

Rationale detailed for fall student testing

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

Using detailed informational graphics to chart student testing, Holyoke school district assessment coordinator Kimberlee Bennett and Supt. Bret Miles highlighted the value of MAP testing in the fall of each school year.

Their report was presented at the Oct. 20 meeting of the Re-1J Board of Education.

Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing is conducted for Holyoke students in grades 3-10 twice a year—in the fall and again in the spring.

NWEA placed all of its test items on the RIT scale, according to their difficulty. Each increasing RIT is assigned a numeric value, or RIT score, that indicates a higher level of difficulty.

Bennett explained when a student takes a MAP test, he is presented with items of varying RITs or levels of difficulty. Once the MAP system determines the difficulty level at which the student is able to perform and the system collects enough data to report a student's abilities, the test ends and the student is assigned an overall RIT score.

Fall RIT scores from the MAP testing are valuable in predicting how well the student will score the next spring on Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) testing. Bennett highlighted 2009 RIT bands for each grade level and each subject area to note projected CSAP proficiency in 2010.

As a result, teachers can use the RIT bands to decide at what cut point proficiency is probable on the spring CSAP tests.

From there, those proficiency bands can be used to identify content necessary to reach proficient levels. Teachers can then group students according to content needs.

The fall MAP test results also allow teachers to identify students in need of more intensive intervention.

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Lastly, information from MAP testing and RIT bands can be used to validate current curriculum so adjustments can be made, as needed.

New instrument prepared for supt. evaluation

Revisions have been made for a new superintendent evaluation instrument which has been a work in progress this fall. The proposed evaluation tool was presented at last week's board meeting. It will return for first reading Nov. 3 and will be on the Nov. 17 meeting agenda for adoption.

Components of the tool include instructional leadership, leadership/personnel management, budget development/management, facilities management, community outreach and other board/superintendent goals.

Ongoing goals and superintendent expectations will be consistent with each domain. Adjustable in each will be five-year goal, strategy and key deliverables for the year.

The board will take a role in the success of the superintendent and district, as well. For each domain, there will be a five-year goal, strategy and key deliverables. Also included will be a board self reflection of communication guidelines.

Delegate assembly reported

Supt. Miles and board member Linda Jelden reported from the Oct. 16-17 Colorado Association

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of School Boards (CASB) delegate assembly. "Staying Ahead of the Red" was the general theme which centered around economic expectations for fiscal year 2010-11.

Jelden reported on the sessions she attended which focused on budget decisions and legal implications of board decisions.

She also noted only 80 of 178 school districts were represented at Saturday's delegate assembly. There were some good topics and debates, with all new resolutions passing.

Miles reported on the session he attended which dealt with getting more out of your BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services). He pointed out consolidation was a big word. He said at the upcoming Northeast BOCES retreat, one topic will be exploring other shared services.

Miles also reported on two speakers from the legislature, both who are likely to be sponsors of the school finance act.

New financial report formats

Supt. Miles introduced new financial report formats, and noted appreciation to Sharon Thompson, director of budget and finance, for her time in changing those formats.

Reports which were reviewed included a cash balance report, quarterly reports and monthly expenditures.

Board member Jeff Tharp said he likes the format, as it gives a good understanding of

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cash-flow.

Other business

In other business Oct. 20, the Re-1J board:

—noted board meetings will start at 7 p.m. beginning with the Nov. 3 meeting.

—accepted the resignation of assistant cook Tricia Coyne, effective Oct. 9.

—approved application for Type V substitute teaching authorization for Laura Roll.

—adopted the revised policy on leaves general provisions and the revised policy exhibit on board of education bylaws.

—acknowledged \$350 cash donations from Trumper Agency and First Pioneer National Bank for football travel gear.

—made the following committee updates: Theresa Tharp on sick leave bank committee; re-appointments Trudy Herman, D.J. Shafer, Scott Dille, Leticia Penzing, Gloria Bergner, Misti Redman and Beverly Young and new member Kyle Stumpf to elementary accountability; Veronica Nuñez, Rena Schneller, Michelle Vieselmeyer and Andrea Kammer on JR/SR High accountability.