

Date: Thursday, June 23, 2016
To: Larry Nyland, Superintendent
From: Michael F. Tolley, Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Re: Friday Memo for June 24, 2016

DIVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:

Department of Special Education

Special Education MOU Update:

As of June 20th, 2016, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Seattle Public Schools have completed regional reviews in all five regions of the District, as well as Central Office. We have received results for the Northwest, Southwest, Central and Northeast Regions, all which demonstrated substantial compliance. This has resulted in the release of \$2,000,000 in previously withheld federal Individuals Disability Education Act (IDEA) funds. OSPI is in the process of completing a review of documentation for the Southeast Region as well as Central Office and we anticipate those results within the next month.

Aggregate Regional Results To-Date:

- Properly Formulated Initial Evaluations: 94.7%
- Properly Formulated Reevaluations: 95.6%
- Students receiving Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and related service as outlined in IEP: 95.9%
- Procedural Guide Implementation: 100%

We have identified areas for increased monitoring and proactive responses around timeliness of Individualized Education Program (IEPs) and Evaluations, properly documenting service minutes through student schedules and the service matrix in IEPs, and need for increased accessibility to accurate data.

The site visit process with OSPI has assisted the Special Education Department to continue implementation of our Procedural Guide; Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability Measures and Professional Development Plan. Feedback and input received through this process inform adjustments we have and will continue to make to these tools to better support all Special Education personnel.

Building administrators have expressed a better understanding of their role in leading special education services, as well as how to ensure services are being delivered as outlined in students' IEPs for their schools.

Department of School Operations

The following information was provided in response to a School Board Director's questions regarding the Open Doors (1418) Youth Reengagement Program with Seattle Colleges.

What is the value of the contract?

\$230,000

What does the program look like on the ground?

Students will attend this program at the Seattle Vocational Institute (SVI) which is one of the Seattle Colleges sites, building at 2102 South Jackson Street. The classes are on the 6th floor of this building.

How many students do we anticipate?

This is a new program. Currently, there are 8 students attending this program. The goal of the program is to reach every student who would benefit from this type of learning environment. The current site could hold up to 200 students.

Do they have a physical space at SCC, and if so, what does that look like?

Yes, SVI has the space on the 6th floor. Students enroll and attend an orientation where they are tested in reading, writing and math to determine current levels of performance. This allows the students to start instruction at their current levels of performance. Next, students begin GED preparation courses. The course is 3 hours/day 4-5 days/week and is self-paced. Therefore, students complete the course at varying lengths of time.

Once students earn their GED, they get free tuition at Seattle College.

At SVI, students can access a case manager that assists with a variety of needs from getting a driver's license or a social security card to other basic needs like housing.

How does this coordinate with Nova?

This program is not tied to any SPS high school. Dr. Perry attended the meetings so he could better support Nova students who might benefit from this program. In past years, former Nova students attended a 1418 program in Shoreline.

Would it be possible to get a meeting with staff to have a better explanation of our alternative secondary offerings?

This program is staffed by Seattle College employees, not SPS. We could reach out to the college once the program is running in the fall.

Equity Factor Description:

A School Board Director has asked for the definition of equity factor that is applied to the mitigation request spreadsheet.

Please find attached to this update the 2015-16 Equity Factor document that explains how the equity factor is generated and the low, medium and high values. This is a complex formula and is under review by the Research and Evaluation Department. The number was originally generated in the absence of segmentation reports after the first year of the SBA state assessment.

Department of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Materials Adoption Budget Information:

The following information has been compiled to shed light on some of the budgeting challenges within the adoption process.

Background:

- The task of a materials adoption committee is to recommend materials that best meet the committee's approved criteria within the approved budget.
- The budget is clearly stated in the Request for Proposal (RFP) for vendors, and vendors are expected to submit proposals that meet those budget requirements.
- It's important to note, however, that in order to promote an unbiased review, neither the adoption coordinators nor the adoption committee sees the vendors' submitted pricing until the second round. In fact, adoption coordinators and committee members do not interact with vendors. The committee's task is to select the *best* materials within the budget – not necessarily the *lowest cost* materials.
- The RFPs, with the budget information, are submitted only to Purchasing, which forwards the vendor materials to the adoption team without revealing pricing.

