

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

2229 E. Buck Road Pennsburg, PA 18073

Pupil Services/Special Education Committee Meeting

March 22, 2021

Ex-Officio: Mrs. Melanie Cunningham, President CHAIR: Mrs. Judy Maginnis, Pupil Services/Special Education

MEMBERS Pupil Services/Special Education: Kerry Drake, Mike Elliott MEMBER C & I: Dana Hipszer

Superintendent – Dr. Allyn J. Roche

Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Andrea Farina

Director of Curriculum & Instruction – Kim Bast

Curriculum & Instruction Supervisor – Sarah Rothermel

Assistant Director of Special Education–Carol Giblin

Special Education Supervisor – Amy Coyle

Motion to approve February committee meeting minutes made by Judy Maginnis and seconded by Dr. Drake.

MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Framework: Dr. Farina reviewed the MTSS presentation that was shared at the January 2020 committee meeting. MTSS has 6 critical components: multiple tiers of instruction and intervention; problem solving process; data evaluation; communication and collaboration; capacity building infrastructure; and leadership. MTSS is an evidence based model that takes the data and integrates it into an academic, behavioral and instructional framework. There are varying degrees of intervention/enrichment based upon student needs and is for all students. This is NOT about Special Education or getting students into Special Education. It is about providing students with the academic, emotional and behavioral supports that they need.

The “practices” of MTSS include:

- All instructional and support services are delivered through a multi-tiered system
- Decisions regarding instruction/support are made using a data-based problem-solving process
- All problem-solving considers academic and behavior (student engagement) together
- A district-based team is responsible for monitoring performance of schools to determine the overall “health” of the District
- A school-based team is responsible for monitoring student performance to determine overall “health” of the school environment
- Parents are engaged in the problem-solving and instruction/intervention process
- Student engagement is a primary priority
- Lesson study (planning) is the focus for effective instruction
- Early warning systems are in place to ensure a focus on prevention
- The focus is on Tier 1 and the integration of Universal Design for Learning Principles
- District leadership is held accountable for implementation and outcomes
- The school (Principal) is held accountable for high quality implementation of MTSS as well as student outcomes

The system of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 is designed so that when a students need Tier 2, they are still receiving Tier 1 and when students are receiving Tier 3, they are still receiving Tiers 1 and 2.

A self-assessment of MTSS was conducted at each building. The findings indicated that teams were functioning very differently, based upon the level. There were concerns about interventions that were being deployed at Tiers 2 and 3 and who was to be deploying them. The model practice of coaching was non-existent. A district mission was developed that established district and building level MTSS teams, professional development has been provided, standardized procedures and processes have been established and we have analyzed resources and supports and formalized at each tier level for academic, behavior, and mental health. A tiered support and intervention flowchart was designed by administrators and specialists to assist all teachers with the process of MTSS.

Working through each tier can take 6-8 weeks. If growth is not occurring, new interventions may be needed or moving into the next tier may be necessary. It is a team decision based upon the data collected during that time period. If a student has been provided interventions at all tiers and there is still a concern for growth, consideration for an evaluation may be warranted.

In January 2021 a literacy and MTSS team was put together and they have been meeting to develop and enhance the MTSS framework.

Sarah Rothermel spoke about Link It and its function. Link It is our data warehousing software and provides us with analytical information. It also provides student tests, rubric based assessments and it now has an intervention manager feature. This feature compiles all of the data and allows us to set criteria that show what standards the students have a strong handle on. We can then group our students based upon areas of need and then develop appropriate interventions. They have developed an MTSS dashboard which will allow us to develop, track and analyze the interventions.

Judy asked if the general education teachers have provided much feedback as to how they are feeling about the process. Dr. Farina said that she didn't believe they are comfortable yet, especially due to the current learning environment due to COVID.

Melanie asked if there is anything the Board could provide to assist. Dr. Farina answered that at this point we just need time and support with analyzing data.

Dr. Drake asked how you tell if the MTSS process works. Dr. Farina answered that the intervention programs have a scientifically research based and have efficacy behind them. They give a rate of growth expectation. The strategy of the team is to look at the rate of growth based upon the length of time and fidelity of the intervention. If the student is not meeting the rate of growth then the intervention process will be looked at. When we look at meeting grade level standards, there are multiple measures: curriculum based measures (how are they performing in class and the interventions), benchmarking data (MAP) and the intervention data alone.

PA Climate Survey: the survey is done in collaboration with Pennsylvania and it is looking for students in grades 3 through 12 to respond about school safety. The results are provided in September and it is foundational to us for writing grants around school safety. The surveys are split for grades 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12. There is also a staff survey around school safety and how they perceive their students feel about school safety.

Parent trainings: Carol stated that there are two more sessions for this school year. The one in April is called Understanding the IEP. In May the training is Autism Initiative.

The next Pupil Services/Special Education meeting is April 26, 2021. Dr. Drake made the motion to adjourn and Judy Maginnis seconded it.