

## **Superintendent's Annual Report January 19, 2012**

Annually, the Superintendent, with the assistance of her administrative team, shall:

- 1) evaluate student performance, which shall include, but not be limited to, student performance or standardized tests such as performance on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), completion of the curriculum, attendance, and dropout rates;
- 2) review the curriculum and instructional services, and
- 3) report to the school board on findings as to student performance and recommendations, if any, for curriculum or instructional changes as a result of the evaluation of student performance.

In October we accepted the 2011 School Report Card, but had little time to discuss it. Tonight I will review the Report Card, share reflections from this past year, and then highlight our challenges and opportunities for the new year and decade.

- I. Each of you has a copy of the [2011 district report card](#). You will see that in 2011 we had 2,193 students – 1102 at ERES, 439 at ERMS and 652 at ERHS. Our low-income rate was 48.2% with a rate of 54.4% at the elementary, 48.5% at the middle school, and 37% at the high school. The high school dropout rate was 4.1%. Our mobility rate for the district was 12.0%. The attendance rate was 94.0%.

Parental contact was 99.1%. The student-to-staff ratios at all levels are slightly above state averages at the elementary and pupil-certified staff, while the pupil-administrator ratio is higher than state average. The average class size is higher than the state average with exceptions at grade 1, and grades 9-12. We have more time devoted to mathematics at the 3<sup>rd</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade level than the state average, but fewer minutes in English/Language Arts at the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Science and Social Studies time at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level is significantly less.

We had 128 teachers with a high percentage of female teachers. 55.5% of the teachers have a bachelor's degree and 44.5% have a master's degree. All teachers are highly qualified.

The School District Financial section shows the average teacher's salary is 23% below state average. The average administrator's salary is at the state average. In 2009-2010 we exceeded the state average for expenses in general administration, and supporting services. We were below the state average for instruction cost. We had few other expenditures. Our budget is approximately \$18.8M with about 40.8% local funds, 41.2% general state aide, and other state funding and 18% federal funding.

The 2009 Equalized Assessed Valuation per pupil was \$78,418 with a tax rate of \$4.17. Our 2009-2010 Instructional Expenditure per pupil was \$4,820 and our Operating Expenditure was \$9,075 per pupil.

The ACT composite score was 20.6. The graduation rate was 85.2% including 78% males, 93% females, 95.7% students with disabilities, and 100% economically disadvantaged.

The next two pages are a report of state scores on state assessments on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Overall performance shows the district above the state average on all tests. The Report Card continues at each grade level to provide us information for each sub-group. Administrators and teachers have analyzed this information for their individual school improvement plan, which we accepted in November. The district did not make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP); nor did our schools.

Briefly AYP is determined by several factors:

- All students and subgroups of 45 or more students must meet targets
- For ERCU#1 we have subgroups of gender, students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged.
- 95% of all students and subgroups must be tested for reading and mathematics
- Meet the minimum target for attendance rate for elementary and middle schools or graduation rate for high school

And then we must:

- Meet the minimum annual target for meeting/exceeding for all students and subgroups.

The 2011 target for students to meet and/or exceed was 85%. Then in 2012 and 2013 – 92.5% and in 2014 the target is 100%.

Currently the State Board of Education is writing a waiver for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation that requires 100% of all students and subgroups of students to meet or exceed state standards by 2014. We will follow the progress of the waiver and hope that we will see some positive changes. However, we are also very realistic that the waiver might not be approved and we will continue to come to you and our community with good achievement and good results, but not be making AYP or having all students meet and or exceed

One of the best things about the NCLB legislation was the focus on student achievement. It got lost some in all of the many rules and regulations; however the end result is student learning. That will continue to be our focus as we move to the Common Core Standards, align our local and state assessments, update our teacher and principal evaluations to meet the new performance requirements, and prepare for the new school report card. We are confident that we can use our professional expertise and some Southern Illinois common sense to make NCLB Legislation and Senate Bill 7 work for students, staff, and our community.

## II. Review of 2011

We have had an outstanding year at ERCU#1! By not making AYP we have been eligible for some additional grants and dollars that were previously unavailable to us. We have not “embraced failure” but we have certainly learned to take advantage of opportunities.

One of the opportunities for funding was the iPad Initiative. Tonight, you were able to see how instruction is enhanced and students are engaged. Teachers and students have had fun learning and that is what we call success.

The First LEGO League began with the Math/Science grant many years ago and two teachers who kept on learning, pushing themselves, taking risks, asking for some resources, and working hard. They, with the 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade team of students, exceeded all expectations as they found delight in creating, imagining, and thinking. LEGO-Serious Play and WeDo robots is an important piece at ERES. You will remember how much we enjoyed second graders teaching us about LEGOs. This might be the first LEGO League and Congratulations to them; but, I can assure you that it won't be the last.

