

Goal 1 – Achievement Strategic Planning group met on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 from 3:30 to 5:30 in the OHS Library, with the following individuals present: Dee Dee Stine, Connie Boznos, Kate Berry, Ethan Schopp, Carolyn Hansen, Stacey Rogers, Patty Emmert, Amber Finchum, Lisa Steve, Trena Glenn, Andrew Wise, Josh Olsen, and Ed Jodlowski.

The group began by watching a Ted Talk by Diana Laufenberg. She emphasized that achievement doesn't come from bubbling in one correct answer on a standardized test. Students need experiential learning. They need to use their student voices and not be afraid of failure – students learn from their mistakes. The question was posed if Diana Laufenberg was in our committee what would her philosophy be regarding achievement. As a group, we discussed the video and linked it our revised mission statement “empowering learners to recognize and achieve personal growth for success.”

Next, we examined the Illinois Interactive Report Card in pairs. What came out of this analysis was presented on large paper. Comments were shared that some of the data doesn't paint Olympia in the best light, but also that the assessment in which the data is being derived doesn't report growth. It was also shared that the data from many assessments report back on a student's ability to memorize content, which doesn't align with the district's mission of skills demonstration and growth. Another group reported that they question the credibility of the report card. Yet, another group questioned the impact of 35% low income coupled with 13% mobility. Another group outlined PARCC and ACT achievement and noticed at the upper grade levels from 8th through high school, the lack of achievement of males. Finally, one group suggested that it might be important to look at trends rather than one year snapshot. As a group, it was discussed that the Illinois Interactive Report Card does not tell the true story of achievement of Olympia students, and we need to do a better job of getting that information out to the public. Dr. Wise shared that principals and teachers have a great deal of achievement data which shows our kids are growing by leaps and bounds, unfortunately, that data is not collected or shared by the state. He agreed that we need to do a better job sharing our student successes.

Then, we examined our data on the Illinois Interactive Report Card, against three area schools that as a group we deemed to be successful. We saw commonalities and differences in these districts depending on what data was being analyzed. Depending on the data, we were ahead in some areas and behind in others. As a group, we reasoned that we would rather have well rounded students who are well prepared for college, career, and life; instead of students who spend their hours memorizing content to score well on the test that the state deems important. Our goal to have every student show growth and we are doing that!

In the end, we discussed next steps. The consensus was to continue our emphasis on student growth and achievement in all facets of life, not just on a standardized test. We want our kids to be successful in their academics, activities, relationships, and personal development. We also discussed the importance of student voice, student skills, and student ownership of learning as well. Ultimately, we want students to be successful in college, career, and life.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, April 12 from 3:30-5:30.