

Knox County Schools
Teacher Advisory Committee
West High School Library Classroom
Thursday, December 11, 2014



Attendees

Dr. Jim McIntyre, Superintendent
Tanya Coates, KCEA President
Mark Duff, Halls High School
Eric Aguilar, Chilhowee Intermediate School
Lindsay Bell, West High School
Annette Benson, Corryton Elementary School
Jannice Clark, Kelley Volunteer Academy
Kelly Clemmer, Gap Creek Elementary School
Denise Cross, West View Elementary School
Jessica Fine, Cedar Bluff Middle & Hardin Valley Academy
~~Jessica Holman, Inskip Elementary School~~
Wanda Lacy, Farragut High School
Jessica McDonald, Vine Middle Magnet School
Ryan Milani, Career Magnet Academy
Valeta Norris, Central High School
Kristi Pell, Powell High School
Dr. Kitty Pruet, Northwest Middle School
Suzanne Sherman, Hardin Valley Academy
Heidi Walsh, Christenberry Elementary School
Karla West, A.L. Lotts Elementary School
Vanita Williamson, Farragut Middle School

Visitors / Guests

Dr. Elizabeth Alves, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Chief Academic Officer
Reem Abdelrazek, Accountability Analyst
Gloria Deathridge, Board Member, District 1
Laurie Driver, Supervisor of Assessment
Julia Kirk, Director of Program Management
Gary Petko, Mathematics Supervisor
Dr. Rodney Russell, Director of Human Capital Strategies
Janet Sexton, Language Arts and Reading Supervisor
Millicent Smith, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Professional Development
Susan Turner, Executive Director of Elementary Education
Nakia Towns, Chief Accountability Officer
Stephanie Jeffreys, Superintendent's Office

RTI²

- Began with Presentation by Dr. Julia Kirk on RTI² in KCS
- RTI² = Response to Instruction and Intervention
- Required by Tennessee Department of Education in Elementary School (starting 2014-15); in Middle School (starting 2015-16); in High School (2016-17)
- Expectation in Tier I (core instruction) should reach 80-85% of students without additional support
- Within that differentiated instruction
- Universal Screener 3 times a year (STAR)
 - Helps identify who needs additional support
 - National norms test
- 10-15% need additional support and receive Tier II Intervention
- Not re-teaching, looking at deficits and closing the gaps
- Tier III supports at 10th percentile or lower
 - May not have made significant progress in Tier II
 - 45 minute more intense intervention
- Child is either Tier II or III, not both
- Progress monitoring every other week in Tier II and Tier III
- Fidelity monitoring for Tier II and Tier III
- Tier II and III can be there as long as they need to be, but we like them to be there a minimum of 8 data points
- RTI² is one means to identify students with specific learning disabilities
- Provide opportunity for student to be successful with intervention support before being referred to identify a possible learning disability
- Most Elementary Schools do RTI during core and extension time
- Core extension is time built in when no new instruction should be taking place
- Question asked about what to do with Tier I students when doing a small group
 - Can do computer-based skill development, or centers that help reinforce learning, etc.; not busy work
- Concern was expressed regarding doing interventions and experiencing a decline of class averages
- Concern was expressed regarding looking at data and seeing the need to use core extension time to re-teach
 - Now that time is being used for Intervention
 - Giving a center to others on something they have not really learned and it is not beneficial to them
- Concerns about speaking with parents who want their child to have intervention but intervention is not needed for their child
- Logistical challenges with no standard norms, what is truly required and what is not
- Concerns expressed in regards to using Teaching Assistants when they don't have some of the training/experience of certified teachers
- Overwhelmed with paperwork requirements; looking for clarification on what is truly required
 - Only requirements are in the state manual, but it may look different from school to school
- If we think there are changes and tweaks to be made that will allow us to maximize student learning, we'll communicate those to the state
- RTI² is required, but we have influence on how we do it locally; and influence on

