and administrators that make the selections. Mr. Shaw explained that they have a council is a K-12 body. In recent years, because of logistics, have been meeting by grade band, but will go back to K-12 connection. When looking at a curriculum, we have K-12 perspective at the table. These are teachers. When looking at a middle school program, elementary teachers have valuable input that would weigh in to the selection, and a high school teacher would as well. There is a process in which they can make recommendations. We also lean heavily on the State production rating models. There is a national organization that also scores curriculum materials, and that is part of the selection process as well. Ms. Zimmerman asked when the current curriculum isn't working, when do they start looking at a new one? Ms. Thompson and Mr. Shaw stated it is more about being old. Ms. Zimmerman asked if the curriculum weren't what we thought, it would be after a few years, would that be a factor. Mr. Shaw stated that is a scenario that would be addressed, but that hasn't been the case in the past. We have bought materials that we feel good about, they have aged out, and we have cycled in new materials. Mr. Shaw stated he has spent almost \$900,000 last year in just ELA for Grades 2 and 3-transition curriculum. Ms. Zimmerman added that number would be less if you were not adding new material. Mr. Shaw agreed but we are on a cycle for all materials. As soon as we finish this one, we are thinking about secondary language arts and looking at the same dollar amounts.



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Mr. Shaw stated that when he reads the data, SAT data reports as well, there are places we are lower and higher, if you look statewide and nationally, everyone is stagnant. The curriculum materials are money well invested, but we need to think about teacher and administrator practice. Research states that is what makes the difference. Ms. Thompson added that the Board just had this same discussion and as a Board must see that students have grown. That is their charge. When it is stagnant as we see on Smarter Balance, that is alarming. Mr. Shaw agreed. These are all good pieces investing in curriculum and one-on-one technology, we need now to invest as heavily in teacher practice and common set of expectations and common language in Red Clay. He needs to walk in a building and have the same conversation in high school as with middle school. Streamlining and providing guidance to what elements, we want to see in their lesson planning and classroom instruction. Broad enough to have some autonomy but want to see the school plans retain their focus, as McKean does with AVID, but also that you know it is a Red Clay School.

Mr. Matthews asked if more of an investment in professional development will help with that or what is the suggested practices. Mr. Shaw answered yes and no. Once this framework exists, he doesn't believe that will be necessary. He doesn't believe it would dramatically change the work that the supervisors are doing. The work they are currently doing will align with these practices with consistency across the district. Ms. Floore added it is important to look at what has happened. Right now we are on the tail end of a massive initiative through the strategic plan and ELL and special education inclusion. Not that we weren't focused on ELL, ELA and math, the teachers were asking for professional development because there were new kids in their rooms. We have multiple levels of coaching. Mr. Shaw also has ELL under his direction. We can only ask them to focus on so much at one time, and train them on these issues, i.e., one-on-one. That was a rollout that we gave training for a year before the teachers had the devices. We want to be careful we aren't throwing all of it at once and we do it with fidelity so that they are trained. There are limited number of days for Chromebook, new ELA and report cards; we also need to be mindful these are all targeted directly with the strategic plan.

Mr. Shaw stated that more professional days would be great, not necessarily full days, those are difficult for teachers. We are in a place right now, as we have October day and in April. Around the nation, schools have embedded it differently. Mr. Shaw stated we have faculty meeting opportunities as well. A few years back there were ½ days and there was great resistance from families. Ms. Floore added that we haven't had a shortage of substitute teachers like we do now. It used to be that we could have PD and pull teachers and not be disruptive to the classroom as the substitutes were competent. Now, not only do we question the competence, but there are so few available. We aren't at 100% fill rates now and we're at the start of the school year. Mr. Shaw has grants that can facilitate PD, but the fill rates are such that it is hard to do. We have structured them so we can use one sub for two teachers.

Mr. Shaw added that he feels it would be a great bump if we could have 3 days this year. Ms. Floore explained that we start contract negotiations next year and that will be a great



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issue brought to the table. Mr. Matthews would be in great support of that. Ms. Floore stated that C&I has done a great job with the PD with the choice of conferences and materials. Some of it is voluntary, and some the teachers are paid to attend. Mr. Shaw stated his team does an awesome job.

Ms. Floore is always thinking of referendum and history. This is the area that is the first to go when you don't have the funding. The source in pride we have in Red Clay is that we have not taken it out since our last referendum. It used to be \$1 million, which included library books, any type of periodicals as well as materials K-12. When we had the referendum, we had a significant bump that people supported. It is a maintained budget and he have every year. Every year it is something different. We are in the 5th year. We had a plan for the first 4 years, but there are always needs. As we start to prepare, the strategic plan is what drives it.

