

# **Assistant Superintendent Report**

May 13, 2025

## **Assessments**

Testing season is in full swing. ILEARN make-up tests are wrapping up this week. Additionally, Spring i-Ready testing has begun. This will lead to Honors placement testing for students in grades 5-7. Finally, semester exams in grades 6-12 will take place in the final week of school. A little more about each of these assessments is described below:

- i-Ready - students are administered this diagnostic assessment in the Fall, Winter, and Spring for both Math and English/Language Arts in grades K-8. This is part of our formative assessment process we use to monitor student progress over the course of the school year. It is also a required measure of achievement in grades K, 2, and 5 for high ability identification. Apart from high ability identification, this data can be used to measure the effectiveness of our instructional strategies and curricular resources. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, this assessment will be scaled back to grades K-2 as the new ILEARN Checkpoints Assessments will take place in the Fall, Winter, and Spring for grades 3-8.
- Honors Placement Tests - Students who do not automatically qualify for honors classes in the middle school through their high ability designation may earn the opportunity to test into these advanced courses in math and English. Students who are on or above grade level on the Spring i-Ready assessments in grades 5-7 may be invited to participate in the honors placement testing. These assessments measure students' proficiency in the content they would essentially be skipping by jumping into the honors class for the following school year (for example, a 6th grader who qualifies for 7th grade honors math would be skipping 7th grade math and moving into the 8th grade math content taught in that honors class). These honors placement tests are created and graded by our middle school math and English teachers, who know the essential content students need to understand to be successful in that honors class.
- Semester Final Exams - An expectation at both TMS and THS is for all classes to have some kind of semester assessment, whether that be a capstone project or a traditional final exam. The purpose of this is to provide some evidence of students' overall proficiency of the content they have studied each semester. While State and National assessments focus primarily on math and English, we want a local measure of student mastery in all subjects. This provides us with a more comprehensive picture of student achievement across all subjects. This data can be valuable in supporting teacher growth as they reflect on their practice.

## **Curricular Materials**

Dr. Glaze and I are road tripping on May 8th. As you know, we recently made a sizable investment in our new elementary reading curriculum (OpenCourt by McGraw-Hill). Our staff have received physical and digital access to the teacher materials and have already begun the work of planning implementation for next year following the professional development they received back in February.

In an effort to save on delivery costs, Dr. Glaze and I will take a road trip in a U-Haul to Groveport, Ohio (just outside of Columbus). By electing to pick up the 8 pallets of student books and supplemental curricular materials, we are able to save about \$15,000. Oddly enough, McGraw-Hill will ship replacement books for the remaining 5 years of our contract at no cost. This always sounds weird to me, but McGraw-Hill isn't the only company with this policy. SAVVAS (the resource we use in elementary and high school math and science) has a similar cost-savings option (although their distribution center is a short trip to Indianapolis). We are always looking for ways to save a few dollars where we can, and the savings here is certainly worth the effort.

## **Professional Development Opportunities**

We have a lot of professional development opportunities our staff have taken advantage of recently as well as a few opportunities being offered early this summer. Below is a list of some of those along with who attended and the outcomes of the experience for staff and students:

- Phonics for ALL Using research Based UFLI (K-6) - Mrs. Higginbotham (TES)
  - This UFLI conference covering explicit instruction, progress monitoring, and lesson tasks. We will also receive a Guidance Link that was created by Melissa Gill's cohort. It is a living document that is constantly adding new details to support for UFLI.
  - This conference can better align UFLI foundations for all students as well as for students who need more support and/or remediation for IREAD3.
- Strengthening Learning in Block Schedule Classes - Mrs. Robertson and Mrs. Clifford (THS)
  - Sending two high school teachers to the virtual conference, and having them present at a staff meeting or PD day/summer academy about the best use of time in the Block Schedule.
  - More efficient use of time will lead to more desirable outcomes for student achievement.
- Leadership Behaviors that Raise Student Achievement - Mr. Ayars (TMS) and Mr. Johnson (TES)
  - Leaders that raise student achievement ensure: 1) Common Lesson Design; 2) Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum; 3) Detailed Data Rosters, Routinely Updated; 4) Collaboration Focused on raising Student Achievement; 5) Teacher Evaluation As a Process Not an Episode
- SIOP Train the Trainer - JR Dover (TCSC ML Teacher)
  - To gain training material to in turn use to teach SIOP to staff

- Students will receive instruction from better prepared teachers with a broader concept of how to reach ML students
- CNC Training Event - Michael Vittorio
  - To learn more running the CNC Machine 2400. To have a better understanding of the software and provide more to students in class.
  - To learn more of proper operations and maintenance of the 2400's. To get more information and knowledge running 4th axis projects.
  - Students will have opportunity to create more detailed artifacts.
  - Student will be train in better safety procedures for running the 2400.

