

Parent Communications

April 7, 2013

1. New CMCSS Logo and Tagline

Chief Communications Officer Elise Shelton shared the new CMCSS logo and tagline that have been developed. The NSPRA audit this Fall and AdvancEd accreditation results last year recommended that the district do a better job of telling our story. A Continuous Improvement Committee was formed in the fall for the purpose of looking into a new logo and a distinguishable “brand” for CMCSS. Feedback was received from other communication groups. The new tagline is “The Defining Difference”. Mrs. Shelton said that next year’s parent calendar will feature people and programs that are making “the defining difference”.

2. 2013-2014 Strategic Work

Dr. B. J. Worthington, Director of Schools, presented the 13-14 strategic work. He explained the process for determining the strategic work for the district. This year, department heads were asked to look beyond just the next year and look three years into the future. The four “pillars” of district work have remained basically the same for several years. They are: Improve Student Achievement; Maximize Employee Capacity; Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness; and Engage the Public in Support of Student Achievement. Each department must look at their work in light of these overall goals. Dr. Worthington explained that goals are determined under each one of these major headings. These are often the “big picture” goals and within each of these there may be many smaller pieces of work that have to be done to accomplish the goal. Progress toward the goals is reported to the School Board each month.

Dr. Worthington noted that many times the goals are driven from the outside, such as implementing Common Core State Standards and preparing the district technology for state assessments. Common Core was part of the waiver for the federal Race to the Top funds. In the future with Common Core, the district will be required to give assessments on-line.

These are the large headings and the related goals under each:

Improve Student Achievement:

- **Implement Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics**
Dr. Worthington commented that Kentucky has been the first state to do assessments since changing to Common Core and their scores plummeted. He noted that result is not uncommon when changing curriculum and assessments.
- **Implement College and Career Academies in High Schools**
Dr. Worthington said that approximately 300 students are planning to participate in the academies next year.
- **Align Balanced Assessment with Common Core Implementation**
- **Expand STEM integration in K-9**

Maximize Employee Capacity

- **Develop employee wellness initiatives**
- **Pilot individualized learning plans (ILPs) for teachers**
Each teacher would have an individualized plan for professional development based on their particular needs.
- **Expand recruitment and retention efforts for all employees**

Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness

- **Prepare district technology for state assessments**
- **Improve organizational efficiency through technology**
- **Increase alternative funding sources**
For example; grants – CMCSS is currently in the running for a \$1M high-fidelity grant
- **Continue implementation of energy efficiency initiatives**
- **Assess and improve safety and security at all facilities**
Currently, safety audits are being conducted in schools. Someone goes in and checks to see if doors are being locked and other safety protocols are being followed. Results are reported to the principal. Structural changes may be looked into if there is a need.

Engage the Public in Support of Student Achievement

- **Share district success stories with stakeholders**
- **Improve parent/community connection to schools**
This will include ways to get parents that may work evening or night shifts involved with the students and schools. We will try to find ways for these parents to connect. The district is also offering more translation services to better connect with ELL parents. Also, there are opportunities for parent involvement through PowerSchool.

Dr. Worthington commented that every item has an action plan and someone that is held accountable to the Director and to reporting to the School Board.

Other discussion: A question was asked about students using computers for testing. Dr. Worthington commented that the district is adding on-line assessments so students can get used to the idea of computers instead of paper and pencil. The goal is to get computers in schools prior to assessments in 14-15 so they will be familiar with on-line testing.

Someone expressed concern for high school scores being 25% of student grade when the changeover to new assessments is made. Dr. Worthington commented that our scores would be similar to everyone else in the state because we all have the same grading scale. Student GPA is important, but other factors considered are ACT scores and what classes were offered and what classes a student took. For example, did the student take advantage of AP classes that were offered?

A question was asked about the STEM Academy vs. STEM integration. Dr. Worthington explained that STEM integration is for all students. However, students wanting to enter the STEM Academy at KHS must meet specific criteria to be admitted.

The group discussed ways they might get better responses from other parents to the Question of the Month. There was consensus that the language needed to be simplified.