

2015-2016

***Freeport School
District 145***

Key Priorities
And
Professional
Learning
Opportunities

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Message from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

The New National Standards are changing the face of instruction in school systems across the country. One of the major challenges that school systems are facing across the country is successful implementation of the new standards. Public Education is arguably witnessing one of the most seismic shifts in the history of educational reform.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction will begin the process of developing a *Standard's Based Instructional System*. The elements of a *Standard's Based Instructional System* includes: valid and reliable assessments, safety nets, high quality instruction, instructional materials, technology, and ongoing research on the new national standards. We believe that if these elements are aligned and there is consistency, academic achievement for all students will increase significantly. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction will also focus on providing teachers with high quality professional learning relative to the instructional shifts that are emphasized by the new standards in an effort to prepare our students to compete globally.

The essential question for 2015-2016 will be, *"Who owns the learning and what does it look like in a 21st century classroom?"* We will focus on Student Centered Learning Practices and identify what it should look like in all of our classrooms. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction will also review the district's assessment model, examine high school math, review elementary reading, and look at how we can bring all schools together to engage in meaningful and thoughtful conversation as it relates to academic success for all students. All curriculum reviews, professional learning efforts, and instructional initiatives will be aligned with our district's strategic plan.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction is dedicated to the success of *all* students and is committed to excellence in teaching and learning. We are very excited about the professional learning and curriculum efforts that will take place during 2015-16. We have identified many "pockets of excellence" in the district as it relates to curriculum and instruction, and look to build upon them, in addition to focusing on the identified areas that are in need of improvement.

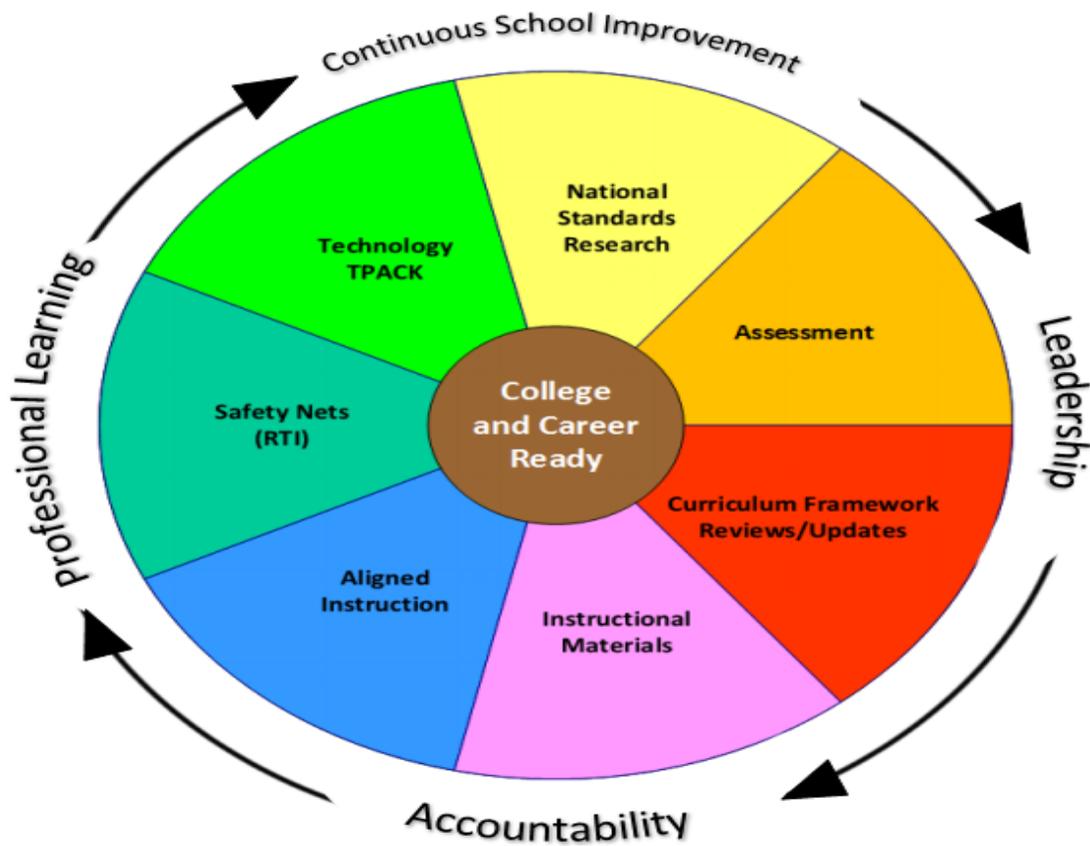
Lastly, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction will continue to provide the Board of Education, parents and community with regular updates regarding our instructional programs, curriculum, and assessment efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Duane R. Meighan, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction



Standards Based Instructional System



District Assessment Committee

Consistent, reliable and valid assessments are essential to begin the process of aligning any school system's instructional system and are needed to measure student growth and to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculums and programs. Freeport 145 will be launching a district-wide assessment committee in an effort to evaluate the current assessment model within the school district. The committee will be comprised of board members, administrators, teacher representatives from all schools and parents. The committee will also develop an assessment calendar for the 2016-17 school year that will include assessment changes recommended by the team. Assessments will be consistent across all of our schools and staff members will be accountable as a result of the recommendations of the committee.

The *District's Assessment Committee* will be charged with the following directives:

1. Review the assessments that are currently in place.
2. Develop and recommend a matrix and or assessment calendar indicating when district assessments are administered, the audience for the assessment, the purpose for the assessment, and whether the assessment is mandated or optional in each content area.
3. Review proposed new assessments to determine how they will enhance the current assessment system's ability to deliver timely, useful data for learning and teaching growth.
4. Review how assessments will be used to support instruction, report to parents, and identify professional development needs.
5. Make recommendations for professional development to ensure the appropriate implementation of the assessment model.
6. Make recommendations for addition or removal of assessments as needs of teachers and students change.
7. Review and recommend changes to the district's report cards if necessary, beginning at the elementary grades, in order to better link them with the state standards and the data produced by the district's assessment system.



High School Math Curriculum Review

The district will continue its efforts to review the math curriculum beginning with high school and work backwards to the middle schools and then the elementary schools to ensure alignment. During 2014-2015, a math committee made up of teachers, coaches and parents began looking at textbooks/resources for across the district. In addition, a Foundations of Integrated Math course was created to address incoming freshmen who needed additional support prior to taking Integrated Math I. In 2015-2016, Foundations of Integrated Math will be offered to these students. This year, a math committee will be formed that will continue to look at Integrated Math and the Traditional Math Sequence. The committee will continue to review the math program and best pedagogical practices. The committee will examine best instructional practices as identified by the new math standards and determine what instructional materials will be adopted for the 2016-17 academic school year. The tentative timeline to arrive to a decision regarding instructional materials will be December of 2015 or January of 2016.

Technology Department Focus

The members of the technology department will continue to work on a sustainable approach to technology integration that supports the district's strategic plan. The department will look at the TPACK Model (The Intersection of Technology, Pedagogy and Content Knowledge) and determine what this philosophy should look like within our classrooms. The technology department is also poised to provide district staff with professional learning regarding Google Apps for Education during the 2015-16 school year. The department will also look at how we can refine and improve the District's website. Lastly, the department will continue to refine and strengthen the FSD145 technology plan in an effort to maximize student learning and prepare our students to become globally competitive.



Elementary Reading

During the 2015-16 school year, we will conduct a review of the elementary reading program in District 145. District 145 staff is directed to integrate the New ELA Learning Standards (CCSS), and realizes that the skills, content knowledge, habits and attitudes addressed in the standards, are minimal expectations for our students. There are no limits to what our students are capable of achieving. It is the responsibility of our staff members to create a culture and climate where *all* students not only strive to realize their potential, but are able to own their learning. A committee will be formed with the charge of examining the current reading curriculum, which includes: pedagogical practices, assessment, and instructional materials. Additionally, the committee will examine how literacy can be embedded across key content areas such as social studies, science and the arts.

Student Centered Learning – Who Owns the Learning?

The district will continue to build on the work that has been done regarding the immersion of “Learner Centered Instructional Practices” in all classrooms. The district has been studying student centered approaches to learning for the past couple of years and has identified four prototype schools. Beginning this year, we will form a committee that will identify what a Learner Centered/21st Century Classroom will look like in Freeport District 145. What does Inquiry Based Learning look like? It is essential that inquiry be incorporated within all classrooms throughout the district. Shifting the responsibility of learning, from teachers to students, will support good teaching, and will help to prepare our students to be globally competitive. Kim Carter, consultant from the Coalition of Essential Schools, will work with the district to assist with this process, along with our C&I Staff, Administrators, Teachers, Learner Centered Instructional Coaches and Staff. The focus will be centered on Inquiry Based Learning. We will be developing a matrix that all schools will implement, within all classrooms, to support high quality teaching and learning. Lastly, we will be looking at creative ways to provide new staff at Jones Farrar Magnet School with training on the International Baccalaureate model which focuses on Inquiry Based Learning.



