Montclair Board of Education
Board Retreat

Presentation by

Dr. Jonathan Ponds

Superintendent of Schools

along with Central Office Senior Staff

July 14, 2021

ALL
Kids Can Learn

ALL
Kids Are Special

Equity, Curriculum & Instruction (ECI)

Dr. Kalisha Morgan

ECI
Where we started.

- Need for consistent **reading instruction** across schools.
- Need for targeted/meaningful **professional development.**
- **Response to Intervention** not consistent across schools.
- **Equity focus** not clearly defined or evident throughout the curricula and across schools.

ECI
Where are we going?

Curricula	Ensure that all students have access to a robust, inclusive curricula.
Instruction	Review our ability to provide equitable instruction for all students/Increase instructional repertoire for staff that is engaging and student-centered.
Achievement	Raise student achievement by providing programming that includes intervention and enrichment.
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Promote positive social/emotional health and well-being for students/staff.

Personnel

Mr. Damen Cooper

Personnel

Where we started.	Where are we going?
Need for consistency with **Contracts**	Contracts for all staff groups and integrated into Edumet/Genesis.
Need for defined **Recruitment Plan**	Establish comprehensive Recruitment Process/Diverse Candidates.
Need for visibility at **College Fairs**	Planned District attendance at college fairs including HBCUs.

Operations and School Support Services

Dr. Felice Harrison-Crawford

Operations & School Support Services
Where we started.

- Need for an **updated School Safety and Emergency Management Plan** to ensure for the safety of all students and staff.
- Need for **data** on the services and resources from the **community organizations.**
- The BOE Policy Committee is committed to reviewing, updating and revising **Bylaws**, **Policies and Regulations** (mandated) in alignment with District goals and new legislation.
- P2419 - **School Action Team for Partnerships (SATp)** to be re-engaged.

Operations & School Support Services
Where are we going?

Emergency Management: Coordinate a comprehensive school safety/ security plan.

Community Partners: Develop an evaluation process for all partnership programs.

Policy: Assist in the review, revision and development of District bylaws, policies and regulations.

School Action Team for Partnership (SATp): Coordinate the school-based implementation of the SATp.

Technology

Mr. Christopher Graber

Technology
Where we started.

- Infrastructure: Network, voice, email, data privacy/ disaster recovery and physical security
- Aligning systems and processes
- Instructional Technology/Obsolescence Plan

Technology Office
Where are we going?

INFRASTRUCTURE - All staff and students will have access to a robust and comprehensive infrastructure to maximize administrative productivity and technology's educational benefit for anywhere, anytime learning.

DISTRICT PROTOCOLS & EXPECTATIONS: Protocols, procedures and support policies will provide a framework to communicate the expectations for effective operation and application of district technology and infrastructure.

Technology Office
Where are we going? (cont'd)

TEACHING AND LEARNING INSTRUCTION: Teachers and students will effectively use district technology and infrastructure in order to enhance teaching and learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ASSESSMENT: Foster a data-driven culture in which leaders and teachers will leverage the power of technology to impact assessment practices and use assessment data to improve learning.

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT, EVALUATION AND EXTERNAL SUPPORT: At all levels, we will assess and evaluate technology use within a system to ensure continual improvement and progress toward the district vision.

Special Education

Dr. Jonathan Ponds

Special Education
Where we started.

- **Need for consistent processes,** protocols, systems, practices, and oversight across the District.
- **Need for stronger link between General Education and Special Education** to ensure all students are supported.
- **Need for efficient scheduling** for utilizing in class support teachers and paraprofessionals.

Special Education
Where we started. (cont'd)

- **Need for more and collaborative communication** throughout the evaluation and classification process with all stakeholders.
- Need for clear **chain of command**.
- Need for organized and consistent review of **IEPs** for accuracy and implementation with fidelity.

Special Education
Where are we going?

- Targeted/differentiated **Professional Development** allowing Gen Ed/ Spec Ed teachers to collaborate.
- Establish continuity of identification, tiered interventions and consistent literacy program to address **Dyslexia** and **reading disabilities**.
- **Collaboration with SEPAC** to disseminate information and demystify processes and procedures.

Special Education
Where are we going? (cont'd)

- Ensure that all systemic changes are done with **equity and inclusion** as the highest priority.
- Consistency of **Intervention & Referral Services** and high quality **Response to Intervention**.
- Support for **Child Study Teams** to facilitate collaborative problem-solving with families and other departments/staff.

Building and Grounds

Dr. Jonathan Ponds

Buildings & Grounds
Where we started.

- Very **old buildings** in need of repair.
- **Ventilation systems** need upgrading.
- Need clear direction for a **facilities plan and priority list.**
- Need for consistent **project management.**

Buildings & Grounds
Where are we going?

- Long-Range Plan for **HVAC**
- Planning for Building **Masonry**
- Plan for Long-Range **Infrastructure** upgrades
- **21st Century Classrooms**

District Accomplishments

- **Reading Initiative** - Orton Gillingham: By the fall we will have 24 teachers trained in the Orton Gillingham approach to reading instruction. Evaluated assessment tools and purchased DIBELS which will be used for early detection of dyslexia and other reading concerns. It will feature benchmark tools, progress monitoring, online scoring, and interventions.
- **Recommendation for policy change to remove class rank** from high school transcripts for the 21-22 School Year providing a more equitable playing field for college bound students.
- **Policies** such as Code of Conduct and Discipline revised to incorporate R**estorative Justice** language and practices.

District Accomplishments (cont'd)

- Formed a **District Equity Team** that will advise District leadership on equity issues affecting student achievement and success, ongoing work toward the District's equity goals, and continuous school growth efforts.
- Approved a revised **Anti-Racism Policy** and started work on its regulations which will be the first order of business for the District Equity Team.
- Completed a Special Education Audit and redesigned the Special Education webpage.
- **Partnered with MFEE and PTAC to match English Language Learners with mentors** through a Peer-led Educational Engagement Program (PEEPs).

District Accomplishments (cont'd)

- In partnership with MEA, PTAC, NAACP and SEPAC formed a **PTA at the high school.**
- In **transportation** we created an additional two routes at both the south and north ends of town using a two-mile threshold. This lower mileage threshold allows us to service more high school students.
- Completed **Cultural Responsiveness** trainings for a teacher cohort and district counselors team given by Dr. Martina McGhee (teachers) and Angela Menifield (counselors).
- Established **two new holidays** on the District calendar: Juneteenth and Eid al-Fitr and recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day in October and Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action in February.

District Accomplishments (cont'd)

- During the Pandemic, made a concerted effort to hire a **diverse workforce.**
- Ensured buildings were properly staffed as we began opening schools. Worked with local universities to recruit student teachers to serve as substitute teachers.
- Initiated an online registration and enrollment process.
- Implemented "Handle With Care" and wellness checks for students/families.
- Supported all aspects of virtual learning from connectivity through device distribution, hotspots and in-person/online technical support.
- Streamed all home athletic events.
- Partnered with community childcare centers to support technology needs.

New Opportunities

New Opportunities: Equitable Access and Shifting Priorities

- **Reading Initiative:** Essential Goal - we are a TEACHING AND LEARNING DISTRICT!
- **Financially support** teaching and learning in our ECI Office
- **Instructional Coaches** (Math and ELA)
- **K-5 Director** in the ECI Office

Thank you. And please remember:

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