

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

**Roundtable Meeting**

**February 6, 2018**

**District Plan Update Roundtable:**.....Dr. Kenneth N. Salim  
Review Progress of Implementation of Initiatives      Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Salim explained that this presentation will be presented in three separate parts, the first part is on the One-to-One Technology Program, the second part is on the Social, Emotional, & Behavioral Learning Framework and the third part is on Targeted Support to Schools. The Superintendent turned the first part of the presentation over to Principal Smith and Ms. Gina Roughton, Assistant Director for Educational Technology, to start the presentation on 1:1.

### School Committee Roundtable February 6, 2018

One to One Program

Purpose: Provide Equity and Access to Increase Opportunity and Achievement by providing all students with access to technology (1.5)

Principal Smith explained that the educational landscape is changing and our students will have to rely and will need access to technology for classroom instruction as much as possible; it has become essential and necessary in order to be successful members of society after graduation from school. This initiative was brought around because all students do not have the same financial resources to have technology provided independently. To make sure all students have access to the latest developments CRLS has moved to a 1:1 environment.

Ms. Roughton explained how the chromebooks were distributed and how they responded to issues. She went over the mentors and family involvement. Many accommodations were included to make sure all families were part of this process.

Timeline

- Phase 1: SY17-18
  - Take-home pilot for all freshman
  - In-class sets for 21 classrooms (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders)
- Phase 2: SY 18-19
  - Take home devices for all high school students.
  - **All Freshman students** are participating in a Take-home Chromebook program
  - Chromebook Orientation – Boot Camp, Digital Dilemmas, App Slam

**Grade 10-12 students** in class with one of 21 pilot teachers are able to use devices daily in those classes.

**Families as partners** in the success of this program  
**Teachers Learning Together** how to impact instructional practice  
Sharing practices & lessons learned via blog  
Observing each other on classroom learning walks  
Developing Chromebooks Field Guide Resource for teachers  
1.5 One to One Program & Instructional Practices

Students have reported that 1:1 technology allows them to work on their own time and not have siblings take up time on the home computer, so our students can complete their assignments sooner.

Teachers are able to use technology without arranging their teaching plans around obtaining a mobile cart or lab usage. Teachers also report that the students are becoming more tech savvy and more eager to learn. Ms. Roughton indicated she would like to get these chromebooks distributed earlier in the summer; and there has been a lot of negative feedback on the heavy cases.

#### 1.5 One to One Program SY18-19 Implementation

Distribution earlier (summer)

Explore case options with student input

Peer to peer professional learning

Discipline-embedded professional learning

Discussion took place around the following comments, questions and concerns:

Ms. Nolan appreciates the update. She wants to know if the problem of intermittent access to wifi in the arts building has been fixed. The ICTS department responded they have not received any reports that it is not working, so most likely it has been fixed.

Dr. Salim invited Mr. Steve Smith, Chief Information Officer, to sit at the table to provide extra insight. Ms. Nolan asked about the chromebooks being used in computer science classes and whether or not Python can be used in these classes. Principal Smith spoke about the RSTA Technology program and the chromebooks with the rest of the school.

Ms. Roughton added that beyond computer science, the chromebooks don't meet the needs of other classes.

Ms. Nolan asked if you cannot save anything, everything is cloud based, if the students are home and don't have the internet access at home, what happens.

Ms. Roughton answered that chromebooks work off line. They cannot collaborate with other students and share information. One of the exit surveys was whether or not they have sufficient access to wi-fi to complete assignments. For students that do not have sufficient access at home, ICTS has reached out to guidance and deans to provide hot spots on loan that would only work with the specific device.

Ms. Nolan asked what can kids access when they are finished with their school work.

Principal Smith stated that what students are doing on the computer has to be appropriate to what they should be doing. There are filters that prohibit accessing inappropriate or non-educational content. By and large the students are using them in the way they should.

Ms. Low-Fleury asked what the capability outside of the classroom is, asking if they can access YouTube. The answer is no because it is blocked in school. They are going to make certain educational apps available. There is the internet, but not for use as a personal laptop.

Ms. Dexter asked have you heard any downsides about 1:1, what is the lifespan of these devices, how much does the extra staff cost?