The elementary school is a Leader in Me school and they have hosted many training programs for educators from Illinois and the surrounding states. The students know what it is to be proactive; begin with the end in mind; put first things first; think win-win; seek first to understand and be understood; synergize; sharpen the saw; and the 8<sup>th</sup> habit of Find Your Voice. Our students are becoming learners and leaders. They celebrate leadership every month with a Student Leadership Day. They keep data notebooks, have assigned class and school jobs, do service projects, lead their own conferences with their parents and teacher. The list goes on and on and so do the teachers and students as they synergize together.

One of the best things that happened at ERES this past year was your approval to start a second class for a few kindergarten and first grade students. These students were challenging all of us as they struggled with school. Now they are placed appropriately and learning. What a joy it is to visit both primary special education classrooms and see the difference made in their learning! Thank you!

We established a Global Initiative exchange program with Gars, Germany this past year. Five students and three staff members visited Bavaria in June of 2011. We attended a festival, toured castles, climbed to the top of the mountain, walked lots, and visited school. We were immersed in the culture and daily life of our new friends and their families. In March of 2012 19 students and 2 staff members will visit Olney. We can hardly wait to share our school, district, community, state, and country with them!

All schools implemented a Response to Intervention (RtI) program within their schedule. At the middle school they have a shorter block in the morning called X-block. At the high school they made a shorter block (about 39 min) at the end of the day, which they call 5<sup>th</sup> block. Data from state and other test is used to identify students in need of extra support in reading and mathematics. All juniors participate in an ACT preparation class. Learning is the focus with an

emphasis on specific skills. As a result, at the high school students made significant gains in college-readiness skills.

We wrote and received grants – from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century After-School grant of \$150,000 to the iPad total grant of \$378,000 to the \$120,000 grant for the Prevention Initiative. The Early Childhood grant was competitive this year and we were awarded \$396,929.00. We also work with the ROE to provide 40 additional students services through a \$50,000.00 contract. We have received over \$40,000 from various other grant opportunities. These grants help add the extra funding for projects to enrich the curriculum. I will also remind you that we have submitted a grant for \$5M to the Capital Development Board in Springfield for an Early Learning Center. Those grants are being reviewed and decisions will probably not be made until the first of March. As with all competitive grants – we write good proposals and hope that indeed readers fund our ideas.

Perhaps the best part of 2011 was the fact that we kept doing those things that matter – the ordinary things- extraordinarily well. Things like: balancing a budget; providing excellent instruction; offering opportunities for students and staff; and working with fantastic people – and speaking of people – the attitude, collaboration, and professionalism seems to be at an all time high – indeed they are fantastic!

Earlier I mentioned Senate Bill 7 and the work ahead for our district. Very briefly, we are learning all we can about the Common Core Standards. We are attending workshops and trainings as well as contracting with consultants who can help us in district. This summer we will have time to work with language arts and mathematics standards. Next school year we will continue collaborating and in the summer of 2013 our plan would be to have the curriculum aligned to the Common Core Standards in Language Arts and mathematics. That means we can have the 2013-2014 school year to pilot our work. We will refine that work in the summer of 2014 and in August of 2014 we should feel comfortable with implementing the Common Core Standards in those two areas.

The Reduction in Force (RIF) committee required by Senate Bill 7 has met and we are close to agreement on the specific items that this legislation requires of us. The seniority list is in each school now and will be approved by the board at the February meeting. We are utilizing a new state software program that will place teachers in the new RIF format. Our district is grandfathered this year because of our contract but we will pilot this program and we will work with EREA leaders this spring on implementation.

By September 1 of this year we are required to have new administrator and teacher performance evaluations. Again, we will work with the EREA evaluation committee to meet that goal. For many years now we have used the Charlotte Danielson model for teacher evaluation. We will update that model to meet the new state requirements and be ready for September 2012.

The other change that is happening is funding. Federal dollars have been paramount these past three years as we struggled with a weak economy. It appears that in the next few years that those dollars will not be as available. At the state level Illinois is still in a precarious financial position. Locally our Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) will decrease this year. The entire financial outlook is bleak.

As you know and can see, our plate is full as we look ahead to the end of this decade 2020. We look at all the changes coming to our profession and ask where this will lead us. That reminds me of the story I have shared with you before about sitting at the St. Louis airport ready to send a young 17 year old girl to visit Harvard. She had new luggage, pretty clothes, and money in her pocket. She was acting so mature and ready to go until about 10 minutes before the plane boarded and then she said, "Mother, you are sending me to a place you have never been, to meet a man you do not know, to do things you have never done." I said, "YES –Go and have a wonderful time!" She did have a wonderful time and has continued to do that ever since.

I remind you tonight that that is what we do for our students. As board members, teachers, administrators, and parents we send our children to places we have never been, to meet people we do not know, to do things we have never done. That is what we must remember as we plan for the year of 2020. We will pack their bags with the best that we can offer in academics, athletics, and extra-curricular activities. We will provide excellent instruction that is rigorous and has relevancy. We will provide current resources and positive relationships. We will practice the 8 Habits of Highly Effective People! We will focus on all of us – students and adults – learning together. And we will have FUN! The respect that we have for each other and the trust that we have in each other has and will serve us well. I'm excited and ready for this great adventure and hope that you are too! Let's go tigers!