Bringing All Schools Together

As we move forward to align the instructional system and focus on continuing to fill the gaps related to the pockets of excellence in the school system, we believe that it is critical that all elementary schools function as “one elementary school” and all middle schools function as “one middle school”. With that said, this concept requires not only the alignments of curriculums, programs, and assessments, but also collaboration efforts with teachers, support staff, and building administrators with a central focus of improving teaching and learning for all students. As Stephen Covey said, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing”. In this case, the main thing must be high academic achievement for all of our students. During the 2015-16 school year, we will look at developing PPLC’s (Principal Professional Learning Communities), bringing grade level teachers together to focus on common teaching strategies, and broadening our understanding of what a PLC (Professional Learning Community) should look like in our schools and its impact on high academic achievement.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

A Science Committee was formed during the 2014-2015 school year to examine the new national science standards (Next Generation Science Standards). Some IQWST (Investigating and Questioning our World through Science and Technology) units were purchased for grades 5-8. The committee created an action plan for the middle level curriculum writing that was to occur over the summer of 2015. The committee discussed the necessity of providing NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) training to all K-12 teachers. During the 2015-16 school year, the committee will continue to explore and examine the implementation of the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). Committee members will visit classrooms outside of the district, who have been identified as using the NGSS approach, along with possibly attending a science conference held in Tinley Park in 2015. The district will be reviewing science (K-12) over the course of the next two years and will also begin to look at Social Studies.



Professional Development Wednesday Structure

The structure of Professional Development Wednesday's is as follows on a monthly basis:

1st Wednesday = Principal-Directed {This time should be used by principals to improve use of the new unit overviews and plans, review school-wide learning/discipline data, plan interventions, develop common assessments, discuss an important article, book study, guest speaker, staff-presentations of learner-centered practices, using Acuity rubrics to evaluate constructed responses (inter-rater reliability), evaluating performance tasks (Math ~ inter-rater reliability), or other activities focused on improving teaching and learning. This time should not be used as a general staff meeting.}

2nd Wednesday = Student Learning Data {Follow the district process}

3rd Wednesday = Teacher-Directed {This time should be used for improving use of the unit overviews and plans, common lesson planning, analysis of student learning data and student work, to develop common assessments, collaborative work, grade level planning, team planning, using Acuity rubrics to evaluate constructed responses (inter-rater reliability), evaluating performance tasks (Math ~ inter-rater reliability), or other activities focused on improving teaching and learning.}

4th Wednesday = Student Learning Data {Follow the district process}

***5th Wednesday** {September } = Teacher-Directed {This time should be used for improving use of the new unit overviews and plans, common lesson planning, analysis of student learning data, develop common assessments, collaborative work, grade level planning, team planning, using Acuity rubrics to evaluate constructed responses (inter-rater reliability), evaluating performance tasks (Math ~ inter-rater reliability), or other activities focused on improving teaching and learning.}

In addition to the Professional Development Wednesday structure, the district has scheduled a variety of professional development activities related to our continuous growth and strategic plans. The schedule of professional development activities is further described below. Highlighted activities are those professional development activities that are aligned with our continuous growth plan but will not occur on a late start Wednesday.



Professional Development Schedule

Fall 2015

Date	Facilitator	Location	Topic
August 26, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
September 2, 2015	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
September 9, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
September 16, 2015	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
September 22, 2015	Early Release Day (Principal Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process
September 23, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
*September 30, 2015	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
October 7, 2015	Principal-Directed	All Schools	Follow District Process
October 14, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	
October 21, 2015	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	Follow District Process
October 28, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	
November 4, 2015	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
November 5, 2015	Early-Release Day	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process



	(Principal Driven)		
November 11, 2014	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
November 18, 2015	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
December 2, 2015	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
December 9, 2015	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
December 10, 2015	Early Release Day (District Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning
December 16, 2015	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	

Spring 2016

Date	Facilitator	Location	Topic
January 6, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
January 12, 2016	Early Release Day (District Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process
January 13, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
January 20, 2016	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
January 27, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process



February 3, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
February 10, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
February 17, 2016	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
February 24, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
February 25, 2016	Early Release Day (Principal Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process
March 2, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
March 9, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
March 15, 2016	Early Release Day (Principal Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process
March 16, 2016	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
March 23, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	
April 6, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
April 13, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
April 20, 2016	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
April 21, 2016	Early Release Day (District Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process



April 27, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	
May 4, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	
May 10, 2016	Early Release Day (Principal Driven)	All Schools	Continuous Improvement Planning Process
May 11, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
May 18, 2016	Teacher-Directed	All Schools	
May 25, 2016	Student Learning Data	All Schools	Follow District Process
June 1, 2016	Principal-Directed	All Schools	

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