



DECEMBER 22, 2017

The following information has been collected from CSD administrative departments and reflects updates on key programs, priorities and initiatives. Items specifically related to the progress of Cheltenham's strategic plan, Five Pathways, One Destination, are noted along with specific plan pathways. To access the plan and a description of each pathway, [click here](#).

Anti-Defamation League

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Tamara Thomas Smith recently attended an Anti-Defamation League (ADL) conference on religious holidays, "The December Dilemma: Navigating Religious Holidays in Public Schools." In addition to information on how school districts can employ inclusive celebratory practices during the holiday season, the ADL shared programmatic resources for anti-bias and anti-bullying programs including:

- [Understanding and Addressing Bullying](#)
- A Classroom of Difference
- Making Diversity Count
- Becoming an Ally: Responding to Name-Calling and Bullying
- Names Can Really Hurt Us Assembly Program

Lastly, the ADL shared the best children's literature on bias, diversity, and social justice at www.adl.org/books-matter.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences.

Presentation to Ninth Grade Students on Internet Safety

Mr. Brandon Lutz, Supervisor of Instructional Technology and Data Analysis, hosted a presentation for ninth graders on creating a positive digital footprint and the implications of a digital footprint on their future. To view a slideshow of the presentation, [click here](#).

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communications & Engagement

PDE SAS Institute

Supervisor of STEM Dr. Brian Reilly presented an Ignite Session on Project-Based Learning (PBL) at the Pennsylvania Department of Education's [Standards Aligned System \(SAS\)](#) conference. Highlights of the conference included:

1. Montour High School presented a re-envisioning of the library as a "CREATEbrary" that invites teachers and students to engage in making and creating;
2. IU5 presented an engaging STEM project involving the design and launch of a space balloon;
3. Willow Run School District presented a personalized learning model; and South Western School District presented an incubation lab where core content and specialist teachers integrate their subject areas to varying degrees in common collaboration spaces. CSD's PBL was identified as a model program that helped shape South Western's initiative.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 3: Professional Learning.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT UPDATES FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

CHS Hosts Upper Dublin Educators

Director of Secondary Education Charlene Collins, Supervisor of Professional Learning and K-12 Gifted Education Matthew Pimental and Dr. Reilly met with Upper Dublin School District administrators and middle school teachers to discuss CSD's implementation of PBL. The Upper Dublin team also viewed the new STEM center at CHS and spoke with the District's PBL teachers. The Upper Dublin staff was extremely appreciative to have the opportunity to meet and expressed interest in future collaboration.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 5: Communications & Engagement.

Robotics at Myers

Myers Machines, the [FIRST Lego League \(FLL\)](#) team at Myers Elementary competed in a qualifying robotics competition earlier this month at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy. The nine-member team of third and fourth grade students won the Judges Presentation Award and qualified for the regional championship in February at the University of Pennsylvania.

The team is led by Challenge Consultant Mimi Rubin and Robotics Mentor Gloria Weber, with support from Dr. Reilly. This year's challenge is "Hydro Dynamics"; the team is collaborating to solve problems related to the human water cycle, with a focus on how people find, transport, use or dispose of water in order to meet specific needs or desires.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 5: Communications & Engagement.

Effective Strategies for all Teachers of ELs

A team of teachers from CHS and Cedarbrook attended the second session of "Effective Strategies for All Teachers of English Learners (ELs)" at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU). The interactive session included opportunities for the team to practice strategies and reflect upon how the strategies can be used within their classrooms. The team discussed the impact of strategies utilized since the first session earlier this year and how they have shared and can continue to share strategies with colleagues. As the District engages in curriculum development, specific strategies will be embedded within units of study. Participants will focus on specific strategies within PLC/Team/Department meetings.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction.

