UMS Restructuring Committee Notes
Second Whole Group Meeting
November 25th, 2008
6:30-8:15PM

Present: Erika Uskali (ROE), Jean Korder, Donna Oakes-Novak, Patrick Russell, Nancy Clinton, Jason Pound, Theresa Feller, Natalee Steffen, Chris Bazell, Meagan Welch, Kevin Erlinger, Carolyn Jenkins, Leslie McClintock, Dionne Webster, Angie Schoonover, Jennifer Rohn, Judy Pece, Melani Ferchow, Don Barbour, Elizabeth Scherer, Susan Baker-Ory, Joe Wiemelt, Bruce Rumminie, Deb Tamimie, Karen Schreiber, Erin Lodes, Catherine Hunter (UIUC), Gayle Jeffries, Lisa Monda-Amaya (Parent, UIUC), Don Barbour, Jan Hari, Kathy Barbour, and Don Owen (chair)

Welcome and sign in

Review of Norms

Comments/Questions

Question: Are we an advisory committee or a decision-making committee? Who makes the decisions?

Response: We will be making decisions. This committee will not use a consensus-building format. Some of the decisions that we make may not be the final decisions. The BOE has the power to accept or reject our recommendations, so at times we are an advisory committee. We are also an advisory committee because most of the decisions are made by the building during the restructuring process, not during this planning time. The framework will help the district and building move forward. Many of the decisions about what school improvement looks like will be done at the building level, but there will be more involvement in this process than ever before by Central Office, and possibly ROE.

General Comments About This Committee's Work

- It is okay for you to talk with your teammates, etc, about what happens during these committee meetings. Please just respect the norms.

- The subcommittees are going to need to be representative of the overall faculty of UMS.

- It is okay to meet during the day, but we have to check with Kathy Barbour about professional leave calendar availability.

Brainstorm: What are the major areas of concern related to not meeting AYP? (Or, what are the major areas for focus in order to improve student achievement?)

Social Emotional Learning Goals
Culture of the school—unified front and everyone on the same page
Writing
Parent involvement
Summer program for special education students (reference in current SIP)
Lots of extra things for special education teachers (special education workload-- current SIP)
Student motivation
Special education modifications—Who is responsible?
Effective progress monitoring for math
Data-driven instruction—how to use the data we have more effectively (particularly for reading and math connections)
Special education and reading collaboration
What data do we have to show that the programs we have in place are working or not working?
Keeping students actively engaged and learning
How do we support teachers through change?
Having meaningful instruction
Are the materials and activities in class really tied to what we want the kids to learn (essential questions)?
Focus on core programs
Importance of differentiation
Effective collaboration for teachers
Community building
Plan for special ed students and "high flyers" to ease them into their school day (motivate them and make them more comfortable)
Minimizing homework for special ed students, especially for students with reading and math deficits
Exploring different service delivery models for special education
Improving attendance
For service delivery, what is working and can it be replicated?
How to keep students actively engaged? Maximizing instructional time
Meeting the needs of low-income students
Continuing work of Summer Academy
Core curriculum goals and collaboration with special ed
How to meet the needs of African-American students
Build of community for students—they need to care and changes need to be important to them
Special ed "step down" (when special ed are dropped, there needs to be a transition)—levels and tiers of support

ELL students are usually in low-income subgroup—we need to look at Hispanic students in readings and all ELL students (it will on the data eventually)
Program model for ELL students
Truancy rate going up
Differentiating instruction
Educating staff about different disabilities (staff development)
64% free and reduced lunch—students aren't getting the nutrition that they need from school meals
Subgroups
Collaboration among special ed and regular ed teachers (behavior issues, as well as academic)
Parent engagement
Systematic ISAT prep
Meeting the needs of kids who aren't reading well (systematic approach)
Common building vision and goal setting
Consistent system for the timely data gathering
Staff development for analyzing data and using data to improve instruction
When and how are students getting supports (besides special ed)—do we know what supports are available and are we using them?
Issue of separating kids into special or regular, as opposed to talking about kids as "struggling"
Transition between 5th and 6th grades for struggling students who aren't labeled
RtI research—how are students responding to interventions?
Parent communication and education—putting interventions in family-friendly language
Successful inclusion of far more African-Americans in higher-level math classes (Can this be replicated?)
AP English as a counterpart for AP Math
What technology tools are available to help struggling kids?
Decision-making model for tough choices
Staff input about professional development to meet the needs of struggling students

ADDITIONAL BRAINSTORM ITEMS WERE POSTED ON THE BRAINSTORM BOARD, AND WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE WORKING DRAFT OF THIS DOCUMENT.

Grouped Ideas = Subcommittees
- Core Instructional Practices/ RtI/ Strengthening the Core Program (orange)
- Special education (teal)
- Climate/ Social Emotional Learning/ Behavioral/ Attendance (yellow)
- Parent Involvement (purple)
- Data (green)
- Big Decision-making Things (red)

Comments/Questions

Question: Should this be broken into reading, math, etc? Do we want to lump everything together?

Response (from committee members): That would be something for later. We are just making a framework that will be put into place by the building. The "core" is defined as two things… What 80% of our students experience as they move through UMS, and the most essential learning and instruction. This includes issues of differentiation and modification.

Question: Shouldn't we be focusing on how we can help struggling students with supports? Will strengthening the core curriculum do that?

Response: Strengthening the core must do that. We need to ask ourselves, how do we keep students from struggling in the first place? Supports can be both in the core as well as in the special education delivery.

Question: We have a reverse bell curve now. What does it mean that we strengthen the core when there are two groups of students? Are there two cores?

Response: The goal is to provide opportunities, supports, and instruction that erases the bi-modal achievement gaps. We need to ask, what is it that we are doing that seems to be working and what is it that we are doing that needs to be fixed? (in the core, in special ed, and for targeted students)

Question: What are we looking at when we look at strengthening the core?

Response: What does RtI look like? What are we doing for that 80% of the kids (base of the triangle)? We need to define levels of support. The trick is that every one of those kids needs to get the core (accessible to struggling learners and challenging to high achievers). The core has to be strong, challenging, interesting, and engaging.

Subcommittees

- **Core Instructional Practices/ RtI/ Strengthening the Core Program:** How do we strengthen the core?

- **Special education and Supports for Struggling Students**: What interventions are working? What changes can be made to Special Education Service Delivery to help students who have IEPs?

- **Climate and Parent Involvement:** How do we provide a safe, respectful, equitable environment? How do we create a representative community of students, educators, parents, and families?

- **Governance/ Framework for Decision making:** How do we make decisions using data?