



Date: June 2, 2011

TO: Board of Education

APPENDIX MMM-12-4
June 27, 2011

FROM: Daniel A. Nerad, Superintendent

RE: Update on MMSD High School Curriculum Alignment

I. Introduction

A. Title or Topic: Update on MMSD High School Curriculum Alignment

B. Presenters: N/A

C. Background Information: In 2008, MMSD received a 5.3 million dollar grant Smaller Learning Communities Grant from the federal government. This grant is known locally as Relationships, Engagement, and Learning (REaL). Work to date has focused on developing teacher capacity, aligning curriculum, improving instructional practice all for the end goal of improving student achievement. During the 2010-11 school year, MMSD unveiled a comprehensive process plan for aligning curriculum PrK-12 with specific focus on the four high schools. The attached report serves as a status update on the MMSD High School Curriculum Alignment Process.

D. Action Requested: Status update no action requested.

II. Summary of Current Information

A. Synthesis of Topic: See background information above.

B. Recommendations: None at this time, this report serves as a status update on work completed to date.

III. Implications

A. Budget: N/A

B. Strategic Plan: Aligns with MMSD Strategic Plan.

C. Equity Plan: Aligns with MMSD Equity Plan

D. Implications for the Organization: Aligned curriculum, enhanced instructional practice and improved student achievement.

IV. Supporting Documentation:

A. Update on MMSD High School Curriculum Alignment Process

Update on MMSD High School Alignment Process

June 6, 2011

The following guiding principles were approved by the BOE on January 31, 2011:

- We will align to the ACT Career and College Readiness Standards and the Common Core Standards (This is not work to design specific course delivery systems).
- This will be a comprehensive PReK-12 process, to build continuity across all grade levels.
- We will be implementing aligned assessments, including the Education Planning & Assessment System (EPAS).
- The high school alignment will focus on grades 9 and 10 in the four core content areas.
- We will establish common understandings, knowledge and skills using Universal Designs for Learning (UDL).

Step 1: Central Office Professional Learning Community PLC

Work Status: Began in January and Ongoing

- Central office staff met throughout winter and spring to develop common understanding amongst of alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, UDL and instructional coherence.

Step 2a: School Administrator PLC

Work Status: Began in January and Ongoing

- Developed common understanding of alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, UDL and instructional coherence. Evidenced by more focused School Action Plans that focus on alignment, literacy across the curriculum and using preliminary EXPLORE data to inform instruction.
- EXPLORE administered to 8th and 9th grade students. PLAN piloted at Memorial for 10th grade students. All schools have received data and are beginning to review data to inform instruction. Data will be used as part of the Welcome Back Conference at each high school.
- Summer Administrative Institute planned for all school-based instructional administrators will be held in early August with focus on improving instructional practice through instructional rounds, RTI and Universal Design for Learning.
- Continue to support capacity building through the High School, School Support Team. With specific focus on understanding and using EPAS data to inform instruction, continuing to align curriculum to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards.

Step 2b: School-based Teacher Leader PLC
Work Status: Began in February and Ongoing

- All REaL Coordinators, Literacy Coaches and Department Chairs have been exposed to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, UDL and instructional coherence.
- EXPLORE administered to 8th and 9th grade students. PLAN piloted at Memorial for 10th grade students. All schools have received data and are beginning to review data to inform instruction. Data will be used as part of the Welcome Back Conference at each high school.
- REaL Coordinators and Literacy Coaches in collaboration with district personnel have facilitated a variety of professional development opportunities in these areas evidenced by 10-11 REaL Grant Teacher survey results indicating teachers agree with:
 - Universal Design for Learning is a helpful framework for curriculum and teaching.
 - Aligning curriculum and assessment to the ACT and Common Core Standards is a productive direction for improving student achievement equitable outcomes.

Step 3: School-based Discussions
Work Status: Begun and Ongoing

Teachers

- In school-based discussions, teachers at all four high schools have begun to review existing curriculum and assess alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards in core content areas in grades 9 and 10. Evidenced by participation in Aligned By Design workshops held throughout the school year and planned for summer of 2011. To date over 75 MMSD high school staff participated in Aligned by Design workshops.
- Advanced options have been implemented at each high school in the areas of English and Social Studies for the 11-12 school year.
- Common course numbers and names in the four content areas have been implemented for the 11-12 school year.
- Due to the cancellation of PCT in spring, opportunities for teachers to meet to delve deeply into this work have been limited. Therefore, each content area and school is in a slightly different position as it relates to defining common understandings, knowledge and skills in each core course in grades 9 and 10.

Parents

- Each school is planning a process for engaging parents in the alignment conversation as schools feel strongly that each school community needs different approaches. Each will invited and support 2 parents to attend Aligned by Design workshops held this summer. At this point parent feedback has not been specifically solicited. Each school is developing plans to have ongoing opportunities for parent feedback and information sharing. An example of the type of opportunity that may be provided at each school

include parent roundtables held at each school, information shared through principal updates and PTO's as well as outreach to underrepresented communities.

Students

- Student Voice opportunities are in place at all 4 high schools to engage students in the school improvement and curriculum alignment process. Additionally, Student Senate will be utilized for feedback at a district level. Student feedback will be solicited during the 11-12 school year.

Step 4: District-wide Content Area Discussions

Work Status: Began in November and ongoing

- Begun with discussions about Advanced Options in Social Studies and English and continued by looking at curriculum in relation to ACT College and Career Readiness Skills.
- Anticipate, deeper level conversations will continue during the 11-12 school year in all 4 core content areas.

Step 5: PrK-12 Alignment Team Discussions

Work Status: Began in September and ongoing

- PrK Literacy Evaluation Committee met and presented to the Board of Education. High Schools are using recommendations in the development of school-wide literacy initiatives.