Freshman Seminar

Ms. Collins met with Keziah LaTorre (CHS English Department Chair and Freshman Seminar Coordinator) to discuss the progress of the Freshman Seminar program, guest speakers for the Spring semester, and the format for the development of the ninth grade English curriculum. Mrs. LaTorre shared examples of digital portfolios teachers are developing with students. Mrs. LaTorre did stress the need for time to meet with the department and/or grade teams about assessment data. A priority moving forward is developing department and/or grade team meetings to discuss student assessment data; Ms. Collins will work with high school administrators to develop the 2018-19 schedule and identify opportunities for these meetings across departments.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT UPDATES FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Arcadia University Partnership

Ms. Collins and Mr. Pimental met with representatives from Arcadia’s Department of Education about the goal of engaging Arcadia students in the PBL experience for the 2018-19 school year. Arcadia is in the process of redesigning field experience for their students. The team and PBL teachers will continue to meet with Arcadia staff to discuss and develop a partnership.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction.

Stanford University Workshop

Ms. Collins, Dr. Reilly, and Mr. Pimental were accepted into the [Stanford University’s K12 d.school Lab Network](#) “Discover Design Thinking Workshop.” The two-day institute will be held in February at Stanford University. This experience will provide the team with invaluable resources to support CSD’s program development as the District seeks to embed design thinking throughout the K-12 curriculum.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction.

Gifted Education Updates

All CSD third graders were recently assessed using the new gifted screening tool, the [Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test](#) (NNAT3). This test was identified to address concerns relating to equitable access to gifted educational services. The window for the Naglieri testing closed on Friday, Dec. 15.

Following a presentation earlier this month to Challenge consultants, psychologists, School Board Directors and community at large, Mr. Pimental reviewed questions received by the District and determined that a deeper dive into the available data around equitable access to gifted services was required. Data which was accumulated during the gifted audit was re-reviewed with a specific lens of parsing out the most critical needs for next steps to address equity and access across the district. Mr. Pimental then presented his findings to all principals and assistant principals, which highlighted the need to (1) identify those minority students not identified as gifted and (2) ensure CSD protocols do not over-identify other groups of students. In addition to the data review, Mr. Pimental gave principals and assistant principals tools to support Challenge consultants and psychologists in this endeavor.

Mr. Pimental trained Cheltenham High School teachers hired for the 2017-2018 school year on methods and approaches to differentiating for gifted learners in a regular education setting. The shift to the new gifted rubric system at CHS was reviewed and the philosophy of how/why the system is applicable to all courses was discussed. Lastly, teachers were given practical and applicable tools they can implement immediately in their classes to better differentiate for gifted learners.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement.

Seeking Equity for Under-Represented Gifted Students

Supervisor of Elementary Special Education Christina Lewis, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education Stephenie Russell, and Director of Special Education Dr. Beverly Gallagher attended a professional learning session, “Seeking Equity for Under-Represented Gifted Students,” presented by Dr. Donna Ford, Ph.D. District school psychologists and challenge teachers were in attendance.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT UPDATES FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Discipline Process

Attorney Andrew Faust provided professional learning to administrators focused on the discipline process, procedures and [manifestation determination](#) meetings. Mr. Faust also provided guidance around disciplinary scenarios that presented by building administrators. The manifestation determination worksheet and discipline flowchart were provided to attendees for additional guidance.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning.

CPR Staff Training

A voluntary CPR training for staff took place this month at the Administration Building. Facilitated by the American Heart Association, the training taught lifesaving skills utilizing the AHA's research-proven practice-while-watching technique. This was a hands-on CPR practice experience.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences.

Professional Learning

Mr. Pimental is working to utilize a new digital platform to plan, track, and record CSD's professional learning. The program, Frontline Education (formerly My Learning Plan), will enable teachers to be notified of what PD experiences they will have during full-day PD days, a method to communicate their experiences in those sessions, and after confirmation of their attendance, the Frontline digital platform will communicate directly with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to record teacher Act 48 hours. Specifically, work has been completed to ensure that the communication of Act 48 hours is properly coordinated between Cheltenham and the PDE.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning.

DVCEE: Teaching for Deep Understanding and Social Action

Dr. Smith and Student Achievement Teacher Leaders from Elkins Park and Cedarbrook attended "If You Aren't Teaching for Understanding and Use, Then What Are You Doing?" – a professional learning experience sponsored by the [Delaware Valley Consortium for Equity and Excellence \(DVCEE\)](#). This highly interactive workshop explored current research in engagement and motivation, and how inquiry as cognitive apprenticeship is the leading model of instruction for developing motivation, as well as deep conceptual and procedural understanding that leads to transfer and application of learning in the real world. It addressed how inquiry is uniquely suited to assist students to meet next-generation standards and new assessments.

