

FINAL REPORT ON ACHIEVEMENT OF DISTRICT GOALS 2010-2011
JUNE 30, 2011

1. To increase student achievement on standardized assessments

- Increase number of classified students achieving proficiency in mathematics
- Increase number of general education students achieving proficiency in mathematics

During the summer and early fall of 2010, principals, supervisors and teachers reviewed student performance on standardized assessments and developed school level goals and action plans to address identified needs. At the public Board meeting, a report on student achievement was made and discussed. In the report on student achievement, it was noted that district students perform at or above the level of achievement found in similar school districts throughout the state. Teachers, principals and supervisors developed professional development and professional growth plans focusing on improving student performance on standardized assessments for under performing groups.

As a result of this analysis of student performance, several initiatives were undertaken, specifically with relationship to the special education population. The child study team members and curricula specialists monitored IEP requirements, became more knowledgeable about the core curriculum content standards and assessment formats, conducted training in assessment formats, and incorporated test-taking skills in classes. The pilot program that was undertaken at Union School with respect to the special education population by developing prescriptive teaching methods for all special education students in grades 4-8 continues. This initiative was most successful last spring. It has been expanded to include regular education students. This was done to address a specific need at Union School to advance the performance of students at that location as they prepare for the spring round of assessments. In addition, test preparation classes are planned for the spring months in math (and language arts) at Pierrepont, Union and Rutherford High School.

The results of the spring 2011 state assessments will not be received until the summer for most grade levels. At the high school only the most preliminary data for the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) has been received from the spring 2011 administration.

In Language Arts Literacy, for total students, the percentage at or above proficiency in 2011 is similar to that in 2010. Likewise, the percentage of students achieving in the Advanced Proficiency range has been stable. The result for mathematics shows an improvement of 5.3% over that in 2010. There has been an increase in the percentage of students scoring in the Advanced Proficient range in mathematics (+4.9%) and a decrease in the percentage of students scoring in the Partially Proficient range (-5.2%). This indicates a positive trend that hopefully will continue. For the special education population the percentage at or above proficiency is significantly lower in 2011 than in 2010. Although this subgroup has an insufficient number of students to statistically affect AYP, it is a concern that this population is not as successful this year as the subgroups in the past. Scores for these students are included in the percentage for total students.

2. To ensure continued academic progress in the face of a difficult economic climate

The district administration and board continue to provide the best educational program for the students while cognizant of their fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers of Rutherford. The district administration and the Personnel Committee reviewed staffing configurations, enrollments and program needs and this was discussed at a public meeting. For 2011- 2012 we anticipate an additional teacher and aid for the LLD class at Pierrepont as a result of the grade span of the students. Additionally we need to appoint an assistant principal at the high school for July 2011. There is an anticipated reduction of staff in the business office. The proposed 2011-2012 budget

discussion at the February Board meeting will emphasize the maintaining of all currently offered programs to our students for the coming year. Information has been provided to the Buildings and Grounds Committee regarding the replacements of boilers at Lincoln and Washington school possibly also at Union and the high school. When these projects are complete, savings should be realized due to energy efficiencies.

With the passing of the 2011-2012 budget, all programs offered to students have been maintained. This budget provided for an additional teacher and aid for a new LLD class at Pierrepont School. A new math series is being implemented K-5 in September with grades 6-8 implementations scheduled for September 2012.

3. To investigate technology opportunities for student and parent communications

The PowerSchool Parent Portal is a powerful online tool for parents and guardians to monitor their child's progress in school. It can be accessed from any computer connected to the Internet and is specifically designed to give parents and students access to real-time information such as attendance, grades, school bulletins, and teacher comments. By opening the lines of communication among students, teachers, and parents it enables parents to participate more fully in their child's education. The district can control what parents view through the portal. The following items are available to be viewed:

- Grades and Attendance
- Score Detail
- Grades History
- Historical Grades List
- Attendance
- Email
- Comments
- Bulletin
- Student Schedule Requests
- Balances
- iCal Calendar (not fully functional at this time)
- Graduation Progress
- Demographic Update
- Password Update
- Honor Roll
- Test Scores
- Discipline Log
- Access Log
- Fees
- School Information

The best practice recommendation is that the district opens the Parent Portal with only a few items viewable and then gradually adds items. After meeting with the Administrative Council it was decided that the following items would be initially accessible:

- Grades and Attendance
- Score Detail
- Attendance
- Comments
- Bulletin
- Demographic Update
- School Information

Currently our teachers in Grades 6-12 use the online gradebook—PowerTeacher—to record and calculate grades. Therefore, these grade levels will be the first to be granted access to the Parent Portal. The current timetable is to open the portal during Quarter 3 of this school year to a select number of parents who are also employees of the district. Approximately, 12 parent/employees will be involved with the initial launch. During Quarter 4 we will open the Parent Portal to parents with children in grade 7 and grade 11. We

anticipate opening the Parent Portal for all parents/guardians with children in grades 6-12 beginning in the 2011-2012 school year.

