Liberty Tech Board Meeting

Monday, Nov. 12, 2018

Directors present: Andrea Ferguson, Michael Boylan, Kenneth Hamner, Eric Ochsner, Esther Goss, James Fiderio, Doug Waldorf

Non-voting members: Principal Mike Stewart, Teacher representative Melissa King, PTO Representative Taylor

Meeting called to order: 7:06 p.m., Eric motion, Andrea second, passed unanimously

Public comment: None

Principal’s Report: Dashboard - focus on CCRPI - Advanced Education Accreditation

Eric asked about withdrawals - seven students of last month - higher than expected. One was going to hearing, others were moving, went to Coweta because of bus transportation, don’t remember others, but nothing that was alarming.

CCRPI - Start with how it is calculated - how it has changed - four components now (content mastery, progress, gap and readiness - mastery was 50 percent now 30 percent - now growth (progress and gap) majority of score/highest weight - content mastery, progress and gap are all from milestones).Our content mastery didn’t change year to year and was higher than state average - where we and others took bloodbath was progress and gap.

Progress measures every student based on score (are you better than others with score from last year - weighted this year, not last year) Not evenly distributed - not sure why not.

Gap similar - growth based on category - every race, special ed, free and reduced lunch - all races except white and black at our school are too small to report

Readiness - average of Literacy rate, attendance, percentage of beyond the core class -

16th on list of state charters, 5th highest content mastery among elementary and fourth highest of content mastery of middle school,

Mike has problems with this list, scoring - second ranked state charter school based on CCRPI - 51.8 content mastery in middle school. Will fall on deaf ears - because number of schools grew in content mastery to close to 50 percent and now state looks like a hero.

What does it mean we have to do? We’ve got to grow. We have room to grow and didn’t. We have to grow in milestones.

We won’t take hit in readiness anymore because of way they pulled elementary schedule  - would give us three extra points.

Eric asks why there wasn’t as much growth as there could have been - Mike has lots of theories - Eric asks what are we doing going forward - watching and tracking - Mike says no data for trends (only two years) but we now have gifted program and EIP program - revamped RTI process to ID student’s needs, all meaningful strategies for growth, changes to math will help - our best middle school math instruction in our existence now - 5th grade math is strongest teacher in entire building, recent upgrade in fourth helping as well.

End of this year - we’ve got to get into domain level performances - look at trends - what are areas we aren’t growing in.

We’re growing in middle but highest performing and lowest performing students are stagnant. Our workshops need to focus on both - designed for all learning levels.

Doug asks if focus on students at either end of curve accounts for 15 points, Mike says not exact correlation, can’t say exact number, but expects addressing those students should result in improvement, as long as middle students continue growth.

Andrea asked about test taking strategies with Mr. Willis this year - IXL for homework - Mike agrees, says student’s use of technology is better than it has ever been, but doesn’t think technology inhibited performance. Mike doesn’t want to take entire month of March to do test prep. Teachers can put sample questions into homework and activities without overdoing it.

Doug says curriculum could be part, but are their best practices for how the curriculum is implemented. Mike says our instructional model is cutting edge - similar to City Schools of Decatur and Museum School - top performing schools - were they implemented at fidelity rate they should have been. Much better this year.

Eric asks about school climate rating - Mike says 5 star at 282 families - creating a lot of stuff, heard more voices, we expanded to 420 families - not as much voice heard - communication seemed to be a big issue in survey last year. They didn’t feel like they were hearing from teachers in timely manner. We’ve made changes - get it earlier - school communicates more clearly this year, more thoroughly. Student survey asked about exposure to substances - not exactly at school - the responses were higher - I knew climate rating wouldn’t stay at five star forever - Andrea asks what deadline is - March - our participation rate is pretty good. We’ll have computers set up at second exhibition night. 90 percent took it first year, 60 percent last year.

Advanced Education Accreditation -

Lot of documentation needed, changed process, we hosted readiness visit, they were super complimentary, from operational standpoint what we have in place to track progress was as strong as he had seen, we don’t have trend data - very different because of size, etc. He wanted us to do it this year, not wait - February or March - need to do it in March - lot has to happen first - give all students, family and staff the advanced ed survey and they want to interview the board. 2.5 day event - walkthrough Sunday night, meet leadership, dinner that night - all day Monday and Tuesday - sit down with board, parents, students, staff members, observe classrooms, watch lessons, etc. No STEAM committee this year, put on hold to out all hands on deck for advanced education accreditation.

Eric says this is a bet, see strengths and weaknesses, play to strengths - get fruits out of this? Mike says valuable process, staff will find out a lot, school leadership find out a lot. Powerful promotional tool - you need accreditation - there is a body over us  - worldwide - sees schools around the world and gives us stamp of approval. It’s time-consuming, but no lose situation.

PTO - Taylor

Survive big events - fall festival made around $3,000 - holiday wish lists for each class go out next week.

Academic - Doug

Grateful to have Roz join the group, talk CCRPI, three focuses of committee - high school prep, CCRPI, Mike evaluation.

Governance - Andrea

New member for that committee - Todd (also possible interest in Academic). Board attending training Nov 27 and 28. - Lake Lanier - James and Doug will attend in February. Pre-K sub-committee  - Kenny will chair it. Contributions from each committee - separate meeting to discuss components. Guided walkthrough - Advanced Ed messaging - what it means, why it is important. - Review board software - make recommendation soon.

Development - James

Andrea met with teachers about holiday event - help with Fine Arts Extravaganza - winter market of vendors - try to get community involvement - 10 vendors selling Christmas-y stuff, five vendors already - PTO will sell hot chocolate, coffee.

Grandparents Day - Andrea and James attended, talked stocks and shares - got some donations - collected $250 with pumpkin patch -

Board been at each school event this year - more visibility - Spirit Night on Nov. 27, but board attending training - Giving Tuesday - big social push, companies that match.

Events coming up - Brooks Tree Lighting, Fine Arts Extravaganza, CCRPI meeting, Prospective Parent, High School Info

Maverick News - Board submit bio or general story about board. Use team photo and general write-up.

Finance - Esther

Reached out about renewing lease - ok’ed five year, just hoping for same rate (or less).

Working on changing bank - Heritage can’t do program where funds are guaranteed (deal-killer). Esther has contacts at Synovus - might be a service issue.

Fund balance looks negative, but it is a positive - quite a positive - cash position is good.

Requiring a vote

Eric motion to approve Sept. minutes, Kenny seconds, approved unanimously

Eric motion to move to executive session - 8:20 p.m. - Doug second, approved unanimously