

EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

September 4, 2018

Attending: Commissioner Sheppard (Chair); Commissioners White and Hallmark

Parent Representative: Toyin Anderson

Distinguished Educator: Dr. Jaime Aquino

District Staff: Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams; Dr. Cecilia Golden, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching & Learning; Harry Kennedy, Chief of Human Capital Initiatives (HCI); Toyia Wilson, School Chief; Shirley Green, School Chief; Carmine Peluso, School Chief; Amy Schiavi, Chief of School Leadership; Carlos Cotto, Director of Health and Physical Education; Carlos Garcia, Chief of Communications; Dr. Ray Giamartino, Chief of Accountability; Rob Ulliman, Planning Director

Commissioner Sheppard convened the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting of the Whole at 5:30PM.

I. Review Minutes of August 14, 2018 Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Hallmark to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2018 Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting. **Adopted 3-0.**

II. Discuss Development of a District-Wide Sports and Extracurricular Calendar

Commissioner Sheppard noted that a master calendar of sports, athletics and extracurricular events would facilitate student participation and highlight these programs in the District. She discussed the need to encourage students to pursue their interests and develop their talents in all areas to reach their full potential. Commissioner Sheppard explained that these are the reasons that she included this discussion on the agenda for this evening's meeting.

Carlos Cotto referred to a central website, www.RCAC.org, which contains a calendar of sports and athletic events for the interscholastic program for grades 7-12 in each school. Mr. Cotto explained that the Athletic Director develops and updates the schedule for the sports and athletic activities in their school. Whenever updates are entered into this system regarding schedule changes or cancellations, notification is provided. The current system enables users to check the athletic schedule for each RCSD school by week and month, or for the entire District for the week.

Mr. Cotto reported that he has reached out to the City of Rochester to obtain information about extracurricular sports and athletic activities, particularly since many of the City Recreation Centers are co-located with RCSD schools. He noted that many community-based activities use the District's athletic fields, but these schedules are shown on a different website.

Mr. Cotto stated that he will collaborate with Mr. Garcia to determine the best way to integrate and present information of all extracurricular activities in the District in a master calendar, including the

arts, concerts, and plays. He noted the benefit of having all of this information in one central location, since he receives many inquiries from parents about signing their child up for sports, athletic, and extracurricular activities.

Commissioner Hallmark inquired whether a link to the RCAC website is currently contained in the District's smart phone application. Mr. Garcia replied that this link is not on the smart phone application because the Rochester Athletic Conference schedule is on a separate website. He stated that he will explore opportunities for incorporating this link into the smart phone application, noting that the Athletic Directors in each school will have to populate the fields with the information.

Commissioner Sheppard explained that she wanted to discuss a master calendar of extracurricular activities because she did not see any of this information on the District website. She expressed concern about community members and colleges having access to information about District extracurricular activities to recognize the accomplishments of RCSD students. Mr. Garcia clarified that Athletic Directors and other staff members involved with the variety of extracurricular activities in the District would be required to enter the information and upload it to the District website.

Commissioner Sheppard suggested having one master calendar for sports and athletic events, and another master calendar for all other types of extracurricular activities on the District website. Mr. Cotto explained that schedule changes due to weather or other circumstances require that the system have the capability of providing timely notification to parents and students. For this reason, he recommended maintaining the RCAC web-based system.

Commissioner Sheppard asked about the additional amount of time involved in updating information on a master calendar on the District website. Mr. Cotto replied that the issue is that Athletic Directors at each school will have to update the District website at the same time that schedule changes/cancellations are made to the RCAC website. He added that input will be needed from multiple sources within the District and in the community regarding the wide range of extracurricular activities available to RCSD students. Relying on many different sources for information and updates may create some glitches in terms of schedule changes, cancellations and providing timely notification.

Commissioner Sheppard inquired about publicity for non-athletic events in the District, such as concerts or plays. Mr. Cotto noted that many of these types of extracurricular events are school-based, and additional coordination and organization of the information will be needed.