The session focused on practical matters, including how to frame units with essential questions, frontloading to prepare students for success, sequencing and teaching towards culminating writing assignments and service learning projects, as well as exploring various kinds of lesson-level, inquiry-oriented teaching techniques (such as visual strategies, think-alouds, practice in miniature, action strategies) that engage students and help them learn how to learn.

The facilitator, [Dr. Jeffrey Wilhelm](#), is Distinguished Professor of English Education at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho, and is the founding director of the Boise State Writing Project that supports over 3,000 teachers each year with over 110,000 contact hours of professional development. He is a highly-regarded author and co-author of over 37 books about literacy and literacy education, including *You Gotta BE the Book*, *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys* and *Reading Unbound: Promoting the Power of Pleasure Reading*.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathways 1 and 3 (Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Learning).

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT UPDATES FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Women's Student Union Meeting

CHS and District administrators attended a recent Women's Student Union meeting to hear student concerns about the District's harassment policy and its implementation at the high school. Other topics included CSD's health curriculum and concerns about the lack of social-emotional components that support subject area curriculum. Administrators will review feedback collected at the meeting and follow-up with appropriate staff as well as the leaders of the Women's Student Union. Students were particularly excited to hear that there will be a group of students that will be consulted during the Health Curriculum writing process. Dr. Smith is collecting the names of student volunteers.

This work is aligned with Strategic Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences.

Text-Dependent Analysis

Director of Elementary Education Dr. Renato Lajara attended a professional learning session at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit focused on Text Dependent Analysis (TDA), a significant part of the PSSA for students grades 4-8. Dr. Lajara learned how other Montgomery County districts are using the TDA data to inform instruction.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

Dr. Lajara, Dr. Gallagher, and Cedarbrook Principal Marcy Hockfield attended the AVID National Conference in Orlando, Florida. AVID prepares students for 21st-century careers by providing academic and behavioral skills necessary to succeed in the workplace. Organization, time management, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving are strong components of the AVID System. For more information on AVID, [click here](#).

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement.

Project Based Learning

Dr. Gallagher, Ms. Russell, Mr. Pimental and Special Education teacher Patrick Fleury collaborated to design a framework to craft IEP language around the PBL instructional model. Each student enrolled in PBL with an IEP was reviewed, and a plan to update IEPs to better reflect the nature of the PBL learning experience was begun. In addition, a plan for how to address the IEPs of current eighth grade and sixth grade students who will be enrolled in PBL for the 2018-2019 school year was determined so that all IEPs are updated prior to the start of the school year.

The first round of interviews for the tenth grade PBL team was conducted. The team has already identified chemistry and special education teachers. The purpose of the interviews was to identify the social studies and English positions. Following the interviews, several candidates were selected to move on to the second round of interviews which will result in the final selection of the team. Those members will then gather weekly for professional learning sessions in anticipation of a trip to High Tech High later this school year.

The seventh grade PBL team met to prepare for the 2018-2019 school year. The initial focus is on the development of the strengths and virtues of individuals in a group and how focusing on strengths reaps greater gains in learning and productivity than focusing on deficits. They engaged in a hands-on project, creating Alexander Calder-inspired mobiles which display their top five strengths as determined from the [Positive Psychology VIA survey](#), to serve as a reminder to themselves and as a leverage point for team members to utilize one another's strengths.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT UPDATES FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Junior Parent Night Presentation

Nearly 80 parents/guardians attended an evening presentation on the college search process earlier this month hosted by the CSD and CHS counseling team. The presentation focused on standardized testing, strategies to maximize students' junior year experience, and the college search process.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement.

School Counseling Plan Development Training

School districts are required to have a comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Plan as part of [Chapter 339](#). District staff recently attended a training at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit in support of this effort in CSD. The training session focused on components of a counseling program, program management, stakeholders and how to include local businesses and community in plan development. Attendees also were provided with information on PA Career Education and Work Standards and engaged in a panel discussion on how to engage business/community stakeholders in the counseling plan development process.

This work is aligned with Strategic Plan Pathways 2 & 4 (Student Achievement and Holistic Experiences).
