



# Altmar Parish Williamstown Central Schools

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## **BOARD LEADERSHIP REPORT**

**Committee:** ESA

**Date & Time:** 11/19/2020 @ 5:30pm

**Member reporting:** Karen Oakes

**Anticipated BOE Date:** 12/10/2020

### **Agenda/Reports:**

- NYS Department of Education on State Assessments
  - NYS 3-8 Assessments are still planned as scheduled.
  - At this point, we are planning on the 3-8 tests being computer-based.
    - The state has said there will be flexibility. Their exact words were, “Being mindful of the variability statewide in the manner that instruction is being provided to students across the State in response to COVID-19, NYSED is carefully considering providing schools much more flexibility than had been necessary in past years in the local scheduling of the spring 2021 operational tests. More information about such flexibility will be provided as the test administration grows nearer in time and the situation demands.”
  - January 2021 Regents Cancelled
    - To qualify for an exemption, the student must meet one of the following requirements:
      - Be currently enrolled in a course of study that would ordinarily culminate in the taking of a January 2021 Regents Examination and earn credit for such course of study by the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year; or
      - Between September 1, 2020 and the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year, successfully complete a make-up program for the purpose of earning course credit; or
      - Be preparing to take a required Regents Examination to graduate at the end of the first semester of the 2020-21 school year.
    - Cannot replace existing passing score

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- No score on transcript; exam name denoted with an "E"

- District and Building-wide Committees that relate to how we support students for success

Naomi described the teams that exist to support student achievement and social emotional health.

- Attendance Committee: Meets weekly to discuss state guidelines for attendance reporting and to determine efficient and effective ways to capture student attendance data in a remote model. Although most students are logging their attendance on remote days via the Google Attendance Form, we are seeing inconsistent engagement levels across the board, as evidenced by missing assignments and late work or incomplete work. We'll come back to this conversation a bit later to discuss possible supports and solutions for this.

Especially during a Pandemic, how to we measure student attendance and engagement?

The blend of synchronous and asynchronous makes this even more challenging.

- Signs of Suicide Committee: Working on developing a plan to roll out a process to help identify students in need of mental health support.

Members wondered about the grade levels that would receive the survey and supports of this program (SOS).

Concerns about the middle level students' mental health, especially during the Pandemic.

Members wondered about purchasing the 7-8 program. It is sold as a 9-12 program only at this time.

Response from an SOS team member, need to consider the amount of support needed to effectively roll out the program. Need to be thoughtful and prepared to address student needs.

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports Committee: Districtwide committee that is meeting weekly to review existing documentation and make revisions so that plans align to most current federal and state guidelines relating to student support (academic and behavioral). We then have a team at each building-level, as well that meets to discuss student data, identify students for support services, and outline interventions to close learning gaps.

Panorama dashboard is almost ready and will allow for SEL student surveys. The surveys and platform will also help with classroom supports and mini-lessons.

Second Step Curriculum is used in grades PreK-K at the Elementary School. We are looking to expand to grades 1 & possibly 2 this year. Second Step lessons are taught by social worker, counselor and school psychologists in K. PreK teachers are teaching their own lessons.

STAR assessments for grades 7 & 8 are up and coming to assist with decision-making and supports at the Middle School level.

- Technology Committee: Meets twice a month to discuss instructional software needs, management of devices, potential purchases, technology support, and to convey information about data security and privacy.

Question about teacher involvement on the Technology Committee. Naomi explained that there is a plan for an instructional technology committee, but that hasn't happened yet. Stay tuned!

Concerns about notification of the approval of websites, apps, etc. There are numerous places for

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staff to look for updates. Naomi will discuss with Tech Committee and look into sending a notification when items have been added.

- Principal Olsen sent out a letter on November 17<sup>th</sup> to families about instructional expectations for remote learning. JSHS Schedule to change December 3.

District will be sending out a communication/letter regarding instructional expectations for remote learning.

An interest in expectations at the Elementary School was also noted.

## Discussion:

- It was suggested at our first ESA meeting of the year to monitor the hybrid and virtual models of instruction.
  - When we compare last year's remote learning experience to this year's what are we doing better?
  - In what areas can we continue to improve?
  - What are the current barriers to student success?
  - If there were no limitations (i.e., budgetary, time, contractual, space, etc.) what supports would you like to see offered to our students to help them succeed in the hybrid/remote environment?

Discussion about these questions:

Little to no instructional change between the spring and the first ten weeks for grades 9-12

Edgenuity still considered a significant challenges for High School Students. Concerns that kids don't understand why they aren't receiving instruction from their teachers...

Concerns about the definition of "instructional tool" – lots of room for interpretation

Students are very confused and "stuck" – want direct instruction from their teachers

JSHS schedule changing – supposed to change on 11/18 but due to need to go remote, postponed until 12/3. The change will get the students in front of their teachers.

Concerns about lack of books and opportunities to read without a library.

Brainstorming on partnering with local libraries and access digital libraries.

Need to better define instructional expectations for remote learning.

Need to consider/re-consider Synchronous and Asynchronous models... how to blend them

Can we consider using the Citi BOCES app to get books online – technology team needs to be able to download the app onto Chromebooks for families during Tech Help time on campus

Worries about the COVID slide

Upcoming student engagement survey – Calls will be made in order to get feedback from all

Need for student and family voice

Important to remember that we are in the middle of a Pandemic and traditional methods will not

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be effective, especially given the needs of our community. Grading, scheduling, decisions about instructional expectations need to be made, but there has to be room for flexibility and grace as student and family situations vary widely. We need to keep this at the forefront when we are planning, making decisions and responding to student work.

Barriers identified: Motivation; Grading; Access to Technology/Internet; Access to Books