Commissioner Hallmark voiced concern about parent and community use of the smart phone application, stating that schools need to be made aware of the importance of including information on the application. Mr. Cotto reported that he is collaborating with the Information Management & Technology Department to integrate the various sources and pieces of information on the application.

III. Preliminary August 2018 Graduation Data and Analysis

Dr. Giamartino emphasized that the data presented this evening is preliminary, and subject to change due to fluctuations in the number of students in the 2014 cohort and the fact that school staff have until September 14th to complete the data entry into the Student Management System. Factors such as recent changes in a student's status (e.g. moving out of the District or state), movement of students

between Rochester and Puerto Rico, and the state's recognition of the status of certain student groups (e.g. students receiving a Puerto Rico diploma) affect the number of students in the cohort. Since graduation rates are calculated by comparing the number of graduates to the total number of students in the cohort, these factors also affect the projected graduation rate.

Dr. Giamartino reported that preliminary analysis indicates an estimated 2.4% increase in the 4-year graduation rate for the 2014 cohort, as compared to the 2013 cohort. He presented data showing the August 4-year graduation rate for each year, from the 2009 cohort to the preliminary projections for the 2014 cohort. Dr. Giamartino observed that the District has experienced a gradual, incremental increase in 4-year graduation rates over the last six years, from 49.5% for the 2009 cohort to an estimated 59.2% for the 2014 cohort.

Dr. Giamartino noted that graduation rates increased over the last year in the majority (58%) of RCSD secondary schools and in each student subgroup. This preliminary data indicates improvement throughout the District for all students.

Rob Ulliman reported that over one-third of English-language learners (35.3%) and of students with disabilities (34.0%) in the 2014 cohort are still enrolled. He pointed out that the new performance and accountability system under *ESSA* will include 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates, allowing for additional time and support needed by these students.

Mr. Ulliman stated that the preliminary estimated dropout rate for the 2014 cohort is 18.3%, the lowest in the District for the last several years. He stated that the District's dropout rate has averaged ~20-25% in the past.

Commissioner Sheppard requested additional information about the graduation rates for each student subgroup for the last 4-6 years, as well as dropout rates for this time period.

ACTION ITEM: Data will be provided to the Board of the 4-Year August graduation rates and of dropout rates for each cohort by student subgroup for the last 4-6 years.

In discussing the graduation rate trends for each RCSD secondary school, Mr. Ulliman explained that the preliminary data was extracted manually from the Student Management System to confirm that each student has met graduation requirements of at least 22.0 credits and attained the necessary Regents exam scores.

Mr. Ulliman noted that the number of students in the 2014 cohort will change by completing the identification of students who have received a Puerto Rico diploma. He explained that these students are included in the District's cohort population, but not in the number who have graduated. For this reason, the District's projected graduation rate will increase as these students are identified and confirmed by the state as having received a diploma from Puerto Rico.

Another factor affecting the District's 2014 cohort graduation rate is a change in a student's status, such as moving out of the District or out of the state. School staff are currently in the process of conducting a review to identify all of these students. Mr. Ulliman explained that these types of changes in students' status would reduce the size of the cohort and also increase the graduation rate.

Commissioner Hallmark requested clarification about whether students entering the District from Puerto Rico are considered to be in the Puerto Rican educational system or the New York system. Dr. Giamartino clarified that the state allowed students from Puerto Rico who entered the U.S. within a certain time period to elect whether to pursue a diploma from Puerto Rico or a Regents diploma. The Puerto Rico diploma is awarded on the basis of attaining a minimum of 18 credits. District staff met with each student from Puerto Rico and their parents to discuss the choice between these two diploma options.

Commissioner Sheppard asked about reasons for the decline in graduation rates for some of the RCSD secondary schools, questioning when the decline became apparent for these schools. Toyia Wilson cited Wilson High School as an example of a District school with a high level of transition, receiving a large number of incoming students over the last school year.