Given this process, why would materials that exceed the budget be forwarded to the adoption committee in the first round?

- Vendors, in their typical RFP practice, will include components that may inflate pricing beyond what core materials would cost. Vendors do this intentionally, knowing that the district may choose to select different components or flex its budget to add more.
- The final committee recommendation typically does not include all of the components put forward by a vendor.
- Purchasing does not do an in-depth cost analysis in the first round for two primary reasons:
 1. The adoption committee has not narrowed down essential components to determine accurate pricing.

2. Purchasing avoids time-consuming analysis on materials that may not be considered in the second round.

What is the budget difficulty facing the K-5 English Language Arts (ELA) Adoption Committee?

- For most adoptions, materials and professional development costs are fairly straightforward.
- A K-5 ELA Adoption is more complex, with vendors offering a wide range of options.
- For example, some vendors in the current adoption have presented pricing that exceeds the budget. Some of this pricing includes options like a digital component, such as e-readers, an optional add-on that significantly inflates the total possible price. It's possible, however, that a vendor may not be able to come in under budget even after optional components are eliminated.
- Purchasing has not been able to precisely analyze costs because of the complexity of the proposals and because some vendor pricing information is incomplete.

How will district manage to keep the recommended materials within budget?

- The second-round field-testing will help the committee narrow down specific components to make sure that cost stays below budget.
- The Purchasing Department will then work with the adoption coordinator to complete an in-depth cost analysis based on final component requirements.
- Next, The Purchasing Department will use this information to negotiate a final price with the vendor.

What is the district doing to potentially avoid future budget issues with adoptions?

- Purchasing is working on the RFP process to potentially require more specific pricing information from vendors. For example, the district may require vendors to provide a price estimate for core materials in addition to the estimate for add-on components.

Department of Advanced Learning and Highly Capable

Advanced Learning and Highly Capable Questions:

School Board members have posed several questions regarding Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning policies, procedures and practices. We have prepared the following Q&A to address these questions.

1. **Is there consistency as a district regarding what we offer students identified as Highly Capable or as Advanced Learners?**

Highly Capable

Our policies and procedures require that Highly Capable students are offered the opportunity to participate in cohorts “in order to provide peer learning and social/emotional opportunities for these students, teachers with experience and/or

professional development on the academic and social/emotional needs of these students, appropriate curriculum, appropriately differentiated instruction, deeper learning opportunities, and accelerated pacing.”

Advanced Learners

For Advanced Learners, our policies and procedures require that these students are offered programs that include “differentiation, content acceleration, and deeper learning opportunities. Delivery mechanisms may include: differentiated instruction, groupings of Advanced Learning (AL) students to work together in subjects or on projects, self-contained classrooms, or accelerated pacing.”

Consistency

These policies and procedures indicate that delivery mechanisms are to be consistent not in their structure, but in their ability to meet the learning needs of students. Consistency in AL programs does not refer to a scripted curriculum across programs and services, but an expectation of learning achievement and instructional quality appropriate to the needs of the learners.

AL Team Support

Given this definition of consistency, designed to reflect site-based decision making, the AL team offers identification and support to any and all schools that request it. For example, the team has worked with more than a dozen individual schools this year, and the team has provided supporting documents for all principals as they develop their Continuous School Improvement Plans. The team, however, does not provide scripted curriculum nor is it able to require compliance.

- 2. Does the definition of services or programs differ from school to school? Do we allow principals or schools to reinvent the delivery model of programs and services that are mandated and/or defined by Board policy. If so, is that equitable?**

As noted above, no single delivery model is mandated by policy. While characteristics of services and programs are defined in policies and procedures, delivery models are site-based and are to be designed and implemented according to the needs of the student population. This is consistent with the definition of equity in instruction. Policies allow for a range of specific delivery models.

For example, some point to the “One/Two Year Ahead in Content” model as a potential consistent approach, but this doesn’t always work under new learning standards. New standards often emphasize the instructional goals of Quality and Mastery rather than Coverage and Content (depth over breadth). Additionally, because individual schools make site-based decisions about materials, scope and sequence, supplemental resources, and more, schools then determine the best delivery model to meet the needs of their student population.