Principal Smith answered the downside is the cases. They complain about having to carry them everyday. They are sturdy to protect the chromebooks and therefore heavy. Kids try to do snap chat or something else they have no business doing our filters in our chromebooks are too strong, so kids with their own plans, can access around our filters.

Ms. Dexter asked when the kids graduate, will they hand them back? Since they are only good for 5 years, the seniors may get them for one year.

Ms. Bowman had no questions at this time, and thanked the administration for the presentation.

Mr. Kimbrough asked what the digital dilemmas are?

Ms. Roughton responded if someone is sharing about someone else on line, what is your role in that conversation? You are only a witness, who do you notify? They have prepared the students for issues like what if you lost your device, how would you handle it?

Mr. Fantini thanked them for the presentation. He asked what a chrombook is? The answer is that it looks like a laptop but you cannot install anything on it. You have full access to the internet unless content is deliberately blocked.

Principal Smith stated that it is essential in the 21 century classroom that students need digital access consistently or they will be at a disadvantage with other cohorts of students. Our students need to have an intimate knowledge of technology.

Mr. Fantini suggested that the seniors get the old freshman devices since they are only good for one more year anyway.

Ms. Low-Fleury returned to YouTube again, asking if it will change in the coming years.

Ms. Roughton confirmed they are working on how students interact with content. The tools they have now to regulate content is all or nothing, ICTS is not comfortable with "all". They are working to make some content usable.

Mr. Fantini asked if parents take a series of classes, is it true they will get a chromebook for \$50.00. Ms. Roughton confirmed it is a great program "tech goes home" a family driven initiative, not a tech driven initiative.

Dr. Salim went to the next part of our presentation, introducing Ms. Alice Cohen as the next presenter to speak on the first section of the Social, Emotional and Behavioral Learning Framework presentation followed by Dr. Carolyn Turk and Ms. Maryann MacDonald.

Dr. Salim began with the summary page of the Strategic Plans and Objectives. He wants the Committee to know that he meets regularly with Ms. Cohen, Ms. Spera and Ms. MacDonald to problem solve and look at the resources to meet the needs of our students.

Ms. Cohen is delighted to be here tonight and began explaining what Social Emotional Learning means, she read the definitions and stated the kids learn through relationships, there are no toddlers at home reading behavior guidelines.

Our young people have more anxiety, impulsivity, youth hospitalizations and they lead in suicide. If they lack the language to say they hate their parents separation, they will use behavior to reach out and communicate. Their behavior deteriorates quickly, sometimes they run through the building over and over again. Ms. Cohen teaches active skill building in real time. Our kids have toxic stress and don't know how to vocalize it. We need to learn how to see the behavior and help. There has been research on the impact of screen time and social media on the developing brain. The research shows that time spent in front of a screen should be monitored and limited.

### **Levers to Strengthen SEL Practices Across CPS**

Ms. Cohen made it clear that a lead teacher can ask for help, it is not only up to the Principal. There are complicated self assessments also.

- Build competency of students, teachers, and families
- Work with school teams to use data from the SEL Self-Assessment to inform goals and action steps in School Improvement Plans
- Provide targeted support to individual schools as determined by need
- Develop a system of multiple data sources to monitor progress

### **Role of Gen Ed Social Workers**

- 3 FTE's have been added to support six schools. Student behavior is usually about asking if they can do something. If they are anxious, they try to be unpredictable on purpose so that the teacher will join them in anxiety
- Social skills groups, individual check-ins, case management
- Provide consultation to teachers
- Provide direct instruction to whole classrooms regarding SEL, relationships, impulse control
- Create more opportunities for students to have a "moment of appraisal"
- Help families access community "wrap-around" services

Children need to examine what it means to be a friend. Ms. Cohen spoke about the benefits of Social Workers, i.e. they can help families access community wrap around services, get medications and scholarships.

### **Using Multiple Data Sources**

Analyzing connections between the data on:

- ✓ student performance, absenteeism, behavior
- ✓ Data on incident tracking
- ✓ Collecting data about time and activities of social workers

### **Case Management**

#### **SEL Accomplishments**

What have we done: They have created SEL benchmarks by grade. Some teachers are frustrated because some young kids just cannot handle as much as is expected. Ms. Cohen meets quarterly with a team to talk about how well they are doing and also what needs improvement. They created a newsletter for teachers and staff with tips and training content. They have trained countless staff on trauma sensitive classroom practice.