Commissioner White inquired whether Wilson High School had a disproportionate number of students entering during the school year, as compared to other RCSD secondary schools. Ms. Wilson replied that incoming students cannot be placed in receivership schools and therefore entering students are placed in non-receivership schools with greater seat capacity, such as Wilson High School, Edison High School, Vanguard High School, and Integrated Arts & Technology High School. Carmine Peluso added that the School of the Arts and School Without Walls do not accept transfer students, which also contributes to the disproportionate placement of incoming students in these other secondary schools.

Commissioner White noted that this is yet another example of the equity issues within the District, stating that staff should be exploring ways to address these issues. He requested a list of the School Chiefs working with each of the RCSD secondary schools that have experienced a decrease in graduation rate this year:

Wilson High School: Toyia Wilson
Monroe High School: Amy Schiavi
Vanguard High School: Carmine Peluso
Integrated Arts & Technology High School: Carmine Peluso
World of Inquiry School No. 58: Toyia Wilson

Superintendent Deane-Williams reported that the distribution of schools among the School Chiefs is examined each year, with consideration given to:

- The school principal and degree of experience in their profession, the school, and the District
- The intensive needs of receivership schools, which results in fewer schools being assigned to the Chief of Receivership Schools

The Superintendent stated that she is considering assigning School Chiefs' to elementary and secondary school levels to facilitate greater alignment with the curriculum. She explained that she will not make a decision about the potential reorganization until the new accountability metrics under *ESSA* have been released and the School Chiefs have had an opportunity to provide their recommendations.

Superintendent Deane-Williams declared that the Chief of Equity, Itonia Owens, is examining student data by race, gender and ethnicity in terms of student placement and distribution among RCSD schools, referrals to Special Education, and student suspension.

The Superintendent stated that she has requested projections for the 2015 cohort from each School Chief by the end of September. The Superintendent asserted that the District could realize substantial improvement by reviewing credit attainment and the specific credits needed for each student in the 2015 cohort to ensure their enrollment in the necessary courses. She emphasized the need to organize the curriculum in a way that is helpful to students, providing an example of a student who needs to pass a Global History and ELA Regents exam. The Superintendent noted that the District can offer a Humanities course, thereby enabling the student to focus on both of these subjects simultaneously. She discussed the need for a personal and individualized curriculum and instruction in the Twilight academies or academic centers. Superintendent Deane-Williams stated that this is the first year that each school principal has been had the level of staffing necessary to provide personalized learning for students.

Ms. Schiavi described efforts to identify schools in need of support for English-language learners and students with disabilities, as part of the Path Forward initiative. The distribution of these student populations was examined by zone and by school. Ms. Schiavi cited Monroe High School as an example of a school with a large population of English-language learners and/or students with disabilities (64.4%), who need additional specialized supports. Among all of the RCSD secondary schools, Ms. Schiavi reported that Monroe High School and Integrated Arts & Technology High School have the highest percentage of students with disabilities and/or English-language learners, which must be considered when comparing school performance data.

Mr. Ulliman noted greater fluctuations in the 2014 cohort than for cohorts in previous years, which also affects the data and comparisons across time. He pointed out that the number of credits and Regents exams passed by students entering the 2014 cohort was significantly lower than the norm for previous cohorts.

As another example of the need to contextualize the data, Ms. Wilson discussed comparisons between East High School and Edison High School. While East High School scaled down their student population to approximately 200 students in their 2014 cohort, the cohort for Edison High School consisted of 438 students. In addition, Edison High School has the NYSSA program for students up to age 21 who qualify for alternative testing. Ms. Wilson noted that this program reduces the graduation rate for the school. She added that approximately 25% of the students at Edison High School have disabilities, almost all of who are in a self-contained setting. Ms. Wilson contended that comparisons of Edison High School with East High School are unfair because these factors are overlooked.

Commissioner Sheppard asked about ways in which the Board can support schools with a disproportionate percentage of English-language learners and/or students with disabilities.