- the conversation at the state level
- Want suggestions and recommendations on how we can refine it
 - We are required to have a district RTI team
 - We have Elementary School and Middle School RTI group and plans staff development
 - RTI² at a glance to show what form is required at each tier
 - Some schools currently have 30 minutes scheduled for Intervention and then also use 2 related arts
 - At a performing arts magnet school, significant number of students in intervention tiers, related arts is what motivates them, concerned about losing that time
 - Using related arts seems like the easier way so we are afraid it is coming
 - Worried about the impact on school culture if related arts time is used
 - Concern about the time lost for Tier I students when teaching intervention for others
 - Could we look at having the option of having certified RTI teachers?
 - Especially for those schools with really high percentage of Tier II and Tier III?
 - We can look at those options, schools could choose to budget an intervention specialist, but it might mean a hard choice / trade off
 - Some teachers believe we are having a fabulous impact on our lower tier kids, but we are not moving our Tier I as much as we'd like
 - One teacher noted that fidelity to intervention is better than ever; our neediest kids are being reached; We have kids who went from 2nd to 8th/9th percentile rank
 - Some teachers perceive RTI ² to appear great for the needy kids, but we also have those kids on the bubble
 - One teacher commented that RTI is a tool to close the gap and schools are rated on closing the gap, but it is a paradox; how can we ever close the gap when we are trying to RTI and stretch our Top Tier?
 - We teach the children every single day, you have to teach all the children in our class, they are all being assessed on the same standards, do our best to diagnose and prescribe what is best for our kids day by day
 - RTI² intended to take the focus off intervention and put the focus on universally high quality classroom instruction
 - Teacher concerns:
 - RTI is so demanding and the implementation does not seem to be including the top kids
 - When the top tier grows and the bottom tier grows the gap is still there
 - some of the kids in our classroom for intervention are not ones that we teach
 - Enrichment with fidelity the growth will happen to Tier 1 to respond
 - How do we take the examples of what is working and look at ways to be innovative?
 - Some schools have Teaching Assistants who are certified teachers so they are leading the interventions
 - Comprehensive Fidelity Monitoring in all 3 tiers
 - We all talk about what we are doing and what we need at our school
 - Sent home letters to Tier II and Tier III but maybe Tier I need some letters sent home too
 - RTI is favorite time of the day for some teachers, because these small groups of

- kids work so hard for the teacher
- The whole point of this is prevention and be proactive
 - Goal should be to consider what can teachers do during those comprehensive literacy and math blocks to make it so student don't need intervention
 - Topic we need to revisit-April or May agenda?
 - The challenge around time and resources and support with RTI
 - Communication; knowledge and understanding of what RTI is and communication with parents, especially Tier I
 - Making sure we take care of our neediest kids and still challenge our top kids
 - Challenge around what you do when the pyramid does not look like the TDOE graphic
 - How do we make sure we get it right? How do we make sure it is having its intended effect?

Student Survey Discussion

- Tripod no longer financially supported by TDOE, but offering a new tool: Panorama
- Student Survey tailored for Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-12
- Potentially free to Knox County Schools
- Principals get feedback on School level
- Superintendent gets district level feedback
- Survey Scales provide some idea of what kinds of questions there are
- About the student-how they feel about the school, subject
- Results Report allows for drill down
- Very interactive and you get a lot of information from it
- Classroom Scales are the core questions that we recommend being in there
- Want to know when you think it should be administered
- We can choose to do all of the supplemental scales or none of them if we wanted to
- Is it customizable to do a grades 3-5 survey, grades 6-8, and grades 9-12?
 - Some questions that may not be best for a 6th grader vs. high school student? (i.e. career related questions)
 - Accountability Office will check to see if they have a Middle School level or just the secondary survey
- Recommendation to do this after TCAP; seemed to confuse students with how they took TCAP versus how they take the Tripod Survey
- Do want to know what my students think and how am I doing, but with little kids they love their teacher and they get upset because they are worried about getting their teacher in trouble
 - Some teachers thought students were more stressed out taking the Tripod than TCAP
 - Some students appeared to not understand the questions
- If it has to be done with grades 3 & 4, should have someone other than teacher to proctor
- Can you explain terminology to students and can you read it?
 - Accountability Office will find out
- Concerned that with some students hearing it read aloud does not really help them comprehend it

- Last year some kids took the survey several times for all their teachers, after filling out so many bubbles they either just put whatever or refused to do it
- Need to have a window when we are not doing other things we have to do
- Do like to see what the kids say if they take it seriously
- Last year some teachers had many ELL students could not understand the questions
- Some teachers would like to see some kind of training component to go along with it and some help for us know the next steps
- Concern regarding the question of Learning strategies; we encourage our children to do these things, but my kids respond almost never
- Review the Survey Scales and determine 3 or 4 supplemental sections we can choose to add or not
- KCS students have told us they want to give feedback
 - I am sitting in this classroom 180 days and I can give you some useful information
- Can this assessment be optional? Does it have to be school wide and county wide?
- It is completely voluntary for the individual student?
- Want all the kids to give me feedback, need to communicate to the kids that we want to use the information to help improve
- The survey needs to have good questions that students understand
- Appears to be a useful way the data comes up with this vendor
- Teachers need to have some input about the questions at grade level to ensure relevancy
- The purpose behind it? Student voice and continuous improvement
- Clear purpose for the teachers-what are we going to do with this information?
- This is not a part of evaluation, feedback for continuous improvement
- Communication around the way the feedback is delivered; not intended to punitive
- Can there be feedback for programs?
 - Accountability Office will check
 - Programs can also work with Office of Accountability on other means to obtain feedback
- Teachers generally see some level of value in hearing feedback from our kids
- Need to consider the aspects of how we implement and how we communicate
- Teachers and students need to have voice and input

Other

- Hope to have some additional strategies for substitute teachers to share within the next week
- Reporting to School board
 - Share feedback with Board
 - Do you feel like this is effective? Is it working?
 - Designate 2 people to go to the school board meeting to give a summary
 - Start with people who have not done it
 - Rotational with Elementary and Secondary representative

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 13, 2014