#### **Masters-Plus Trauma Course**

250 staff received training on the neurobiology of compassion fatigue (aka known as burnout) and how to reduce secondary trauma

Yoga movement breaks curriculum

Mindfulness courses

Students currently receiving mindfulness training/practice/support.

### **Questions and Discussion**

Vice Chair Kelly commended the presenters for this wonderful presentation. The stories on community building have been wonderful.

Ms. Nolan stated that hearing about all of this coming together is more about lighting the spark instead of filling the box. She wonders about the City's responsibility to ensure that these opportunities are shared with all kids. It was stated that the Department of Human Services is opening their services to CPS teachers. She also wonders about the SEL self assessment, who is doing it? Ms. Cohen responded it is a school based tool, it has to do with school wide supports, and the point of break boxes is to keep students in the rooms in order to maintain the normal flow of learning.

Mr. Kimbrough asked for an example of what mindfulness training looks like in the classroom.

Ms. Cohen answered that the kids usually sit in a circle, there is a sound, like a chime, and they describe what they hear as related to sensory input. They need to also focus on feeling, i.e. feel their feet on the floor, stomp their feet. Mindfulness becomes a tool that students decide to do on their own without being told.

He also wanted to know how many schools are doing this.

This is 8 weeks long; in the beginning there were only 10 schools across the district, now all schools are doing it.

Mr. Kimbrough asked about A scores.

Ms. Cohen answered that the Ace Average Childhood Experiences score is a test for adults to reflect on their childhood. All children are resilient, some more than others. They don't always think about cause and effect, therefore; they don't care about how they make you feel, if they don't think they will ever see you again. We need to provide support to parents that have kids with tantrums because many parents will say they had no idea other parents were experiencing the same problems. We have to keep asking, as social workers, if everyone is doing okay.

When asked about suspensions, Ms. Cohen responded that there are some circumstances for suspension, but not always. Most kids come to school to see people; they are not really invested in the Common Core and the Strategic Frameworks.

Ms. Dexter talked about having social workers in the schools and screening time. The example of the boy that needed to run around the classroom; if you were the teacher, you would not have been able to do what Ms. Cohen did. She is bringing these issues up because it takes resources to do it – time and teachers. She is looking at it from the point of view of the budget.

Ms. Cohen responded that most kids that are in trauma do not realize there is restoration. SEL practices teach the students that they can fix it. They need to know there is a cost to loss of control. Taking responsibility for your behavior means that you will hear about how you have treated others and you will need to re-shape your behavior. Ms. Cohen stated that they may not need more staff; they may need to allocate their staff in different places.

Ms. Bowman thanked everyone for this part of the presentation and wanted all assembled to know that she is practicing her mindfulness in order to stay focused while participating remotely and she values the work that is being done in the district.

The Superintendent moved on to the third part of the presentation:

### **Targeted Support to Schools**

#### **Underlying Principle**

Dr. Salim explained that we should always be ready to provide financial needs to schools; we need to anticipate the need before we experience the need. Rather than being reactive to budget needs we

should plan ahead. One way to do this is by having data that looks for trends to find out where the most supports are.

### **Process for requesting targeted support**

#### **Administrator files a request in response to the following:**

- What significant issue is your school facing?
- What impact is this issue having on students, staff, an/or families?
- What has the school implemented to address this issue?
- What additional support (s) do you think is needed and for what time frame?
- What impact will this support have?

### **Review Process**

1. Request reviewed by teaching and learning team
2. Recommendations to Superintendent and cabinet

#### **1.5 Targeted School Support**

##### Elementary

- Inclusion instructional specialists
- Funding for after-school programming
- Short-term additional staffing
- Professional development

##### Upper School

- Short term additional staffing
- Coordinated and intensive support from central administration coordinators
- Planning underway for academic support vacation programs for Upper School math

Ms. MacDonald spoke the second part of the presentation. She explained that staff goes out to the schools and gives target support to schools. They all bring different processes of support. They look at a cross section of teachers and administrators across the district.