The piloting of the PowerSchool Parent Portal has been successfully completed. The Parent Portal will open late September for all parents/guardians with children in grades 6-12.

4. To improve the K-8 World Language program by exploring activities of the departmental action plan submitted in May of 2010.

- a. All students begin with a basic introduction to Spanish language study in kindergarten, taught by their regular kindergarten teacher. This continues through grades 1 and 2. Beginning in grade 3, students are provided with two periods per week of 30 minutes each instruction in Spanish by a Spanish certified teacher. Beginning in grade 6, all students have the opportunity to experience an exploratory study in Spanish. At the end of grade 6, students elect a level 1 world language study in French, Spanish or Latin. They continue this study in grade 8. Upon completion of Spanish, French or Latin 7 and 8, students who earn a "B-" grade or better may be recommended to commence their high school language study at level 2. Based upon this sequence of study, students are able to complete up through Advanced Placement level of world languages in French, Latin or Spanish at Rutherford High School.
- b. Members of the world language department continue to serve as representatives on the professional development committees. Mrs. Alvarado gave a workshop to the high school world language teachers on incorporating podcasts into the world language classroom. She also presented two workshops to the South Bergen Jointure Commission, Ready for Podcasting and Digital Storytelling: i movie. Mostly Rutherford Teachers attended. Mrs. Capria gave workshops to the K-2 teachers at Lincoln and Washington schools on incorporating elementary Spanish across the curriculum. Ms. Heimbach is in the process of taking a Google Website workshop and creating her own website for her Latin classes. She will turnkey her knowledge of Google Websites to the grades 3-12 world language teachers at an upcoming department meeting.

Benchmark assessments have been implemented in the grades 6-12 Spanish classes as well as the grades 7-12 Latin and French classes. Benchmark assessments have been included in the grades K-3 Spanish curriculum and will be implemented during the 2011-2012 school year. Benchmark assessments will be included in the grade 5 Spanish curriculum during the 2011-2012 curriculum review cycle. Benchmark assessments will be included in the grade 4 Spanish curriculum during the 2012-2013 curriculum review cycle.

Mr. Ryan has met with the grade 7 Spanish, Latin and French teachers to discuss the grade 7 world language selection process. The teachers made several suggestions to enhance the process. Mr. Ryan will meet with the principals at Union and Pierrepont schools to implement some of the teachers' suggestions to improve the selection process.

The grade 8 and level 1 Spanish, French and Latin teachers have met on several occasions throughout the school year to review their curriculum maps to ensure vertical and horizontal articulations are taking place. Mr. Ryan is in the process of meeting with the Grade 8 Spanish, French and Latin teachers to review the recommendation process and to ensure the appropriate placement of students into Level 2 world language classes. The grades 7-12 Spanish teachers are in the process of creating podcasts of Spanish stories and songs to be used by K-2 teachers to enhance student knowledge and understanding of elementary Spanish.

A greater focus has been given to increase student retention in levels 3, 4 and AP in French, Latin and Spanish. Students in grades 6-8 Spanish classes are speaking in the target language at 80% or higher. Students in Spanish levels 1-AP classes are speaking at the target language at 90% or higher. The French students in grades 7 and 8 are speaking in the

target language at 80% or higher. Students in French levels 1-AP classes are speaking at the target language at 90% or higher. All teachers in the world language department continue to be encouraged to partake in peer observations and to share teaching techniques with their peers. Mr. Ryan is also in the process of improving the learning opportunities in the world languages with the special education population in all grade levels.

All of the activities of the World Language department plan as submitted to the Curriculum and Instructional Committee in May of 2010 have been completed. The one remaining activity is the establishment of benchmark assessments for grade 4 Spanish. These will be included in the grade 4 Spanish curriculum during the 2012-2013 curriculum review cycle.