Mr. Pappenhagen asked if there is a target in improvement and to assess whether the changes were successful. Mr. Shaw answered at the higher level of strategic plan, there is. Mr. Green has asked that there be shorter checkpoints. We use reading inventory and math inventory as part of our assessment suites. We use curriculum-based assessments and will monitor if we are progressing toward that. If we're not, what do we do different. We don't have it currently, but we have more work to be done. We will have an ELA benchmark assessment, but we don't have a target for that at the moment. Mr. Pappenhagen is troubled by that. We want to make a change but have not basis for whether that is successful or not. Mr. Shaw added that Mr. Green has stated that as well.

The Committee thanked Mr. Shaw for his time and presentation.

II. Minutes

The July 2019 Minutes and Transcript were reviewed. Ms. Thompson moved to accept the minutes and Mr. Matthew seconded. The motion carried.

III. CFRC Committee Membership

Ms. Floore explained that Mr. Robert Chase was a teacher in Red Clay and the RCEA representative to this Committee. Mr. Chase no longer works for Red Clay but would like to be considered for a Community Member position and continue working with this Committee. Mr. Chase lives in Red Clay and has children who attend the Dickinson IB program and he has asked to continue.

Nate Schwartz, a current member of our committee, has been asked to be on the Cab Fund. This is conflict of nights. He asked if the Committee were willing to switch to 6:00 PM start time, he would be able to continue in his role of Community Member for this Committee. Mr. Matthews explained that would be a hardship for Board Members when there is a Tuesday evening Board Planning Meeting. Ms. Floore suggested we change the meeting location to the Baltz District Board Room. It would also help with the accessibility of the meeting place as well. Mr. Matthews and Ms. Thompson stated



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that would make it more convenient on Board Planning days as well. The Committee agreed.

Ms. Thompson asked about our new RCEA member. Ms. Floore explained that the RCEA would be giving us a new member. They go through their executive board to ask for volunteers. Mr. Matthews added that the RCEA would be asking for nominations at their next meeting.

Larry Miller, Community Member, is also stepping down. He is retired now and thanked the Committee for the opportunity to serve all these years. If we have the chance for a Red Clay Gala this year, Ms. Floore would like him to be honored as a founding member of this Committee. Ms. Thompson stated there is a Red Clay Foundation meeting tomorrow and they are discussing possibilities.

Ms. Floore distributed the listing of the proposed meeting dates for this year. Some are the same week as the Board meeting, but most are the week prior.

IV. Monthly Expense Reports

Ms. Floore distributed the August Expense Reports. We are at 55% of revenues received. Compared to last year was 56%.

She explained the State of Delaware give back. We still have to give the state \$3 million back even though there are new Opportunity Grant funding. However, there is a new piece of epilogue. It was that we would give the State a preliminary plan. It would be tried up after unit count. Now, they no longer they will allow a preliminary and a final. We believe it was due to too much paperwork for 19 districts each giving in their plans. The State wants one plan. The State still takes the giveback now, however, and it is out of Division II. If you look at Line 13, Technology, it states we are at 168%. In the final plan, we will give that back. We couldn't possibly have received more than that.

Ms. Thompson asked where does it show the State took the funding. Ms. Floore explained it took from Division II. That is our all other costs. At the start of year, that is the funding we use and now have to cover those costs locally. We have only received \$2 of the \$5 million due to the give back. We will take it from Division 5 and Division 3. We take a little bit everywhere. Most of it comes from positions as we cash in 15 positions. The numbers are skewed and will not end up that way. The budget is \$222,000, but they gave us \$374,000. We won't get \$374,000 due to the give back. Ms. Zimmerman asked if the numbers would change shortly. Mr. Pappenhagen asked if it would change after September 30th count. Ms. Floore explained it would change after she does the plan. The final plan won't be done until December.

Ms. Thompson asked why Ed Sustainment was 110%. Ms. Floore explained it was because the preliminary budget is \$2.5 million and the State loaded \$2.7 million. She budgeted lower as part of the giveback will come from Ed Sustainment. Ms. Thompson stated then all of the numbers will be off. Ms. Floore added that the State also only



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prefunds 75% of last year's allocation. It will change from September 30th count, so we don't want to do the plan until December. Ms. Zimmerman reiterated that they don't want to do the change ups twice, so they no longer want a preliminary plan.

Ms. Thompson asked about the positions we cash in. Ms. Floore explained that we do not hire people for the positions given us as part of the giveback. Out of 2500 positions in the district, it is 14. It is not a grand percentage, but a part just like the other pieces. Ms. Zimmerman stated that was in place years ago, no one lost their job. That is correct. We are also net up as we hired over 50 positions. We are over 120 hires to start this school year. That is teaching staff due to retirements, other districts hiring our staff and growth. We are over 200 if you include the paraprofessionals.

