

Knight Administration



December

Mark Dohmen, Superintendent Report

Financial Focus

This month I wanted to share a clear picture of our district's finances. There are three key concepts that help schools monitor their financial health: Solvency Ratio, Unspent Authorized Budget (UAB) Ratio, and Annual Unspent Spending Authority.

The solvency ratio provides a picture of fiscal health of a school district and represents the percent of the district's available funding. The recommended financial solvency ratio range is 5-15%, not to exceed 25%. North Cedar Community School District has a solvency ratio of 7% (FY 15). UAB is the amount of the maximum spending authority not expended during the fiscal year. The recommended UAB ratio range is 5-15%, not to exceed 25%. Our UAB ratio is 19% (FY 15). Annual unspent spending authority stabilizes at 0%. Basically, this means are we spending all authority generated for a given year?

Comparison of Concepts – Where is your District?

		Assigned and Unassigned Fund Balance (Cash)			
		Status	Negative	Zero	Positive
Unspent Balance (Spending Auth.)	Negative	Very High Concern	Very High Concern	Very High Concern	
	Zero	High Concern	Concern	Concern	
	Positive	Concern	Acceptable	Best	

Although, you can be "too" much on the positive side

Mary Bendixen, JR/SR High Principal

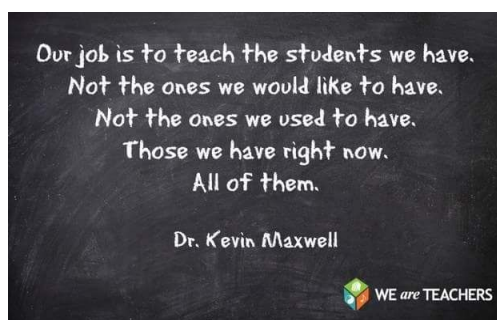
The Junior-Senior High has identified four building priorities to improve the learning environment for our students: Standards-Based Grading, Multi-Tiered System of Supports, Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports, and Social Climate. We have established a leadership team for each initiative.

Standards Based Grading (SBG)

The staff continues to make progress toward implementing Standards Based Grading and we are hoping to pilot SBG in some courses during second semester. There are a few details that need to be worked out with Grant Wood related to PowerSchool gradebook before we can implement, so it is possible I will delay implementation until next fall. However, I do feel we've accomplished quite a bit since the start of the school year. Teachers have made good use of professional development time to unwrap standards, and to develop proficiency scales, assessments, and pacing guides.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

In a Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports educators examine data and identify students who need additional academic supports. Those supports are provided in both small group and individual settings, and are monitored to ensure that all learners demonstrate proficiency in the Iowa Core standards and leave school ready for life. Our Junior High staff is using iReady data to determine intervention groups. As a starting point for high school, we will pull a D/F list each Monday and assign students to groups based on that information.



Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional and academic success. The PBIS team will be asking for input from the staff on what they feel are the most important expectations related to behavior. This is a good starting point for developing a set of building wide expectations.

Social Climate

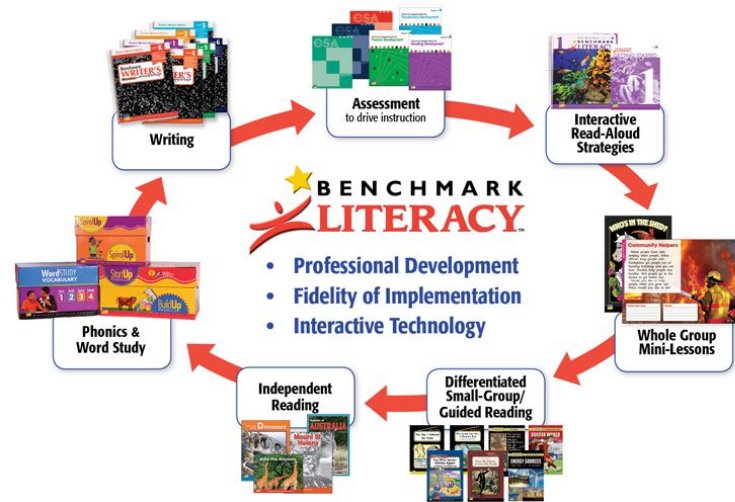
The Social Climate committee is focusing on building relationships among the junior high and senior high staff. We are in the second year as a 7-12 building, and our goal is to work as ONE staff rather than two. We have had many opportunities to collaborate and socialize already this year, and the sense of camaraderie is growing.

Jenny Horman, Elementary Principal

The elementary has adopted a new reading curriculum this year. Benchmark Literacy is a comprehensive literacy program used in grades kindergarten through sixth. Benchmark literacy program includes seven components; Whole Group Mini Lessons, Differentiated/Small Group Guided Reading, Independent Reading, Phonics and Word Study, Writing, Assessment to Drive Instruction, and Interactive Read Aloud Strategies, all which contribute to a balanced literacy program.

There are many highlights to this curriculum, some of them include;

- 30 weeks of explicit comprehension-focused lessons for the whole class, small groups, and intervention
- Assessment-driven instruction that is differentiated and includes responding to text
- Gradual release and built-in choice that support student progress and teacher creativity
- Precisely leveled texts for your full range of students, including ELs and striving readers
- Leveled Reader's Theater and diverse genres that engage students and extend learning
- Research-based resources and professional development that have been proven effective
- Interactive technology that motivates student learning, involvement, and excellence



Our Mission

The mission of North Cedar Community School District, in partnership with its community, is to ensure a safe and caring environment for each student, providing the essential knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes to create lifelong learners who are responsible, contributing, and productive citizens in a changing and increasingly diverse world.