Mr. Peluso asserted that a more equal distribution of English-language learners and students with disabilities among schools would have a significant impact on equity within the District, and provide support to schools with a disproportionate percentage of these students.

Ms. Schiavi declared that the support of the Board and Superintendent in allocating resources to schools cannot be over-emphasized. She stated that this is the first time that she has heard principals state that resources are sufficient to meet school needs, which is critical for District students and families. Ms. Schiavi urged sustained financial support for schools, particularly in light of anticipated budget cuts for 2019-20.

Commissioner White cautioned against focusing on struggling schools to the detriment of high-performing schools. He acknowledged the need to attain a more equitable balance in the distribution of specific student populations among RCSD schools, but not by jeopardizing high-performing schools.

Superintendent Deane-Williams maintained that the overall size of schools and the number of students per grade level should be reduced, stating that East High School is the ideal size for a secondary school. She asserted that efforts must be made to examine the number of students at each grade level in each school, house students in grades 6-8 in the same location, and ensure that staffing levels are adequate for each school. The Superintendent declared that East High School has the ability to serve students in the way that they need, and the District should replicate this model in every school. She stated that RCSD schools have improved, but are not at the point of being able to replicate the success of East High School. The Superintendent pointed out that the District has expanded a number of programs, such as community schools, extended day programs, and the AVID program. She stated that the District will be able to focus in 2018-19 on the outcomes resulting from these different inputs.

Commissioner White contended that opening new schools is necessary to increase equity throughout the District, noting that past efforts in shuffling students among the same existing schools has not been effective or equitable. Superintendent Deane-Williams replied that the work of the Path Forward initiative led to recommending a partnership between P-TECH and the Greece Central School District, adding 7th and 8th grades to the School Without Walls, and creating an additional school of the digital performing arts. She stated that options also need to be explored for relocating the Leadership Academy for Young Men because all of the space in the current building is not needed. She suggested that a comprehensive high school or another school of the arts could be housed in the building currently occupied by the Leadership Academy for Young Men. The Superintendent stated that these are some of the considerations and recommendations included in the Path Forward report.

Superintendent Deane-Williams explained that work is under way to examine the long-term financial plan, cost of securing additional space, and possibility of obtaining the resources to open these schools. She stated that an analysis has been conducted of the size of RCSD schools and feeder patterns, and a long-term financial plan is needed that would allow the District to secure the funding to open a new school. The Superintendent reported that a team in Albany is considering the option of utilizing the downtown elementary school designed to be a magnet school, with 50% of students from the community and 50% from Monroe County. She stated that Ms. Wilson has been collaborating with the Greece Central School District and Monroe Community College on this project. Although there is support for this school, funding must be secured to open two new PTECH programs.

Commissioner White remarked that while there has been a great deal of discussion about opening new schools in the District during his ten years on the Board, no action has been taken toward

attaining this goal. He emphasized the need to act because the student population cannot be equitably distributed in the District without jeopardizing the accomplishments that have been made in high-performing schools. Superintendent Deane-Williams reported receiving the same concerns from students, parents and community members during outreach efforts conducted last year as part of the Path Forward initiative. She asserted that personalized approaches are essential to student success, which cannot be attained in large comprehensive high schools.

Commissioner Sheppard expressed concern about the schools in which 50% or fewer students have graduated, resulting in large numbers of students being sent out into the world without opportunities for survival. She suggested the possibility of revisiting the local diploma option.

Commissioner White stated that the District should ensure that schools are not so large as to be unmanageable or lacking in personal connections or instruction for students. He contended that the only way to accomplish this goal is by opening several new schools to reduce the size of the some of the District's larger schools.

IV. Update on Regulations regarding New Performance Measures and Accountability Designations under *ESSA*

Dr. Giamartino provided a handout to Committee members that summarizes the *ESSA* information presented in the July 2018 Excellence in Student Achievement Committee meeting. He stated that no new updates have been provided by the NYS Education Department, and the new performance metrics and accountability designations are not expected to be released for a few months.