3. And, we shouldn't say we offer something when we do not. That appears to be the case for Spectrum at the very least.

As noted in previous responses, although the self-contained classroom model is one of the many possible delivery models for Advanced Learners (Spectrum students) specified in Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs), it is not mandated by the district in policy nor in procedure. Delivery systems for Advanced Learners are site-based decisions. As of the 2016-17 school year, no self-contained Spectrum classrooms remain in SPS elementary schools. Decisions by schools and principals not to offer self-contained Spectrum programs were decisions made with the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) approach and the district race and equity lens. Many middle schools have also moved away from self-contained Spectrum classrooms and are offering students instruction designed for their appropriate readiness level.

Over the last five years, many district schools have embraced the MTSS model and strive to support all learners in all classrooms. In compliance with the 2011 MTSS implementation, appropriate services for Advanced Learners are to be provided at every school as a part of Tier II Strategic Interventions.

Superintendent Procedure 2163SP (Supports & Interventions) states that “Tier II strategic interventions are designed by grade level, department or building teams based on district developed guidelines and are delivered primarily in small groups in the general education setting by a general education teacher, but may be delivered in other or additional settings or by other trained staff as appropriate to the specific intervention. Interventions are defined as a change in instruction to a student in the area of learning or behavioral difficulty to improve performance and accelerate progress to end-of-year benchmarks.”

In the case of Advanced Learners, end-of-year benchmarks may be standards that are above grade level after mastery of grade-level standards has been demonstrated.

The MTSS approach, coupled with superintendent initiatives for Equity, Diversity and Eliminating Achievement Gaps, brings the practice of the removal of students from their neighborhood elementary schools and transporting them to Spectrum sites into question. This practice is not mandated nor mentioned in policy, nor in procedure.

The Advanced Learning team continues to support teachers districtwide with professional development in effective differentiation to meet the needs of all diverse learners in any classroom. In particular, our trainings focus on how to provide appropriate challenge, depth, enrichment and rigor for Advanced Learners.

4. What proportion of our teachers has taken Professional Development in differentiation?

Advanced Learning has offered 14 sessions of Professional Development (PD) in differentiated instruction at the John Stanford Center over the past two years. In addition, AL staff has facilitated full-staff workshops at over a dozen schools that have requested

that support on differentiation. Additionally, teachers have worked on differentiation through the Formative Practices Institute, applying the practices of MTSS and Dufour's Four Questions. Differentiation also took center stage through sessions this year provided by other departments, such as Math and English Language Arts. Additionally, all teachers who were in teacher prep programs in the past three to five years have significant training in differentiation strategies.

Though the Advanced Learning team facilitated professional development in differentiation at every school that requested it this year, we are aware of the very little time educators have for professional development. Attendance is not mandatory. We are not able to provide the exact percentage of teachers that have had professional development in differentiation. We do believe, however, that it is a significant number for the aforementioned reasons.

5. What is the purpose of the principal changes proposed in the 2190SP draft?

- To align with Superintendent Procedure 3130SP (Student Assignment Plan)
- To clarify certain procedures
- To address minor additions to written procedures to align with current practice
- To continue adherence to practices guided by the race and equity tool

6. Are the Smarter Balanced Assessments psychometrically appropriate as screening devices?

Advanced Learning does not use any screening devices to keep students from participating in the eligibility process. WAC 392-170, however, mandates the use of multiple data points to determine student eligibility. One of the data points used is student achievement data. The district has adopted Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) as the measures of student achievement. Smarter Balanced Assessments provides the current achievement data in Reading and Math for grades 3-8; MAP scores are used for grades K-2. The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee uses achievement data as one of several data points for Advanced Learning identification.

Historically, the validity of each district-approved achievement test (WASL, MSP, MAP, SBA) and state or nationally normed assessments (Stanford, ITBS, CTBS) has been questioned. Regardless, if the district wishes to provide additional or alternate achievement data, Advanced Learning would incorporate that data as well.

In Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs), it is important to note this excerpt, which emphasizes that the committee considers numerous data points: "The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) reviews each candidate's test scores and supporting documentation to determine eligibility. SPS's established eligibility thresholds are not absolute disqualifiers; teacher and parent input are also important considerations."

