



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo: 2019-20 School Improvement Plans Mid-Year Update

TO: School Board
Superintendent Kocanda

FROM: Barry Rodgers
Director of Innovation, Teaching and Learning

February 25, 2020

Background:

School improvement plans for the 2019-20 school year were shared at the October 22nd Board Meeting. School improvement teams have been working on their school improvement plans by developing and executing action steps in relation to their goals. As noted in the October 22 memo, School improvement plan goals expand upon our academic goals of reading and math featured in the District Improvement Plan by incorporating other important aspects of child development. In alignment with our district strategic emphasis on social-emotional learning, all schools have crafted school improvement goals focusing on the critical area of social-emotional learning with an emphasis on adults (per CASEL research). Utilizing the theory of action from CASEL, a major focus of our work is on adult learning and building capacities in the five social-emotional competencies in our staff.

Crow Island School

Crow Island's SIP supports the shared goal by providing professional development opportunities and seeking participation by all staff members. In addition, utilizing the research on Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) structures from the previous year's SIP plan, the staff is establishing an SEL MTSS structure to support all students' social emotional and behavioral needs.

Highlights include:

All staff have participated in professional development opportunities related to wellness and self care through district and building (Institute days, faculty meeting times- SALON meetings, release times, lunch and learns, outside workshops and conferences). Survey data shows that 91% of teachers are reporting that they have been able to put what I have learned in Professional Development experiences this school year in practice in the classroom and it is having a positive impact on them.

SEL school wide values were shared with students and with parents. Through work at faculty meetings, staff created common building wide expectations. Classroom teachers continue to have morning meetings and teach explicit SEL lessons based on the Four B's (Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible, Be a Learner) and Peace Power. Crow Island is utilizing an SEL screener to inform decisions regarding interventions based on specific SEL needs.

Greeley School

Greeley's SIP supports the shared goal by providing professional development opportunities for staff, along with creating a mindfulness space for staff. In addition, the SIP team is also focusing on the staff's need for professional development targeting instructional practices for addressing the regulation needs of students.

Highlights include:

Seven staff members took part in regularly-scheduled CHAMPS user group (group coaching for classroom environment). Three staff members participated in behavior coaching through NSSED. Twenty-one staff members have attended professional development on restorative discipline. Additional professional development including opportunities for teacher to teacher training will occur in the spring.

Greeley adapted their SIP plan to include a calming/sensory/regulation room for students. The space features weighted tactile bean bags for sensory input and tactile exploration, a sand table for therapeutic play and sensory input, marble mazes (recommended for ADHD, sensory integration disorders, and autism) and yoga mats for yoga/calming exercises. In addition, Greeley worked closely with their PTO to revision cafeteria space for students, as volume levels and layout of the space impedes on student self-regulation and social interactions.

Hubbard Woods School

Hubbard Woods's SIP supports SEL by increasing both the number of SEL learning topics at staff meetings and the number of activities that support adult emotional well-being. Furthermore, the building has established a goal to increase their knowledge, understanding, and practice of Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

Highlights include:

Staff are utilizing a kick off SEL activity at staff meetings to model SEL practices. Teachers have organized a walking group and yoga lunch group to promote self care and SEL for one another. Regular SEL topics have been incorporated as part of the Principal and PTO newsletter. Staff created and led an SEL professional development opportunity for all teachers based on positive attitudes and being there for others.

An MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) committee was formed and has had regular monthly meetings to discuss and implement the effective use of social emotional and academic support processes. Hubbard Woods has been actively collaborating with NSSED to understand and utilize new best practices with staff.

The Skokie School

The Skokie School SIP goal provides frameworks and strategies to help staff work toward balance through understanding what depletes and supports well-being, both individually and collectively, with the goal of staff members taking ownership of replenishing their energy in order to be a positive contributing member to the Skokie School community. In addition, each member of the staff community is working to support the students' and each other's social emotional learning through collaboration.

Highlights include:

Staff survey data taken in the fall and winter shows that staff has an increased awareness of what depletes their energy and is able to more consistently use strategies to replenish their energy on a consistent basis. That being said, there was a decrease in the percentage of staff who almost always or often feel energized and at their best during the school year. Skokie is actively working to enhance staff energy as the year continues by inviting staff to write notes of appreciation, adding in time at staff meetings for staff to connect, and incorporating messages related to the power of gratitude, mindfulness, and positive psychology.

Skokie revised their advisory program so that teachers work collaboratively to focus on SEL and have meaningful conversations and activities to support student SEL. Student and teacher feedback from the new advisory practices and developing curriculum has been very positive. The student leadership group (Lions of Leadership) has provided ideas and feedback for SEL topics and helped to serve as student advocates. NSSED coaches have collaborated with multiple teams and staff

members to create and revise behavioral plans for individual students, help teachers integrate positive classroom management strategies, and implement a positive, consistent lunch/recess plan.

Washburne School

Washburne School SIP team is striving to develop a shared understanding around the value and impact of social emotional learning both for staff self-care and for students' holistic success. To support student needs, professional development opportunities targeting instructional practices addressing de-escalation of students and non-compliment behaviors are being provided to staff.

Highlights include:

The Washburne SEL Team has met regularly and presented to staff on three occasions, focusing on Adult SEL and increasing staff knowledge around the 5 CASEL competencies. SEL practices have been incorporated into every staff meeting in the form of brain breaks, inclusive openings and an optimistic closure. Washburne has also made it a priority to extend their adult SEL efforts with parents by holding parent coffees, meeting with the PTO, and through the weekly school newsletter.

Washburne has worked closely with NSSED to examine practices that inform best practices to support challenging student behavior and SEL. NSSED coaches have conducted classroom observations and shared strategies with teachers. Teacher leaders and building administrators have attended professional development on managing behaviors, special education and inclusive practices. Administrators have established weekly check-ins with social workers to understand and address student issues in the building. Weekly Student Support Meetings have allowed the school to be more proactive providing student services and professional development to staff.

The District utilizes a common School Improvement Instrument that provides coherence, clarity and meaning for all levels of our learning community. The tool is designed as a "living document" to promote progress toward our goals and to facilitate innovation. For the mid year update, each school improvement plan has been updated to capture ongoing efforts and evidence of progress.

School Improvement Plans for each school are listed below:

Crow Island School

Greeley School

Hubbard Woods School

Skokie School
Washburne School

Alignment with the District 36 Shared Vision

In developing School Improvement Plans, we emphasize the connection to our Shared Vision. Our District has the core belief of attending to the whole child and through specifically addressing Social Emotional Learning will help us live our Shared Vision. We believe that when faculty and staff have a strong understanding of SEL, they will be able to advance the following key tenets of our Vision for every student:

- Every Student to Flourish
- Innovation
- Experiential learning
- Support and challenge
- Continuous growth and achievement
- Making a difference in the world

Next Steps

Schools will continue to implement School Improvement Plans with the support of our Administrative Team. An end of year update of School Improvement Plans, complete with outcomes and reflections, will be shared in June.