V. Follow-Up Items

A. From the August 2018 Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting:

1. Historical data of the number/percentage of students graduating in five or six years

Dr. Giamartino presented data regarding the number and percentage of students graduating in 4, 5, or 6 years for the 2006 through 2012 cohorts (i.e. from the 2009-10 through 2015-16 School Year). He noted that the 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates have shown the same gradual upward trend during this period.

Commissioner Sheppard inquired whether 5-year and 6-year graduation rates are included the state's evaluation of District and school performance. Dr. Giamartino responded that these graduation rates will be considered in the state's evaluations under the new *ESSA* plan, which takes effect this school year. Beth Mascitti-Miller explained that students in the 2012 cohort who graduate in six years will be considered by the state when examining the District's 6-year graduation rate this year. She noted that receivership schools also have 5-year graduation rate targets to meet as part of attaining demonstrable improvement.

Commissioner White asked about the effectiveness of using graduation coaches this year. Superintendent Deane-Williams replied that it is too early to determine the effectiveness of this approach, but the analysis is currently under way. She added that graduation coaches provide an extra check on student progress toward graduation, in addition to the monitoring

performed by principals and school chiefs. The Superintendent reported that graduation coaches have identified opportunities for students to progress that had previously been missed.

2. Number/percentage of students in the 2014 cohort planning to graduate in five or six years

Dr. Golden reported that a preliminary analysis 5-year and 6-year graduation rates for the students in the 2014 cohort has been conducted, but not yet verified or finalized. She stated that this information will be included in the 1st Quarter Academic Reports prepared by the School Chiefs.

3. Attendance data for summer school students in the 2014 cohort

Mr. Peluso presented an Attendance Data Sheet for students in the 2014 cohort who attended summer school this year, indicating an overall attendance rate of 58.5% for those at the Franklin campus. He pointed out that some students attended summer school just to prepare for a course or exam, while others needed to make up an entire course.

Ms. Wilson noted that every student in the 2014 cohort who had not graduated in June was enrolled in summer school to ensure their continued engagement in school. Enrollment included students who were completing online credit recovery, and did not necessarily need to attend summer school.

Commissioner Hallmark expressed concern about the University of Rochester summer school programs, which had quite low attendance rates. Ms. Wilson explained that attendance will be one of the factors considered in a more comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of the various summer school programs to determine which should be approved for next year.

Commissioner Sheppard observed that summer school attendance affects programs' funding allocations. She requested information about the summer school programs for which attendance has affected funding, and the target attendance rates that each program would have to attain to receive adequate/full funding.

ACTION ITEM: Information will be provided to the Board of the summer school programs not receiving full funding because of attendance issues, and of the target attendance rates necessary to receive full funding for each of these programs.

Commissioner White asked about the staff member in the Central Office responsible for evaluating student academic progress in summer school programs. Dr. Mascitti-Miller responded that the Office of Accountability evaluates student academic performance against the cost for each of the summer school programs.

Superintendent Deane-Williams stated that academic return on investment indicators, transportation costs, and funding sources have been examined closely over the last two years in the budget process to explore opportunities for efficiencies. She explained that graduation rates for the high school sites need to be compared with other indicators and costs to determine the academic return on investment for this year's programs. The Superintendent

noted that funding and grant sources must be examined for other programs because these are operated by partners with the District. She added that community partnership programs also need to be evaluated in terms of potential efficiencies and academic return on investment.

Commissioner White asserted that examination of program or grant objectives must begin before the budget is developed to determine whether resources should be invested. He noted that it is much easier to avoid investing resources in a program that is ineffective in meeting District goals than to discontinue an existing program that was insufficiently vetted. He also pointed out that early planning would enable the District to inform and assist community-based organizations with planning if a program is to be discontinued.