7. Is there community engagement in and outside of the HCC community?

The Advanced Learning team engages the community in a number of ways, both inside and outside the Highly Capable community.

- The Highly Capable Advisory Committee meets monthly.
- The West Seattle Highly Capable Pathway Focus Group meets monthly.
- An Advanced Learning team member sits on the Equity and Race Advisory Council.
- An Advanced Learning team member participates in the Southeast Seattle Education Coalition.
- The Advanced Learning team continues to consult with the Thurgood Marshall Equity Committee.
- A 2014-15 community task force made wide-ranging recommendations on Advanced Learning programs and Highly Capable services.
- The Advanced Learning team has surveyed stakeholders on various issues, including a districtwide survey of administrators and kindergarten teachers on Early Entrance to Kindergarten and a statewide survey of districts regarding appeals processes.
- The Advanced Learning team has increased communication with historically underrepresented families, including universally administering the Cognitive Abilities Test screener to second-graders in Title I schools.
- The Advanced Learning team has broadened its outreach to the teacher community through professional development offerings, including partnering with English Language Arts for training, offering differentiation PD to all SPS staff monthly, and providing training at school sites on Differentiation, Active Learning, Unit Planning and Formative Practices.

8. Are the Superintendent Procedure 2190SP (Highly Capable Services & Advanced Learning Programs) conceived, reviewed and written through the race and equity tool?

Advanced Learning has consistently and specifically used the Racial Equity Analysis Tool. As a result, we are:

- Working closely with the Department of Equity and Race Relations
- Providing second-grade universal testing at Title 1 schools
- Offering special consideration for underrepresented student populations
- Providing free appeal testing for free and reduced-price meal eligible students
- Considering private test results in conjunction with, rather than in place of, district administered cognitive and achievement test results in the appeal decision process.

9. Pathways: What is the linkage between the different programs and how is capacity overlay addressed here?

“Pathway” is a specific term related to admissions policies. Capacity concerns are also in the realm of Admissions, not of Advanced Learning. Linkage might refer to the fact that students have choices, such as participation in Advanced Learning Opportunities,

requesting assignment to a school based on their designation, or joining a Highly Capable Cohort site if eligible.

10. Timeline: What is the latest date that this can be addressed as an action item by the School Board to address testing in fall 2016?

Advanced Learning will not have the entire Advanced Learning team on board after June 23. The team would need to make any adjustments to the published policy so that time is allocated for the policy to be circulated in order for action to be taken in August.

11. How will this address the day-to-day testing snafus of recent years?

The challenges this year were not in the testing itself, but rather revolved around scheduling, communication and processing of referrals due to an antiquated system that has been scheduled for upgrade, but put on hold by Technology Services at the end of August 2015. Efforts are under way to upgrade the system in a secure way. The time frame to make this happen is closing quickly. Advanced Learning is relying on this upgrade in order to eliminate the probability of facing the same challenges in 2016-17.

12. What data can you supply regarding testing? a) taking the tests; b) passing the tests; c) appealing the tests; d) gaining entry by appeal – data disaggregated by race and/or ethnicity.

Total number of students who were referred (total number tested)

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2010-11	907	284	235	117	3341	5107
2011-12	898	311	272	444	3470	5637
2012-13	763	247	283	454	3149	4985
2013-14	630	218	311	494	3011	4826
2014-15	637	249	307	630	3486	5341

Students who became HC eligible

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2010-11	102	15	24	28	503	685
2011-12	89	12	20	61	469	675
2012-13	70	21	22	51	500	670
2013-14	139	11	43	105	630	959
2014-15	101	14	46	98	529	863

Students Who Appealed Successfully for Advanced Learning by Year and Ethnicity

	School Year	2010-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
Race/Ethnicity							
Asian		34	29	28	18	21	18

Black		9	6	16	0	2	1
Hispanic		11	9	13	8	7	5
Native American		1	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed/Multiracial		8	24	22	20	31	33
Pacific Islander		1	0	0	0	0	0
White		177	163	189	148	163	167
	Total Success	249	241	277	197	226	236
Total NUMBER of students who appealed by year		495	497	359	360	488	480

Total number of appeals filed by race in 2015-16: A=45; B=8 ; H=15; M=63; W=332

Attachment: 2015-16 Equity Factor Description