West Central School District

Ad hoc Learning Committee

Findings from December 19, 2019 Meeting

Members Present – Paula Hawks, Lexi Klinkhammer, Lacey Roberts, Kim Lanham, Dusine

 Hoff, Belinda Prostrollo, Justin Eich, Cheryl Prunty, Nicole Harmon, Derek

 Bahrenfuss, Jessica Bos, Madison Anderson, JoAnne Bohl, Matt Alley, Mark

 Rockafellow, Melinda Jensen, Sarah Weber

On December 19nd the committee met to address questions and concerns related to:

 Personalized learning

Standards-based grading

A lack of communication from the district to parents

A growing lack of interest among students for learning

The meeting started with a review of the findings from the December 2 meeting. Some additions/clarifications were made to the Personalized Learning list and to the Standards-based Grading list. The additions/clarifications are as follows:

**Personalized Learning**

* Learning grit and responsibilities to keep them going. \*Develop the ability to push thru challenges

**Standards Based Grading**

* Resources \*The lack thereof for our teachers
* How are we supporting teachers, parents, and students with all of the information?
	+ \*Empower-
		- student mastery levels may not reflect actual level of mastery.
		- May also provide parents more information than they desire.
		- Has been a valuable tool for teachers to gather student data and extract reliable data.

 \* Indicates added information

Following the review of the first two items, the committee proceeded to the third and fourth items:

 3. Lack of communication from the district to parents

 4. Student lack of interest in learning

The committee reviewed a list of communication mediums currently used at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The mediums are as follows:

West Central

Communication Mediums

Elementary School

* Class Dojo – behavior tracking, classroom work, parent messaging, class photos, calendar
* Email
* Newsletters – grade level, building newsletter, district
* Phone Calls
* Social Media

Middle School

* Grade-level newsletter
* District newsletter
* Email
* Periodic message from Mr. Rockafellow
* Teacher-level class messages via Campus and Empower
* Automated messages via Campus and Empower
* Social Media

High School

* Newsletters - District
* Registration session in August - we give parents lots of information then (credits, ideas to help students be successful, behavior/discipline, computer, etc)
* Personalized emails-letter depending on circumstances to parents and students - reference the policy or handbook info.
* Email responses to parents about questions
* Text messages from teachers and coaches
* School counselor sends information to parents about topics (stress, vaping, etc)
* School counselor has sessions for parents (financial aid, scholarships)
* Missing assignments information to specific parents every Thursday
* Teachers send emails to parents and students about upcoming assignments, tests, study options, deadlines, volunteer opportunities, activity schedules. These go out from some on a weekly basis; many send out a message at the beginning/end of every unit; many send notices before unit/quarter/semester tests.
* Social Media

Small Group discussions identified the following most common concerns/questions:

**Lack of communication from the district to parents**

* Class dojo has been great just want to make sure it’s being used consistently and

 make sure that all of the teachers know what the others in their grade level are doing

* More [information] is better - we will decide what we want to read and what we do not
* MAPS/NWEA testing – notify parents in advance. Parents could make sure kids are in bed on time
* Positive feedback on dojo - putting everything in one place
* Email seems to work best in MS on a case by case situation
* More communication regarding leadership and practices
* Being notified sooner when kids are struggling
* Elementary parents are only able to see one core teacher where in MS they are able to

 visit with all teachers that work with their kids

* Communicate the plan for SBG (Standards Based Grading) and our version of personalized learning

**Lack of student interest in learning**

* Busy lives for kids - they need to work on facts at night - kids tell teachers they are too

 busy- family units are different now than when we all grew up

* No easy answer - some of it is personalities, some of it is teachers’ ability to find student

 interests, but even that won’t work for all students -different abilities in

 teachers and in students - world is different - bigger and more complicated

* Communication ties in because if parents are in the know then they can support
* Kids have more freedom and flexibility [in the classroom] that they feel it’s up to them to learn so the drive

 to learn is not there, why study

* Are we preparing them for the next grade level, each building is different does that cause

 there to be too much going on and takes away from learning

* Retesting, retakes, no due dates seem to be making students less responsible
* More concrete on what learning looks like no matter if they are receiving a letter or a

 number score- we feel that interest in learning is impacted by this because expectations

 are not clear

* Society problem - lack of interest and what can teachers and parents do together to

 battle that - always has been a problem

* You have some students that are battling things at home that are bigger then school,

mental health issues. How do we help them beat those odds so they want to succeed in life?

Committee members are encouraged to share this information with stakeholders.