

Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200

201 North Scoville Avenue □ Oak Park, IL 60302-2296

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, Superintendent
Greg Johnson, Associate Superintendent

DATE: 27 February 2020

RE: Freshman Curriculum Status

BACKGROUND

This discussion item is presented to update the board of education on the status of our freshman curriculum restructuring plans, first announced in August of 2019.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Over the past several months, teacher teams have worked to develop units of study to be included in the revised freshman curriculum. Our focus has been on developing three systems simultaneously: the curriculum itself, the professional development needed to support it, and the student support systems needed to ensure our students find responsive, targeted support the moment they need it in our new curriculum. As of this date, all of our divisions have made progress.

As we've made this progress, we have come to realize that the professional development our teachers need is multi-faceted. On one hand, we have identified common practices for our teachers to master: differentiation, cultural responsiveness, effective assessment practices, and classroom management with a growth mindset. On the other hand, we know that there are significant division-specific professional learning topics that we must pay attention to. This professional learning is absolutely essential to the success of our new approach. Shortchanging this process in the limited time we have each year would be a critical mistake.

Finally, we have developed a framework, including specific, targeted interventions that we are prepared to roll out using existing FTE next school year. We are incredibly excited about this process, but this work, too, will require an initial implementation, evaluation, revision, and re-implementation to ensure that we are successful with our students.

In order to give the attention needed to all of these processes, our teachers have requested an extension of the implementation date, something we are willing to grant. We are shifting the implementation date of the restructured freshman curriculum to fall 2022. Our collective commitment to this work has not and will not change. Our goal is still as it was: the dismantling of an inequitable course structure that has disproportionately sorted our black and brown students into college prep classes, even when their academic profile suggests they are just as capable as their peers who are enrolled in honors. We can do this by providing a common, high-quality, rigorous curriculum to all of our freshman students, ensuring that they have access to the pedagogy they deserve to find success in the highest courses we offer.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is presented for discussion only.