Commissioner Hallmark inquired about the considerations involved in placing students in summer school programs, and the impact on transportation. Dr. Mascitti-Miller replied that community-based organizations participated in summer school based on the number of students expected to attend. She noted that community-based organizations tend to recruit students from specific schools, and staunchly advocate for their programs. Dr. Mascitti-Miller reported that evaluation of summer school programs will be conducted earlier this year to enable the District to collaborate with community-based organizations whose programs will not be continued.

To maximize transportation service and cost efficiencies, Dr. Mascitti-Miller stated that the District offered summer school at one site at the secondary level and two sites for the elementary level.

Dr. Aquino questioned the theory of action behind summer school. Ms. Schiavi described a major effort conducted approximately three years ago to examine the way in which services were delivered to students during the school year and over the summer. She discussed separating the middle school from the high school level, and focusing on opportunities to accelerate learning for middle school students over the summer. Ms. Schiavi explained that the high school summer program has focused on credit recovery, placing all necessary resources and opportunities for online credit recovery on all secondary school campuses. The long-term plan was to shift from credit recovery to accelerating credit attainment and student learning.

Dr. Aquino inquired about the theory of action for summer school at the elementary level. Dr. Mascitti-Miller replied that summer school for elementary school students began with enrichment activities under a grant from the Wallace Foundation. The Foundation awarded the grant to the District approximately 5-6 years ago to reduce summer learning loss. Dr. Mascitti-Miller reported that options for elementary level have expanded over time to sustain the reduction in summer learning loss and to increase student engagement.

Dr. Aquino pointed out that the District's theory of action for each of the summer school programs should determine the objectives and indicators used to evaluate the academic return on investment.

Commissioner Hallmark commented on the expectation that 9th grade students attend summer school if they have not earned at least 6 credits by the end of the school year. She asked how

these students are encouraged to attend school in the summer, and how the District ensures that they actually enroll and attend. Ms. Wilson replied that students who have not attained a certain level of academic progress during the school year are required to attend summer school. She explained that school counselors and support staff collaborate with parents and families to ensure that students are aware of this requirement. Ms. Wilson reported that early registration was held for summer school this year and every effort was made to accommodate students' needs.

Commissioner Hallmark inquired whether grades in summer school are included in assessing a student's academic performance. Ms. Wilson pointed out that students are able to use summer school as an opportunity to replace a grade in a course that was taken during the school year. This gives students an opportunity to obtain a higher grade in the course, which will be calculated in their overall grade point average.

4. Specific items for which school principals will be held accountable in the 2018-19 school year (5-7 items)

Shirley Green provided a handout of the six elements that School Chiefs discussed with school principals last year and which are linked to the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan goals:

- Instructional Walkthrough: observation in classrooms and using this information to plan professional development in schools:
 - » Building flexibility into the master schedule to ensure provision of Tier 1, 2, and 3 instruction
 - » Using observation to ensure that principals are monitoring/evaluating teachers' instruction
- Academic Achievement:
 - » Increased graduation rate
 - » Increased Math and ELA scores for grades 3-8
 - » Expansion of accelerated courses (Advanced Placement and opportunities for early credit attainment in middle school)
- Suspension: Reduce suspension rate by 10% or below a specified threshold
- Attendance:
 - » Increase the daily attendance rate
 - » Reduce chronic absences
- Special Education:
 - » Ensure that principals are reviewing behavior intervention plans for students with disabilities, examining referrals to Special Education, and following up on compliance issues

- Parent Engagement:
 - » Ensure that schools are welcoming and offer meaningful parent engagement
 - » Have at least three parents on the School-Based Planning Team, and ensure accessibility of meeting minutes to members of the school community
 - » Have a functioning PTA/PTO

Commissioner Hallmark asked whether rubrics have been created to measure performance in each of these six areas. Ms. Wilson reported that Hattie’s Visible Learning is based on the latest research and was used to develop the six components that should be observed in classrooms. These components provide a framework for discussions with principals about ways to coach teachers on their instruction, as well as a basis of comparison with their peers and the District as a whole. Ms. Wilson noted that the School Chiefs have prepared the data walls to provide visible learning for all, so that each school can be measured on each of these dimensions on a weekly basis. She explained that this approach facilitates provision of targeted supports, along with input from principals.

