

Oyster River Cooperative School District

May 10, 2017

ORHS - Library

7:00 p.m.

BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES – Competency Report Card

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Tom Newkirk, Denise Day, Dan Klein, Kenny Rotner, Maria Barth, Al Howland, Michael Williams

ADMINISTRATORS: Superintendent Dr. James Morse, Asst. Superintendent Todd Allen, Jay Richard, Aaron Ward, Jason Duff and Valerie Wolfson

I. CALL TO ORDER:

II. INFORMATION BOARD REQUESTED:

Tom referred the Board to the survey results that were in their portfolios.

Todd Allen shared a packet of all current reports that are sent out to families.

III. COMPETENCIES DISCUSSION:

Al Howland stated that he has a 7th grader and if you are not looking at power school, can you get a “snapshot” of where a student is at?

Todd. Yes, from an administration or teacher and he shared a sample power school report card.

Kenny Rotner asked why the elementary is a number and the middle school is a letter – why the difference?

Jim explained that the elementary is done at a different point in time when the idea of standards was relatively new.

Denise asked what is a standard, and what is a competency.

Aaron Ward answered her question.

Denise asked if you have a student who is “behind” can they be working on multiple competencies.

Aaron answered that it was possible.

Kenny asked how do we approach a child not on an IEP?

Valerie stated that mantra is “growth” children are not standardized. Therefore, competencies support all learners.

Al asked when you see a struggling student – how much effort does it take to address their needs.

Valerie stated that it is not overwhelming – normally I’m dealing with executive functioning skills. We are also providing enrichment.

Aaron explained that there is no difference between a student struggling with a competency or a student with D+ or C-, same issue. The schedule, we hope will provide RTI time, provide opportunity and extra support.

Jason noted that competency allows me to start my day with intervention because I know where they are. I have far more specific information from classroom teachers using competencies.

Kenny noted that in Math you have to build a structure. He stated that math in the high school is a weak spot.

Aaron stated that summer work will target specific areas since we'll know the child's weaknesses.

Al asked if you could blend summer school into REACH?

Aaron said you could evaluate and monitor system for next year.

- A. Educate and inform
- B. Create module for home use
- C. Send home articles
- D. Parent nights by teams

Second half of the year collect formal and informal feedback.

Tom. Is the "meets category" too general? I think a 4-point scale may be more appealing to the parents. "Is this working for you?"

Aaron. We have had countless conversations and I honestly think there are valid arguments for both.

Kenny. I get what you are saying Tom. Who is best to decide what's best for student's education. Experts or public opinion?

Aaron. It is easier to move toward a 4-point system if after year one parent feedback supports having an exemplary category.

Dan. I agree with Kenny we need to be informed by experts. Given the degree of change we need to educate parents. Dan shared concern about current reporting template.

Jim. Reviewed various products – light years ahead of where it was and continues to improve.

Aaron. Next year we will hold parent meetings to help parents to understand how to use the product and review progress in Power school.

Maria. Obviously report card are a foreign language. Everyone needs to understand the language. There needs to be more education about the language in our report cards.

Al. How do we help parents become active in their child's learning.

Tom. Is there a gradation to the competency?

Aaron. I do not think so, if a child does not meet competency then it will mean they need assistance progressing.

Al. Can the accelerated learner move beyond competency?

Valerie. Your question is how to challenge students beyond competency. The current factory model limits us. However, a competency model indicates strengths as well as weaknesses.

Will the 8th grade retain the traditional grading system that bridges the gap from 8th to 9th?

Todd stated that is a Board decision. The proposal as it stands is a 6, 7 & 8 grade proposal.

Jay. Currently Math courses differ. Algebra is grade based and all other Math courses are competency based is competency based.

Michael. Do the students in world language have to meet in all areas to get high school credit?

Jay. Yes.

Tom. Perhaps the 8th grade could over a two-year period, maintain current grading practice.

Jim stated that even if we have a dual grading system, it is important to hold all staff accountable to competencies but allow 8th grade to use numerical grade.

Tom. Similar to major goals and expectations isn't that similar to competencies?

Yes, similar but more specific.

Todd. Move away from math averages. Bedford High School use grade based upon competency/grade

The issue of 8th grade transition became a focal point of the conversation in the 2nd half of the workshop.

Aaron. Change is a process/teacher who are not for it may change once they try it.

Maria. What is the next step?

Denise. Approve the reporting process.

Dan. Are you ready to make a recommendation.

Jay. Yes, super majority of staff are ready to move forward.

Todd. The recommendation is a 3-point scale.

Denise. I personally have heard 3 vs 4. I'd like to see us move forward.

Aaron. Again, the scale is a modification that could be made at Board level.

Al. I would like to see end of year report. What the results are after one year.

Jim explained the process. As with any proposal or recommendation the Board has the right under policy to change the reporting system through amendments to any motion. The work of the staff over two years has been extensive and thorough. The last step is Board approval of the reporting tools, hopefully on May 17th.

Denise. Educating parents is important as is a thoughtful procedure for reporting.

Workshop ended at 8:48 PM.