This is all in alignment with our goal of providing staff with the support and training necessary to help our students achieve at higher levels, with a special focus on our vulnerable populations and other areas of high need.

### **IUK Resident Teacher Program**

Last month, Dr. Glaze and I had the pleasure of interviewing about a dozen resident student candidates from IUK. The purpose of these interviews is to pair a candidate and school district for the resident teacher program. This program is essentially a full year of student teaching experience for the IUK student, except unlike typical student teaching experiences, these students are paid through a joint grant. Resident Teachers spend the first semester primarily observing and supporting the supervising teacher about 3 days each week. During second semester, the resident teacher takes over the class full time 5-days each week under the guidance of a certified teacher with at least 5 years experience.

We have had some success with this program recently. Braydon Lake is our current resident teacher from IUK and he actually stepped in when Mr. Comer had to step away. Based on my conversations with Mr. Leach, Mr. Lyday, and Braydon's supervising teacher Mr. Morgan, Braydon is an exceptional resident teacher and we hope we can retain him as a full time teacher if he applies for the position next year. Braydon is also involved in extracurriculars as a coach with Mr. Worthington, also in the social studies department at the high school.

In last month's interviews, Dr. Glaze and I had the pleasure of interviewing a former THS graduate, Nick Hughes. Nick stood head and shoulders above the other candidates and expressed his desire to return to Tipton as a resident teacher. We are awaiting a final decision by IUK, but we are confident we will be working with another excellent resident teacher and Blue Devil. Our hope is that with the Tomorrow's Teachers program, we will continue to see more resident teachers like Nick return to Tipton and create a pipeline of talent to our schools.

## **Graduate School**

As the School Board considers and votes upon the proposed succession plan, I think it is only fair that you are kept up to date on my progress towards my EdD. While I won't bore you with the month to month assignments, I feel it is appropriate to provide you a summary of my progress each semester. Below is a brief summary of my Spring semester through Ball State University:

- EDAD 685: Fiscal Management of Educational Agencies with Dr. Tracy Caddell
  - Final Grade: 254/260 (97.69%)
  - This was an excellent course. It really provided me with a firm understanding of some of the foundations of school finances. I saved all the presentations and notes for future reference as they are all densely packed with information. The capstone project was a financial health analysis of our school district. The purpose of the project was to help us determine the overall financial situation of the school district (revenue, expenditures, student achievement, projects) and identify if a school district is set up for success as we apply for superintendent positions. I am happy to report that I am confident with where TCSC is financially.
- EDAD 780: School District Administrator with Dr. Michael Shaffer
  - Final Grade: 400/400 (100%)
  - To be honest, this class was a relative breeze (as the grade would suggest). I attribute most of that to the fact I have essentially been living in this work for the past few years. We read and wrote a lot about the role of the superintendent and their relationship with the board. It basically gave a general overview of roles and responsibilities that the superintendent office deals with on a daily basis. I still enjoyed the class and will have this professor again this summer in another course.

The summer semester begins in mid-May, and I will be working through the following courses:

- EDAD 687: Legal Aspects of Education with Dr. Michael Shaffer
- EDCU 700: The Secondary School Curriculum with Dr. Jill Bradley-Levine

## **Green Thumbs**

The week of May 12, we will be planting flowers in the large flower pots around our campus. Dr. Glaze and I invite you to join us if you have availability. We will be communicating out details soon.

We will also be planting trees this summer. We recently had to remove a few trees that posed a serious risk to our buildings, and we would like to replace those with new trees. This serves as a great opportunity to help beautify our campus and establish something that should stand the test of time. If you are interested in joining us this summer for that work, please let Dr. Glaze or I know!

## **Monthly Shout Outs**

This month's shout out goes once again to our district administration team, Dawn Benefiel, Holly Brandon, and Brook Cleaver. With the departure of Emma Crawford from payroll, our team once again had to jump in and keep the payroll wheels turning. This is not an easy task on top of a full time jobs, and I know Brook has put in extra hours to ensure our staff continue to get paid. There is never a good time to have a sudden loss in personnel on our small team, and I want to give major kudos to each of them as they stepped up to this important task as we await Nathan Gonzalez to join the team next week.