Dr. Aquino observed that the information presented indicates the summative measures to be used to hold principals accountable. He inquired about methods that will be used to ensure that students are actually learning.

Shirley Green described the use of diagnostic assessments for every student at the beginning of the school year, with a review every five weeks throughout the year to monitor academic performance.

Ms. Wilson stated that research-based indicators are used that have a direct link to student performance in the classroom, academic standards, or individual learning targets. She explained that the targets established for each school evolve during the school year according to performance changes in each area.

Ms. Schiavi discussed using a three-prong approach of informal observation, classroom walkthroughs, and common formative assessments. She stated that the School Chiefs also examine the cohesion between the curriculum and instruction, goal-setting with students, and the data used to measure progress toward goals and toward the ultimate outcome. Ms. Schiavi asserted that this approach and measurement of progress every two weeks ensures that targets will be met.

Dr. Aquino inquired at what point during the school year the Superintendent and Board members can obtain a reliable estimate with supporting evidence indicating the status of student academic performance in the District.

Mr. Peluso stated that this information can be provided every five weeks to the Superintendent and Board. He described collaborating with the directors of each academic content area to develop common assessments, which the District has not had in the past. Mr. Peluso pointed out that the District has relied on NWEA assessments in the past to examine student academic performance, but these assessments are not administered frequently enough. He stated that ELA and Math formative assessments will now be used to evaluate progress every five weeks.

Dr. Aquino stated that he is puzzled by the use of instructional walkthroughs to ensure implementation of the curriculum because interviews with staff have indicated that there is no common curriculum in the District. He asked about the way in which these walkthroughs are used to evaluate implementation of the curriculum in the District.

Mr. Peluso acknowledged that the District does not have a common curriculum, but instructional walkthroughs are used to ensure that instruction is aligned with academic standards.

Dr. Golden emphasized that the six elements for measuring performance and holding principals accountable is preliminary. She stated that the performance and accountability measures will be finalized in the next few weeks to enable school leaders to monitor student performance more frequently. Dr. Golden explained that principals have to serve as instructional leaders, which requires that:

- Instruction is reviewed with teachers on a regular basis and re-teaching plans are developed;
- Professional development is designed to enable teachers to create learning assessments that are tied to classroom instruction and activities; and
- Assessment of students' academic performance is discussed with teachers on a regular basis.

Ms. Schiavi pointed out that receivership schools have autonomy over the curriculum, and each principal considers a curriculum to be in place in their school. With each curriculum, a wide range of supplemental materials is provided and learning targets are posted in each school. Ms. Schiavi emphasized that a curriculum is in place, but the question is the degree of cohesion in the curriculum among schools.

Commissioner Hallmark questioned the way in which assessments will be supported, since the District is no longer using Student Learning Objectives. Dr. Golden replied that professional learning opportunities will be offered to teachers and administrators, and the professional development plan will be completed by next week. She described collaborating with the Rochester Teachers' Association to offer dinner seminars and half-day sessions. Dr. Golden stated that principals and teachers are being encouraged to conduct grade level meetings on the same day as professional development sessions, which would enable student work to be evaluated at the same time across the District. She noted that teachers tend to view assessments as a disruption of their instruction, and efforts are being made to shift this perspective to view assessments as a coherent and integral aspect of professional development.

Commissioner Sheppard expressed concern about the goal of increasing the percentage of students scoring at proficiency levels on Math and ELA exams in schools that only have a few students currently at these levels. She maintained that increasing the number or percentage by a slight degree would not be meaningful or sufficient in terms of goals, and requested that another method or standard be used. Dr. Golden clarified that schools in this situation will be expected to realize a substantial increase in the percentage of students at proficiency level.

