

Superintendent Report

This month's report to the Board of Education will cover the following areas:

- A. 5Essentials Results
- B. Second Semester School Response to Intervention Reports
- C. State Budget Update
- D. Title IX Update

This is an unquestionably untenable time as we approach a full year without a state budget, and with the imminence of no budget for public schools as we move into the summer. Thankfully, our district enjoyed a fantastic year, but we look ahead to a year that will test our resourcefulness and innovation.

5Essentials Results

An executive summary of the 5Essentials Report is available in your packet. Please remember that this is a requirement from Senate Bill 7 (The law that also held new teacher evaluation and additional compliance reforms) and districts are required to submit to this survey every other year at a minimum.

All teachers and parents are provided access to the survey, as well as students grades 6-12. We typically have not seen high participation. Individual building reports and the district report will be included in next year's school and district report cards that are available online.

RtI Report

I asked each building to provide me with some information regarding what they perceived as "successes and challenges" related to their respective Response to Intervention plans. You can see that each school took a different approach. The elementary buildings are at a point in their evolution where they can report much more on student "products", while GMS and GHS are still working through some "process" pieces. I compliment the support staff and Mrs. Hanson for diligence in trying to promote equity, responsiveness and resourcefulness in serving struggling students to the best of our abilities.

State Budget

While we have no budget for public education at the time of this report, I am pleased to see that the Evidence-based Funding model from Vision 20/20 did make it through the Senate. Much as schools in IL have struggled with more of an “income problem” than a “spending problem”, our state finds itself in the same straits. There isn’t enough to cut or impede in the budget when there are insufficient levels of capital for needed programs and projects. We still hold out hope that the evidence based model could be in place by the 2017-18 school year. At best I believe we pray for some kind of “hold harmless” provisions to get us through 2016-17. I hope to spend some more time explaining the evidence based model at the meeting.

Title IX

In mid-May schools across the country received a letter from the US Department of Justice and the US Department of Education (Civil Rights Divisions for each) that outlined nondiscriminatory practices meant to protect the civil rights of transgender students. The letter was classified as “Significant Guidance”, which indicates that there are no new requirements to existing law, but this informs us how each Department will evaluate whether entities are complying with legal obligations.

Because we receive Federal funds, our district would agree that we will “not exclude, separate, deny benefits to, or otherwise treat differently on the basis of sex any person in its educational programs or activities...” The document guides us to understand that “Schools have a responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students, including transgender students.”

Key to the document is page 3 of 8, Sex-Segregated Activities and Facilities. You will note that it is stated “When a school provides sex-segregated activities and facilities, transgender students must be allowed to participate in such activities and access such facilities consistent with their gender identity.” Please note the section on restrooms and locker rooms. The suggestion is that a school

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“may make individual-user options available to all students who voluntarily seek additional privacy.” We cannot force a transgender student to use an individual access restroom or changing room if we are not allowing it for all students, nor can we require the transgender student to be required to use that facility for their sex assigned at birth location.

We anticipate a flood of PRESS policies and other ISBE regulations will be forthcoming, but I wanted you to be aware of the conversations thus far.