Dr. Turk explained the process when a form is submitted, it goes through a very sophisticated process. At times, the Principal and Administrators need to come together to address problem solving issues that have not been resolved. They make observations as they visit schools. They look at the data. As they looked at the submissions from PAUS, they look at the type of data, which happens to be concerns around math, the data from the Instructional Leadership Team and Ms Amigon. They looked at the categories of meeting, exceeding and partially meeting expectations. Looking at gaps; what have you done so far? There have been data meetings established to make decisions about changes in the classroom to be further reviewed. What is still missing? They need more support for students before and after school to meet student needs in a creative way and a full time math tutor was the resolution. This recommendation was brought to the Superintendent's cabinet.

Ms. MacDonald stated that for the elementary schools, she gave an example of the Graham and Parks asking for an additional support for SEL learning. Ms. Cohen, Ms. Spera and Ms. MacDonald worked collaboratively for developing a plan. They offered another paraprofessional to help the classroom teacher with this cohort. Ms. Spera assigned two inclusion specialists to go out and support the Graham and Parks school. She gave another example of the Haggerty school; they needed support with writing.

Dr. Adams spoke on support at the Upper Schools. They have some vocation programs planned to provide supports to schools. Teachers always have data that they are constantly collecting. There are

weekly TLT meetings at the central office and the schools. It is not always possible to logistically figure out where to meet. There is extra school time offered to students in need by using February and April vacation time. They are constantly looking at ways to improve the way they do their work to make sure the students are being supported.

Discussion took place around the following comments, questions and concerns:

Ms. Kelly encouraged Dr. Salim to give regular reports in the Weekly to keep the Committee updated. She is glad they are in the schools also, it is good to get a feel of the climate at the schools and it should help build relationships and trust especially for the schools with the most needs.

Ms. Dexter stated that every time a staff member is added to a school, she would like to know. There always seems to be a new person hired, so what happens when there is last minute hiring, it is better to have staff in reserve. Who defines the problem? Sometimes it is the parent that discovers a problem and those in the schools do not see a problem. That in itself is a problem.

Dr. Turk stated that a difference of opinion is not a bad thing. On TLT, they do not always agree on everything but they are able to talk it through, listen, understand different perspectives and come to a resolution. She expects that same type of interaction and conversation happens at the schools too.

Ms. Dexter wants to know if a group of parents can initiate the request, go to the district to begin the process or is it true that if the Principal doesn't feel a problem exists, there is no problem?

Dr. Turk stated that they always want the families to be in the process. She does not want the district to always be the initial starting point. There should always be an exchange of listening and then action.

Ms. Kelly stated that certain groups of parents are not feeling enabled to speak authentically about their child's situation. It has been focused on in the past, but the elephant is still in the room. There are still concerns about what issues will be the stressed at certain schools, with staff and principals and the issues need to be faced and discussed in depth.

Mr. Fantini in the chair at 9:05 p.m.

Ms. Nolan is interested in measures of success. She wants to know how the district judges whether the interventions are working. She has been tracking the number of students passing algebra and she wants to know why the percentile is so low, and has been for years, it raises questions. Did the plan from last year change? There does not seem to be any progress monitoring because the measures we know do not show progress. She also wanted to make sure it is clear that PAUS is not the only school that is struggling. What is progress monitoring really doing, this is a concern.

Dr. Turk responded that the work with the DESE has helped them look at the data and see where there is progress and where there is no progress. They need to focus in on the partially met expectations and they need a little bit more to push them over the threshold. The DESE suggested that they pay more attention to that section of the data that represents standards. Rather than just having the numbers, they attach each number to a name in order to see where each child is struggling and provide support on the particular need of the child.

Dr. Adams stated that there are a lot of things that look different this year from last year. There is a new structure to look at data and planning day by day. It helps to decide how to do teacher collaboration and have longer blocks of teaching time.

Ms. Bowman would like to thank everyone for the presentation. She also suggested that for future meetings; having three major topics in one presentation during a Regular Meeting should be avoided.

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Ms. Nolan asked what the schools are that need the most help and what are the dashboards. She would like to see the specific measures and targets that are being used.

Mr. Fantini also thanked them for the presentation. This system is starting to develop in a very good way. He would like parent voice needs to be stronger. He suggested that schools be audited by outside entities, in order to provide a non biased perspective.

Dr. Salim acknowledged that it is not optimal to focus on this in the context of a Regular Meeting. He wanted to focus on these specific topics in order to have the Members know what the needs are for funding these specific areas, which will be included in the budget.

Dosha Beard  
Executive Secretary  
to the School Committee