



**PCCS Academic Excellence Committee Meeting
Approved Minutes
March 16, 2021 – 6:00 PM
Remote Meeting by Zoom**

Call to Order: 6:03 pm

Chair: Abe Janis

Committee Members Present: Demetri Georgatsos, Ted Erski, Gabi White, Abe Janis,
Lea-Ann Bell-Domanski

Staff Present: Tony Zamiar, Geoff Deigan, Jessica Loustaunau

Public Present: Nell Anen, Ellyn Edmonds

Public Comment:

No Comments from the public.

Discussion Agenda:

1. Assessment Testing

- NWEA
- IAR

80% of superintendents in Illinois signed a petition asking that the assessment testing requirements be waived.

This request was denied at the state and national levels, but there may be some adjustments made.

PCCS administration discussed that there may be an option to delay spring testing until the fall and discussed the pros and cons of spring versus fall testing (particularly as it would affect current 8th graders)..

IAR requires these tests be conducted in person. Testing all at once is a 6 – 7 hours process.

- Normally the testing is conducted in 6 sessions, with one test per day which is normally about an hour.

- Limited window to complete due to ISBE timelines. (3/15 – 5/28)
- IAR test is not used for high school placement. High Schools are using Teacher recommendations and/or NWEA scores.
- In a normal year, we have 100% participation. Accountability is 95% within ISBE guidelines.
- Given the current number of students in remote learning and the requirements to complete testing in person, it may be challenging to meet the 95% participation requirement.

We must offer options for students to take in person even if they have chosen to remain full remote.

- Considerations:
 - What about when a parent says no we are not coming in person.
 - Looking at 4B enrollment and 4C preliminary we would have about 20% of the students missing in person testing.
 - Once 4C enrollment is completed, we will reach out to remote students to ensure to offer options for taking the testing.

Testing likely to start week of April 24th/26th

Questions have been posed to ISBE and we are awaiting further direction. The hope is that they may allow split windows – 8th grade in spring and then grades 3-7 for fall.

NWEA – Can be done remotely.

- We have just finished the winter round of NWEA. Fourth grade students do get a jump start to help place them appropriately in Math.
- Spring NWEA will start after IAR is complete – likely into May.

These testing scores are the numbers that go on the report card for schools from the state. This is the way ISBE makes the schools accountable for rating. These scores are reviewed as part of re-chartering. It could shorten our Charter period, if the scores are missing or averaged with a missing year.

Next update from ISBE is due March 30th and will be included in the overall board meeting.

2. ISBE Accountability Framework for FY20

Several assessments are needed to meet standards.

Many have been postponed due to COVID.

Certain assessments must be completed in order to maintain our charter.

Suggestions were given for us to decide how to be assessed, but wanted a fair comparison to have equal footing with all other schools.

- PCCS is seeking to waive this requirement for the year due to inability to support assessments.

2. Update of Phase 4B

We will be moving to phase 4C on April 12th with 2 caveats:

- The current trends of the Lake County Dashboard data need to remain at or below the levels they are currently in.
- Staff vaccination guidelines are met
 - At least 75% of PCCS Staff has been fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

The date was decided as it is 2 weeks post spring break and there are no current requirements for mandatory quarantining.

Plan continues to be tweaked and reviewed. Staff will be briefed tomorrow – 3/17/21, with parent listening session coming March 29th.

- Continue to sharpen the plan over time. On paper it works, but in practice we will need to ensure that logistics work.
- Anticipation and goal that students will remain with current teachers for 4C. Designed to accommodate anyone's choice.
 - This may change if someone chooses to remain remote, but asks before end of year to return.

Expect that 4C will remain until vaccines are rolled out for children or until the state changes their protocols – state goes to Phase 5 – this would remove the choice of remote for parents.

- However, parental choice remains for the remainder of this school year.

Question posed if the Barn could be used to support logistical issues. Unfortunately, it is not quite ready and does not have any occupancy permits at this time. The permits were due last month, but are delayed from the county and state.

4. Q&A

How are we assessing educational gaps given the past year?

- Student services continues to benchmark and monitor progress monitor. They are watching for dips to be addressed as needed.
- The team has heightened the social emotional screening to compared to previous years.
- Additional support is being provided as needed, with more exceptions than in the past.
- At this time, there is no updated data on our benchmarks.
- We will be looking at fall to spring data instead of spring to spring data, to assist teachers in preparing for the students

NWEA is not used for school ranking.

- Any anomaly in our standardized testing, we use NWEA to show/support why an IAR to IAR testing window.
- State has said that schools will not be held accountable for IAR testing.

Student growth appears to be holding back some grading of the information. Will we be able to see illustration of growth of the students?

- Need to consider how the kids are growing on a regular basis not just at the time of a test.
- Need to really get quantitative results

Have we retained the standard benchmarks?

- For the most part they have retained the same benchmarks. We look at overall child performance, and have made some exceptions for interventions to support an individual child.

New Business Items:

None at this time

Next Academic Excellence Committee Meeting is, Tuesday, May 18th.

Adjourn

There being no further business before the committee, Ms. Bell-Domanski motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Georgatsos at 6:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gabrielle White
Academic Excellence Committee Member