BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS: DISTRICT-WIDE STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING OUR MISSION: 2017-2018

Overarching Vision

The Bedford Public Schools develops skillful, reflective, lifelong learners who think critically and creatively and who are informed, responsible, and productive global citizens. The school community provides a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in which the unique intellectual, social, ethical, and emotional growth of each learner is realized.

Overarching Theory of Action

All students will become skillful, reflective, lifelong learners who think critically and creatively and who are informed, responsible and productive global citizens if:

- the system hires and supports passionate, skillful and knowledgeable teachers who personalize learning and regularly collaborate to produce student-centered, "minds-on" instructional strategies
- the curriculum prioritizes higher order thinking skills development and depth of content understanding,
- checking for understanding is systematic and student achievement is evaluated through authentic, common assessments
- and deliberate steps are taken to address diverse learning needs, promote cultural proficiency and close achievement gaps while maintaining high expectations

Ongoing District-wide Strategic Objectives

Coherent, Higher Order Thinking Curriculum/Student Centered Learning	Equity and Diversity: Teaching All Students and Building Community	Collaborative Professional Culture	Strengthen Communication and Deepen Our Community Support
Ensure that all students are actively and regularly engaged in "minds-on", student-centered learning, and developing their capacities for: ● analyzing and understanding complex material, ● creatively problem solving, ● reflecting upon and directing their own learning, ● effectively communicating their ideas.	Ensure that all students are meeting district-wide learning expectations by personalizing learning, closing achievement gaps, diversifying our staff, and carrying out the cultural proficiency work needed to ensure that all students feel safe to take intellectual risks and grow.	Nurture a professional culture that maximizes administrator and teacher learning, innovation and creativity by creating authentic opportunities for collaborative work on higher order thinking curriculum, student-centered instruction and authentic, performance-based assessment, and by effectively managing state and federal mandates.	Review and renew our Strategic Plan, explore and implement new ways to bring families and community resources into the educational process and to tell our unique story.

Primary Strategic Focus: K-12 Literacy

Purpose

Developing all students' abilities to comprehend complex texts is essential to their achieving depth of understanding, analytical and inferencing skills, and enduring independence as thinkers and learners. These qualities and the attendant capacities for researching effectively and writing clearly and persuasively are essential for citizenship, college and careers in our constantly changing, technology charged and interconnected world. Doing so for all students is essential to the effective closing of our persistent learning opportunity gaps. In order to successfully close these gaps, the purposeful integrated teaching of general literacy in the elementary grades and disciplinary literacy in the secondary grades must be the responsibility of all educators.

Theory of Action

Successful development of the abilities of all students to comprehend complex texts and express themselves in sophisticated ways depends upon the simultaneous shift of instructional emphasis to inquiry-based learning and student ownership of their own literacy learning goals and progress. While these pedagogical approaches themselves target key student outcomes, i.e., higher order thinking and independence, they intersect with literacy instruction as critical engagement and motivation mechanisms, essential for ensuring student persistence through the real challenges of becoming deliberate, critical and capable readers and writers.

District-wide Steps

- Complete needs assessment (consistent but differentiated as needed for each building), including surveys, analysis of student work-performance, focus group discussions to determine existing strengths and areas for growth

- Frame the district-wide and school-based strategic steps towards improved literacy in ways that maximize teacher leadership, innovation and collaboration.
- Develop professional development plan for teacher leaders and administrators on facilitating adult learning
- Use building and district leadership groups, including K-12 curriculum leaders, to vet plan, gather feedback and input from practitioners, as we advance literacy work in year one of the plan
- Identify district measures including common assessments and other comprehensive data to track student growth and achievement as we implement the plan
- Create and/or implement professional development for practitioners in response to needs assessment
- Propose plans for years two and three in the spring; assess effectiveness of year one steps
- Expand with some K-12 consistency electronic portfolios that allow students to curate and reflect upon own work relative to literacy growth
- Begin to frame long and short term literacy learning targets as "I can" statements that involve students directly in owning their progress.
- Provide PD in inquiry-based instruction that engages students' curiosity, provides them with in-the-moment opportunities to investigate interesting questions, and increases their reading engagement by providing time to pursue avenues of interest through internet searches of lesson-related topics.
- Begin articulation of K-12 expectations for elements of literacy
- Develop and deepen vertical conversations related to literacy, beginning with 3-8 ELA; integrate vertical work into K-12 curriculum leaders' work
- Visit other schools-districts who have practices in place from which we can learn
- Determine optimal leadership structure for literacy implementation: existing leadership structures, literacy task force, disciplinary literacy leadership team, or some combination