Ms. Thompson asked about Academic Excellence units. Ms. Floore answered that we earn 63 and we do not cash any of them in. Our unit count is up in special education so we may have more. Intense and Complex is up. Ms. Floore explained if we earn 63.28, we cash in the .28, as it is hard to use it. The law is you can cash in 35%. If you fail two referendums in a row, you can cash in all of them. 10 years ago, Red Clay cashed in 35% and cut \$8 million.

We ended with a healthy balance and sufficient funds to meet our obligations. Looking at the bottom line, we are at 17% encumbered and 19.4% expended and encumbered. The 30% is an overall target. Ms. Zimmerman asked about Chromebooks, does that fall under Curriculum. Ms. Floore explained there is a line item from the referendum and it is labeled in this report as Referendum Technology and Tech Instruction. It was a specific line item in the referendum that we track to the promises we made.

Ms. Thompson stated that Special Services is at 96.6%. Ms. Floore explained that is not special services is not special education. It is the in-district alternative school, Positive Change. Ms. Floore agreed to allow the contract to process as it is tuition funding. The PO is for the whole year but the invoice is paid quarterly. It is a district placement, but the physical space is out of district. This is not Board expulsions. They are Parkway and Kingswood, the consortium. It is alternative placement with parental consent with a team recommendation. The students do come back to our schools. It is a small program K-8. The high school program is a credit recovery program.

The same percentages hold true for Tuition and Meadowood. The Early Years program moved and consolidated. We do have classrooms at Warner, but no longer at Baltz. They are all at the Central School. The week that school began, two different billboards went up for Early Years programs at two separate churches. The public was greatly confused. We have satellite autism classrooms in specific buildings like Richardson Park.

V. Financial Position Report

Ms. Floore distributed the latest Financial Position Report. The purpose of this report is to project out will a district have sufficient funds to meet its obligations. Even though we



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are solvent at the end of June, will we make it until the receipt of taxes? The projection is until October 15th, when we actually receive our taxes at the end of the month.

Projected one month of payroll is \$4.6 million. The projected available balance as of October 15, 2019 (we will have another two payrolls after that).

Ms. Zimmerman asked if a district sees they will be in the negative, what do they do. Ms. Floore explained that triggers the financial recovery team at DOE. It did happen the first year Ms. Floore was brought into Red Clay in 2007. Red Clay asked the State for a float to cover our payroll. We were solvent for the year, as we had made all of the cuts. Unfortunately, we did not have the cash flow. We asked for a float to cover our payroll, and we essentially paid it back throughout the year. The Financial Recovery Team was in our offices every day and worked with Red Clay.

The report lists what we ended the year with on 7/1/19. How much we will receive in revenue 7/1-10/15. \$10 million is a lot as many pay their taxes early. More will come the following month. Division 2 and Division 3 we already went through on this report. It is flexible money we could use for salaries. Projected expenses of salary and non-salary is listed. Actual unencumbered is cash on hand. We also end the year with encumbrances, which are purchase orders that have not been used, as the invoices have not been received. You can't liquidate a PO, it's a promise. But it is on the report. Every once in a while, invoices come in less than the PO with some left. But it's not much. This report is only regarding local funds, do we have enough to cover the local portion of the payroll. The State portion is more than 60% more.

Ms. Thompson asked if she paid her tax bills early, who gets the interest. Ms. Floore answered that the County does. We pay nothing to the County for the collection of taxes. There is a cost to do that. They coordinate our tax rate, our warrant, and compile that into the invoice. The taxes come to us at the end of the month that it is collected. If you paid your bill in July, we receive it at the end of the month. We receive payments every month, as there are also late payments.

Ms. Zimmerman moved to accept the Financial Position Report as presented. Mr. Matthews seconded. The motion carried.

VI. Presentations

Ms. Floore would like to discuss future presentations at a meeting when more Committee members were present to share their views.

Ms. Floore brought a question from a prior meeting from Ms. Thompson regarding positions. Ms. Floore shared that the Institute for Public Administration did a study. Ms. Floore would like to do this as a presentation next meeting. It is a position study. This was done as part of the School District's Consolidation Task Force. The Task Force had subgroups such as staffing and services. All of the members served on one or more



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subgroups. This report came out from Earl Jaques request and was done by the University of Delaware. It looks at school administrator funding.

VII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VIII. Announcements

The meeting for October was canceled due to scheduling conflicts. It was requested that the meetings be scheduled for 6:00 PM and held at the district offices.

The next meeting will be held on November 12, 2019 at the Baltz District Office Board Room at 6:00 PM.