She emphasized the need for collaboration with schools to ensure that goals are challenging, but attainable.

Dr. Aquino commented that attaining a 10% increase in the percentage of students scoring at proficiency levels in ELA and Math throughout the District is a quite ambitious goal to achieve in one year.

Dr. Mascitti-Miller noted that the performance of students scoring at levels 2-4 on standardized assessments will be examined in the future because of the new accountability standards established by the federal and state government.

Superintendent Deane-Williams pointed out that Mr. Peluso is a former school principal, and requested that he describe his approach to monitoring and improving student performance. Mr. Peluso explained that he would review the data in detail to identify the students scoring at the upper end of each proficiency level, pinpoint learning gaps, and examine interventions to coach teachers on focusing on specific subgroups. He reported that his use of this approach as a principal enabled the school to progress toward targets.

As a School Chief, Mr. Peluso discussed plans to facilitate use of this process among principals, examine use of the data, the types of interventions and services provided and their impact, and strategies for assisting English-language learners and students with disabilities. He described focusing on credit attainment of 9th grade students and their course schedule to ensure that opportunities are provided to recover necessary credits more quickly.

5. Data regarding the number/percentage of Teaching Assistants, Paraprofessionals, and Per Diem Substitute Teachers that have pursued opportunities through the District to enter the teaching profession

Harry Kennedy presented information about the number/percentage of entry level staff who have converted to teaching positions as a result of opportunities offered by the District. Data was provided of the number of Teaching Assistants, Paraprofessionals, and Per Diem Substitute Teachers who pursued these opportunities from September 1, 2016 to September 1, 2017 and for September 1, 2017 to September 1, 2018, with detail regarding race and ethnicity. The data reveal that the majority of candidates pursuing District opportunities to enter teaching careers are per diem substitute teachers, many of whom are from diverse backgrounds (22% in 2016-17 and 30% in 2017-18). Mr. Kennedy pointed out that the District does not have many Paraprofessionals or Teaching Assistants converting to teaching because the individuals in these positions do not have four-year college degrees.

Commissioner Sheppard inquired about the supports necessary for Paraprofessionals and Teaching Assistants to be able to pursue a teaching career. Mr. Kennedy replied that having to obtain a four-year college degree represents a substantial barrier for individuals in these positions.

Commissioner Sheppard asked about partnerships or programs that may enable staff members in these positions to attend college and support themselves financially. Mr. Kennedy

responded that the District offers entry-level staff loan forgiveness and a teaching position after completing the requirements.

Dr. Aquino commended Mr. Kennedy and the Human Capital Initiatives Department for increasing the percentage of teachers of color among the per diem substitute teachers in the District by 6% over the last year. He noted that although this is not a sufficient increase, it is very difficult to attain.

Dr. Golden pointed out that the District offers tuition reimbursement to Paraprofessionals who attend college. She contended that there is an equity issue in expecting employees in Paraprofessional positions to be able to advance the funding needed to pay for college and requiring them to wait for reimbursement. Dr. Golden suggested re-evaluating this approach and offering opportunities to Paraprofessional employees who show promise or meet other criteria.

B. Action Plan for the Path Forward

1. Specific problems/gaps in implementing the *Parent Preference/Managed Choice Policy* (5153);
2. Corrective actions to be taken to address each particular problem/gap, and the staff member responsible for each corrective action;
3. Timeline for completing all of the necessary corrective actions; and
4. Consequences for future violations in implementing the *Parent Preference/Managed Choice Policy*

Commissioner Sheppard reported discussing the Action Plan for the Path Forward with Dr. Golden, noting that additional time is needed to finalize the Plan. She stated that work will continue, and Dr. Golden will notify her when the Action Plan is ready to be presented to the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee.

VI. Presentation of the K-2 Curriculum

Commissioner Sheppard explained that Dr. Goodwin was unable to attend this evening's meeting, and will present the K-2 curriculum in the October 9, 2018 Excellence in Student Achievement Committee meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29PM.