

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: August 27, 2018
To: Members, Board of Education
From: Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D.
Subject: Response to the Community Review Committee (CRC) Report

BACKGROUND

For more than four decades, the Community Review Committee (CRC) has united stakeholders around an expansive set of initiatives and supported transformative growth of District 39’s mission. The Community Review Committee, a subcommittee of the Board of Education, draws participation from District 39 parents, community members, teachers, and administrators. Each spring, this committee generates a report on a topic of community interest, resulting in strategic recommendations supported by research. Following a June report by administration detailing the previous year’s progress with the strategic plan goals/outcomes, the Superintendent and administrative team reviews the CRC’s report. Then in August, the Superintendent presents a formal response regarding implementation of CRC recommendations.

CRC’s report, “Differentiation and Personalized Learning¹,” presented findings and recommendations focused primarily on improving the District’s commitment to “provid[ing] an environment that supports the academic, social-emotional, and physical well-being of each student.”

SUPERINTENDENT’S RESPONSE TO THE CRC

The Superintendent reviewed and presented the following strategic recommendations to District 39’s administrative team which includes those presented by the Community Review Committee:

Recommendations for Differentiation

1. District 39 should support increased professional development opportunities in the form of peer/collegial observations. Administration will assist in making time available for teachers to learn from one another.
2. District 39 recommends evaluating current and/or new resources teachers can access to enhance differentiation efforts. This recommendation includes the evaluation of how to

¹ Community Review Committee Report: <https://bit.ly/2K4Zl08>

better align staff roles who support differentiation district-wide such as Differentiation Support Teachers (DSTs) and What I Need (WIN) Teachers.

3. District 39 should evaluate the amount of collaborative planning time available for teachers. Prior to considering ways to provide teachers more common planning time, the district should investigate how to better utilize the common planning time currently available for teachers.
4. District 39 recommends increased teacher trainings on effective collaborative planning approaches centered around differentiating instruction.
5. District 39 should develop a protocol to improve communication about differentiating instruction.

Recommendations for Personalized Learning

1. District 39 recommends using the following district-developed definition of Personalized Learning as a guide to continue investigating the potential benefits for students:

“Personalized Learning (PL) is a guided instructional approach where learning is student-initiated, student-driven, and teacher facilitated. It allows for learning experiences to address distinct learning needs. In a Personalized Learning environment, students take an active role in their learning by exercising their voice and choice in setting learning outcomes, establishing learning pace, and monitoring progress.”

2. District 39 administration should continue to learn about the multiple ways to implement a personalized learning approach in order to determine the best approach for D39 students.

The Superintendent and administration supports these recommendations and acknowledges that each contribute to achieving the intended outcome of the Personalized Learning continuing initiative. In addition, the recommendations made by the Community Review Committee have informed administration’s decision to add Differentiated Instruction as a new initiative this year. District 39 plans to embed these recommendations in the 2018-2019 Strategic Plan under Differentiated Instruction and Personalized Learning as appropriate. The 2018-2019 Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board during the September Board of Education meeting.

CONCLUSION

The Superintendent commends the 2017 -2018 Community Review Committee members for the work and research required to provide the findings and recommendations in the “Differentiation and Personalized Learning” report. These strategic recommendations will assist District 39 in delivering its mission:

² Ibid

District 39's mission is to nurture, guide, and challenge students to become creative thinkers, collaborators, and socially responsible, compassionate, and productive citizens of a global society.

The Superintendent values and appreciates CRC's contributions to the strategic planning process. It continues to ensure that District 39 remain current in best practices. District 39 continues to support the work of the committee and looks forward to future reports.

Respectfully submitted for presentation to the Board of Education,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond E. Lechner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent