

CONCORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONCORD-CARLISLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

120 MERIAM ROAD CONCORD, MA 01742 PHONE: 978.318.1500 FAX: 978.318.1537 www.concordpublicschools.net

May 12, 2010

TO: School Committee

FROM: Diana Rigby, Superintendent

RE: Annual Review of 2009-10 District Goals

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Goal #1- Improve Student Learning

Elementary Schools – Math specialists worked with grade level teams to develop common math assessments and to integrate instructional and assessment materials from Kathy Richardson’s program into the Revised Investigations math curriculum. For Grade 5, special education teachers worked with classroom teachers and math specialists to develop “intervention modules” to provide intensive math support for students who struggle with skill attainment. Principals and math specialists met with grade level teams on a monthly basis to analyze student work and monitor student progress. Flexible math groupings in grades 3-5 provided differentiated instruction for those advanced students performing above grade level.

Kindergarten teachers worked together over the summer to evaluate the first year of Full Day Kindergarten. They shared and developed lessons, revised the Thursday afternoon small group and individual student sessions, and discussed strategies for supporting the social and emotional development of young children. K teachers expanded their use of the ActivBoards to increase student engagement in math and reading readiness activities. Guided reading units were developed and implemented for advanced readers during the second semester.

Language arts specialists worked with grade level teams to develop a comprehensive K-5 Language Arts curriculum map. Curriculum mapping software is currently under review for purchase to facilitate teacher involvement in curriculum development. The Teachers’ College Assessment of Reading was implemented in grades 1-3, and the GRADE assessment for reading in grades 3-5. Fourth grade teachers developed and implemented a yearlong plan for lessons and common reading assignments using the Teachers’ College Reading Workshop model. K-5 students continue to produce high quality writing portfolios using the Lucy Calkins writing program.

Teachers in Grades 2,3, and 5 collaborated with the Science Specialist to revise science units, create curriculum maps, and common assessments. Field investigations have been incorporated in the science curriculum with fifth grade students studying the biodiversity of the Merrimac River estuary environment and fourth grade students raising Blanding and snapping turtles.

Elementary librarians developed and implemented K-5 lessons in Digital Citizenship including Internet safety.

The Director of Teaching and Learning formed an Elementary World Language Committee to discuss and evaluate world language instruction at the elementary level.

CMS - Middle school language arts teachers worked together to improve the coordination of the sixth grade language arts program and the developmental language arts program. Special education teachers collaborated with the language arts teachers to implement remedial reading and writing strategies for special education students. Sixth grade social studies teachers worked together to develop and implement differentiated lessons and common assessments. Art and English teachers collaborated to teach interdisciplinary units in the use of imagery in writing. The principal, department chair, math teachers and special education teachers have been working with an outside math consultant to evaluate and revise the math curriculum and assessment to improve student achievement. Eighth grade math and science teachers worked together to create and implement interdisciplinary units for teaching linear equations and graphs. Eighth grade science teachers also worked with the technology and engineering teacher to incorporate lab experiments in the curriculum units.

The CMS House “huddles” and department chairs met monthly with the principal to discuss instructional practices and student progress.

CCHS – The English department worked with the principal, assistant principal and director of teaching and learning to assess current curriculum and differentiated instructional practices for Grade 9 English. The Grade 9 English teachers identified common texts and student projects, developed and implemented common units of study, developed common criteria for assessing analytical writing and reorganized Freshmen English into Honors and College Prep courses.

The Hooked on Science Program (STEM Academy) supported student seminars in biotechnology, environmental studies, organic chemistry, field geology, and modern physics and engineering. Funded by CEF, the research lab provided unique opportunities for students to engage in independent fieldwork using a variety of instrumentation. The Environmental Field Studies students studied Blanding turtles, mapped invasive species, studied Thoreau’s journals, identified birds and worked on a phrenology project. A Robotics club was formed and participated in the WPI Robotics competition. CEF also funded Patriot Productions to build a school-based film and television production program. Students produced a weekly weathercast in conjunction with CCTV.

Social Studies and Art teachers collaborated to provide interdisciplinary courses in the American Experience.

The Virtual High School provided many online courses for CCHS students. Virtual high school courses taken this year included AP Economics, AP English, AP Government, and courses in writing, math, chemistry, social studies, and interdisciplinary courses. CCHS and CMS teachers piloted Moodle, a free-open source software package, to provide more students with online learning opportunities. Students were able to access course material, take quizzes, and ask questions online.

During the 2009-10 school year students and teachers have significantly increased their use of Web 2.0 technologies to improve student learning. On opening day, the keynote speaker was Alan November, an international leader in educational technology, who reminded us that we are teaching the “net generation” or “digital natives “. He inspired us to think about how we are infusing technology and 21st century education in our classrooms. Digital tools such as podcasts, blogs, wikis, digital storytelling and ActivSoftware were used daily by K12 teachers and students to create multimedia presentations for multimodal learning. Third grade students did online research about turtles, disasters, planets, and a class project on Native Americans and created Keynote presentations and Quicktime movies. Fourth grade students used Skype to communicate with classrooms in England and Japan. High school students learned communication tools to communicate with students in China. Fifth grade students produced digital videos for the Explorers unit. Middle school students learned how to design websites and produce imovies and animated stories. The CMS literary magazine is a school-based blog dedicated to providing students with a creative outlet to express themselves through words and art. Applied Tech classes used Google Sketch Up 6 to introduce CADD software and support the designs for the world language building projects. High school students in the advanced 3D graphics course designed robots, created bio-rendering graphics, and produced animated videos. The high school library was transformed into a 21st Century Learning Commons shifting from primarily print-based support to a digital environment with new tools for reading, learning, creating, and publishing. A web portal for digital information provided students with academic databases and primary sources. The library-media specialist assisted students with advanced web searches, source evaluations, and web-based tools for collaborating, synthesizing, and sharing work. Students used technology to access online course work, check email conference folders for class and school information, participate in blogs and wiki forum discussions, create Powerpoint presentations, and work with web-based platforms and digital tools.

The elementary principals, technology specialists, and director of technology worked together to develop and implement the longitudinal database in X2 to organize individual elementary student achievement data in reading and math.

CCHS implemented the new Global Literacy Certificate Program to “help students gain skills and knowledge for today’s global and interconnected world. “ Requirements included completing the GLC portfolio with foreign travel experience, successful completion of four years of a world language, community service related to world

culture, and a global focus project. Several senior students completed the new program this year and were awarded the Global Literacy Certificate during Awards Night.

Goal #2 - Support the newly hired CMS principal and METCO Director

Both the CMS principal and METCO Director have completed a very successful first year in their new administrative positions. Both were provided mentoring, coaching and direct support from the Director of Teaching and Learning on a weekly basis. I met with the CMS principal several times per month, visited her school, and discussed school site and student issues on a regular basis. The CMS principal participated in bimonthly administrative team meetings with the district administrators. The METCO director also received ongoing support and feedback, and his leadership has resulted in significant programmatic improvements.

Goal #3- Increase communication and partnerships between the schools and community

During the year, all district documents were posted on the district webpage for community access. The director of technology worked with the technology specialists to provide teacher trainings and assistance in developing and maintaining teacher web pages. An increasing number of CMS and CCHS teachers posted student assignments on their web pages or in First Class conference folders. The new technology specialist at CCHS assisted colleagues in their use of the X2 Aspen grade book, and the parent portal will be available in the fall.

Parent satisfaction surveys focusing on curriculum, instructional programs, communication, school leadership, school climate, student-adult relationships, parent involvement, bus safety, and overall satisfaction were implemented. The response rates were high; K5 (50%), CMS (48%), CCHS (45%), and many parents submitted helpful and thoughtful comments. Parents rated the K8 program as good to excellent (86% to 93%); the high school program (79%). Detailed results were posted on the district website and the administrative team reviewed the results to identify areas of concern for further study and action.

The CCHS Community Service Program, 2Volunteer, linked students with a wide range of opportunities to be productive and responsible citizens through volunteer community service. Many students performed more than the required 40 hours of service at Gaining Ground, Open Table, Concord Public Works, Emerson Umbrella, Concord elementary schools, Teen Buddy, Book Pals, TOY program, Public Libraries, Concord Children's Center and many other community organizations.

The Middle School students participated in the "Coats for Kids" project and the elementary students participated in food drives for Open Table, Trick or Treat for Unicef, "Pennies for Peace" project, Halloween costumes for children in need, school supplies and relief for Haiti earthquake victims.

The grand opening celebration of the new Willard school was well attended and very successful in thanking the community for their generous support of the beautiful new “green” school.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Goals #1-6 reported under Student Learning

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal #1 – Support teacher professional development in differentiated learning, common formative assessments, and Web 2.0 tools

During the summer more than 120 teachers participated in 27 elementary curriculum development projects, five at the middle school and six at the high school. Fifty-nine teachers in grades 6-12 participated in ActivBoard training, nineteen high school teachers learned how to use the Dreamweaver program to design websites, and seven middle and high school teachers were trained in the Moodle software to provide online learning opportunities for their students.

The district collaborated with Teachers 21, Primary Source, Teachers As Scholars, and EDCO to provide more than 100 workshops, institutes, courses, and conferences for individual teacher professional development opportunities during the school year. New teachers to the district participated in the mentor program and met regularly with their mentors. Grade level teams at the elementary level worked together on Tuesday afternoons, during AP days (release time) and Building-Based Curriculum meetings to develop common formative assessments in math and reading. At each school site, the technology specialists provided ongoing training in Web 2.0 tools. At the Middle School, teachers participated in ten hours of technology training in First Class, Web Literacy, ActivTools and Rapid Web Development. The CMS principal, technology specialist, and Library and Media Specialist attended the Alan November Building Learning Communities conference. In addition to the week long institutes in the use of ActivStudio, CCHS technology teacher leaders in each department provided training in First Class, Rapid Web Design, X2, and Web 2.0 tools. The new technology specialist provided weekly “Thursday Tech “ trainings in X2, First Class, Web 2.0 tools, and ActivSoftware and ActivTools.

Goal #2 – Work toward productive, fair, and respectful settlement of CCTA contract.

The Deputy Superintendent and Human Resources Director are working with the School Committee and CCTA to negotiate a fair and respectful contract settlement. The CCHS principal and I have met monthly with the CCTA leadership to foster collaboration and communication. We secured the cooperation of CCTA to pursue the Race To The Top Grant for support in the development of revised teacher evaluation procedures.

Goal #3 – Support administrators in evaluating teacher performance.

The Human Resources Director met regularly with principals to assist them in completing the evaluation procedures for pre-professional and professional staff. Site administrators attended Supervision and Evaluation professional development.

Goal #4 – Develop an effective and efficient supervision and evaluation process in collaboration with CTA and CCTA.

The Director of Teaching and Learning, K8 principals, and CTA worked together this year to evaluate and revise the CPS evaluation procedures.

The administrative team and CCTA have made good progress in revising the CCHS supervision and evaluation procedures and will be ready to pilot the new procedures next year.

Goal #5 – Implement the new BudgetSense HR/Payroll database and system with an employee access web portal.

Human Resources, IT, and Business office worked together to automate and streamline communication between the central office and employees. District employees can view current pay data, update emergency contact information, check the status of accumulated leave balances, and complete district forms online. This summer and next fall, employees will be able to submit leave and substitute requests electronically. Moving to a paperless business environment has saved the district time and money.

Goals #6 – Implement employee satisfaction survey, analyze responses, and disseminate results.

After consulting with CTA and CCTA, it was determined that the employee satisfaction survey needed to be developed and administered by an external “survey expert” after contract negotiations were successfully concluded for CCTA. The administration team has met with K12 Insight, an educational communications vendor, to review their employee satisfaction surveys and services.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Goal #1 – Develop a responsive and responsible budget which meets district needs and acknowledges state and town resources.

We worked with School committee and town governments to develop FY 11 budgets that met district needs and remained within levy limit guidelines. Both budgets were approved at the town meetings.

Goal #2 – Manage resources to improve the quality of the educational program and facilities.

We worked with Director of Special Education and principals to reduce the OOD expenses by improving in -district programs. At CPS, we used ARRA funds to hire a

behavior specialist to work with families, teachers, and students with significant behavioral issues. At the high school, we used ARRA funds to hire an additional school adjustment counselor to assist post-hospitalization special education students. We also established a Life Skills Learning Center for developmentally disabled young adults to receive ADL (Activities for Daily Living) instruction onsite at CCHS.

We have maintained partnerships with important community organizations that provide resources for a variety of programs not currently supported through operating budgets. We are eternally grateful for the support from the Concord Education Fund, Concord Carlisle Community Chest, Center for Parents and Teachers, and Concord Carlisle Adult and Community Education.

Goal #3 – Work with the CCHS Facilities Master Plan committee to finalize plans for the high school building project

We worked with CCHS Facilities Master Plan committee to develop a flexible plan to significantly transform the high school. OMR was hired, current building conditions were evaluated, educational specifications for 21st Century learning were revised, and a clear plan to resolve the significant building issues was created.

We submitted a third SOI to MSBA for state reimbursement and was approved for a Feasibility Study. Town meetings have approved the funds for the Feasibility Study and the ballot vote will take place next week in Carlisle and in June in Concord.

Goal #4 – Open the new Willard School on time.

The Willard principal, Facilities manager, and Deputy Superintendent worked daily with the Willard Building Committee, OMR, and CTA (Construction Co.) to open the new Willard School on time in September 2009. During the summer 2009, the Director of Technology, District technology staff, Willard technology specialist, and Willard staff and faculty worked daily to prepare the new Willard for the opening of school.