

To: Dr. Tammy Davis  
From: Dr. Pamela Miller  
Re: Middle School Principal's Report  
Date: August 7, 2009

### **Curriculum, Instruction, Professional Development and Assessment**

- Teachers spent the first two weeks of July doing unit planning using UbD backward planning, which begins with establishing learning objectives and then designing lessons to achieve those learning outcomes. Mary Cavalier, our restructuring school coach, offered one day of professional development on the planning process and one day of follow up support. All teachers are using a common UbD template for unit planning and a common lesson plan template that cues the incorporation of Marzano's research based instructional best practices. Teachers in science and social studies had an opportunity to plan with their new curriculum.
- Science teachers received one day of training on the implementation of the Foss Inquiry Kits. The kits contain a multitude of interactive inquiry lessons using lab based activities, many of which incorporate web-based technology such as virtual exploration/observation.
- Dr. Miller met with Kevin Sousa to review the computer maintenance that needs to be done on the laptop carts. Our goal is to have a usable cart in each curriculum area of the building. There will be a limit to what kinds of programs will be able to run on these computers. They will be able to be used for writing and we are exploring a process to allow students to save work to our network when using the laptops. This is an important problem to solve to allow students to save work for assignments and for building their portfolios.
- Dr. Miller, Ms. Kruger and teacher leaders attended the three day NSDC conference for Teacher Leaders and the Administrators that Support Them. The focus this year was on working in a learning community, which is the model for our Restructuring Plan. Sessions and keynote speakers were impressive and inspiring; we came back with many new ideas. The group will meet to share what they learned when we meet for our last two days of leadership training on August 11 and 12.
- Interviewing continues for the middle school special education position and for two paraprofessionals.
- Dr. Miller and Shannon Kruger met to discuss plans for the new Learning Lab. Kevin Sousa will be installing two additional computers into the room for student programs and we are planning to meet with Lori Kruger and the teacher, when hired, to plan the structure and details of the program operation. We will base the design on an RTI model where all students can be referred for support to improve skills needed to be successful in the regular classroom. The learning lab will also

provide some of the support required by student IEP's. Assignment to the Learning Lab could be long-term or short-term, depending on the support needed.

### **Community and Parent Activities**

- Dr. Miller met with Maria Pearson to discuss goals for the WRMS web page. We plan to link curriculum "Course Expectation Sheets," which contain a course description, topics of study, common lessons and assessments and technology skills/projects for portfolio work. Teachers worked on creating these expectation sheets last year and during their summer work time. These expectation sheets will ensure that all students who take a particular class will have the same learning experience no matter who is teaching the course. It is particularly important when more than one teacher teaches the same class, such as Algebra. It moves us toward consistency and having them linked to our website communicates learning objectives to parents/community.

### **Student Activities**

- The last of the student summer programs will be wrapping up shortly. Credit Recovery, Summer Boost, SPED EYP, individual tutoring and enrichment programs were all held at the middle school. It was very exciting to see students engaged in learning over the summer!
- Dr. Cadarette and Dr. Miller met with counselors and Scott Powers, Director of the State Scholars program, to discuss how we can continue this program without the School to Work position that was cut from the 2009-2010 budget. We have a plan to continue, however, there are aspects of the program that will need to change. We are committed to recognizing and promoting State Scholars and forming alliances with our business partners that support student learning and prepare them for the world of work.
- Dr. Miller met with Student Council Advisors to discuss a plan to make student council more of a leadership program. We discussed ways we could allow students to have more of a voice in what's happening in the school. We also discussed re-opening the school store. We have a plan to use the store space off the cafeteria; we were able to relocate the offices that were occupying this area.

### **Recognition**

- Congratulations to Shannon Kruger for completing her last course needed for her principal certification!

### **Other**

- Dr. Miller has prepared a first draft of the WRMS 2010-2011 budget and has had an initial review with Cheryl Somma. Work continues to provide budget detail and prepare a budget narrative.