



Oak Park Elementary School District 97 News

Update on District 97's Vision Work

On July 12, 2016, the Board of Education adopted the following shared vision for the district.

Create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child.

This vision was developed over the course of several months by community members who engaged in a positive and productive dialogue with each other and the district about the preferred future we want for all of our students. Many of these same community members then joined the Superintendent's Advisory Panel (SAP), which is comprised of a cross-section of stakeholders who worked closely and collaboratively with the district to identify the two areas or "big rocks" in which we must make progress in order to be successful. These areas include:

- *Educating the whole child by ensuring all systems, structures and processes within District 97 reflect an understanding of what it means to support the successful development of each and every student*
- *Establishing a comprehensive system of support for all District 97 staff, especially teachers*

Below are updates on the work that has been completed to date in conjunction with the vision and "big rocks," as well as details about the activities we will be undertaking in the days ahead to help every child we serve learn, grow and achieve. We will be launching a website later this month that will be accessible via the district's site (www.op97.org), and will feature information and updates about the work being done across the district to support the vision and contribute to the success of all students.

Working Definitions of Key Terms

The SAP identified several key terms that serve as the foundation for the work the district is undertaking in conjunction with our vision. These terms include "positive learning environment," "equitable," "inclusive" and "focused on the whole child."

From August 2016 through November 2016, the team drafted the definitions, and then refined them based on feedback provided by district faculty and staff members. Below are the current working definitions for each term. Community members are invited/encouraged to use the Let's Talk feature on the district's website (www.op97.org) to share their thoughts on these definitions. The district's team will review the input it receives, and revise the definitions as necessary to ensure they continue to align with the work being undertaken to support student learning.

Positive Learning Environment

Is a place where all members of the school community are engaged in hands-on, real-world experiences and feel safe, empowered, supported and valued.

Equitable

Is the practice of beliefs and creation of systems that provide access and opportunities for all students in order to eliminate the predictability of outcomes associated with race, gender and socioeconomic status.

Inclusive

Is to provide equitable opportunities for access and promote active participation of all stakeholders in an accepting and supporting environment.

Focused on the Whole Child

Is the practice of supporting, measuring and celebrating all aspects of a student's development (social/emotional, academic, physical, artistic expression) through caring and respectful relationships.

Progress to Date

- *Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)*. Our schools have Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) teams to help each student attain our universal goals. MTSS includes dedicated staff members (e.g., language arts specialists, Rtl leaders, PBIS coaches, etc.) and instructional resources (e.g., 95% Group, SLANT, Read 180, MobyMax, SPIRE, etc.) we can use to meet the unique academic, social and/or emotional needs of students.
- *Metrics for success*. This fall, the district identified and defined the metrics that will be used to measure the advancement of our vision. These metrics include student progress made through MTSS, results from the PARCC and MAP assessments, student attendance, and data from the Education for the Future and Illinois 5Essentials surveys. We will also be utilizing qualitative data collected from students, faculty, staff, parents/guardians and community members.
- *Leadership Coaching*. All 10 of the district's building principals are receiving coaching from the National Equity Project, which is an organization whose mission is to "to dramatically improve educational experiences, outcomes, and life options for students and families who have been historically underserved by their schools and districts." All of the coaching activities will be tailored to meet the needs and complement the work of each individual school.
- *Student Voice*. The district is exploring ways to actively engage students in the advancement of our goals, while also giving them a more prominent role/voice in their learning on a day-to-day basis. We are looking at a variety of platforms (e.g., survey data, Student Council, membership on school and district-level committees, etc.) through which students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and knowledge, and further develop the leadership skills that will contribute to their college and career readiness.
- *Social-emotional curriculum*. Second Step, which is a curriculum that teaches skills for learning, empathy, emotional management and problem solving, has been implemented across the district this year to ensure that students have access to tiered positive behavior supports.
- *Consistent curriculum*. We have implemented common curricular resources in science, writing and math across all eight of our elementary schools.



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Access the district's family of websites, which feature information about the district's schools, academic progress, finances, accomplishments, history, current news and upcoming events by visiting www.op97.org.