

## **Honeywell Update- February 3, 2016**

Good evening Highland Park, this is Dr. Taylor. I've kept you "in the know" via my Honeywell messages about the budget planning process, informed you about ways the district will do a better job investing stakeholders in the decision making process, and have "planted seeds" about the forthcoming strategic plan. You can download transcripts of all of these messages by going to the Superintendent's Page on the district website. Please tell your Spanish speaking friends and neighbors they can listen to audio of these messages in Spanish.

Tonight's important message is the first of three about the state of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in our school district. Several needs in these three core areas are being addressed by seven committees of teachers currently led by me and soon to be guided by our supervisors of curriculum and instruction.

The first concern our curriculum committees are working to address is for all subject areas (math, language arts, etc.) to be vertically aligned. It's vital that students, through the course of their K-12 career, build on what they have learned from one year to the next, instead of simply re-learning concepts and skills each grade level. Learning the same idea each year is inefficient and does nothing to intellectually engage a student, let alone excite him or her about learning!

Curriculum Committees are now meeting with teachers in small groups to analyze district curricula and the ways they've implemented these curricula in their lessons. Each committee will then meet for a full day to use a tool called a Topic Scope and Sequence Chart that will identify gaps in what is being taught from Kindergarten through the senior year of high school and redundancies (the ideas and skills being retaught) that are showing up over the course of time, from Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade. Once completed, these analyses will allow us to revamp our curricula so what teachers present in their classrooms allow them to "dig" more deeply into the content, provide greater opportunities for students to think creatively and critically about what they are learning, and help kids activate prior knowledge so they see the connections among what they've learned from year to year.

There is much more to share with you, and I will save additional details for my next Honeywell message, which will be broadcast February 17. For now, please have a good night.

#17770