Schuyler Community Schools
SAA Weekly Meeting
Tuesday, March 6, 2018 9:30 AM
Schuyler Administration Meeting @ SMS SPED Office
120 W. 20th St.
Schuyler, NE 68661-2400

I. Discussion Items

Prepared by: Christina Bywater, Secretary to the Board

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 305

Introduced by Bostelman, 23.

WHEREAS, the Nebraskans for the Arts annually recognizes select schools and school districts that make a notable and worthwhile contribution to the arts and arts education in the State of Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, Schuyler Community Schools is home to a diverse student population supported by an outstanding staff focused on providing quality academic and extracurricular programs in the arts; and

WHEREAS, Schuyler Community Schools arts programs have developed business and community partnerships that provide students the ability to enhance their creative skills and career opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the academic, athletic, and artistic achievements of the youth of our state.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Legislature congratulates Schuyler Community Schools for receiving the 2017 NebraskARTS Award on October 18, 2017, which was awarded in the State Capitol Rotunda.

2. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Schuyler Community Schools superintendent, Dr. Dan Hoesing, on behalf of the students, teachers, staff, and parents of Schuyler Community Schools.

PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATURE

I, Patrick J. O' Donnell, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Legislative Resolution 305 which was passed by the Legislature of Nebraska in the One Hundred Fifth Legislature, Second Session, on the 6th day of February 2018.

CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE

Nebraska State Board of Education "Priority School" Request

We are here today as representatives from Schuyler Central High School to provide some insight into our school district and help you understand the challenges and successes we realize with an extremely diverse student population. In addition, we are here to help you understand the complexity of the issues when judging our student and staff performance solely on data that may be either taken out of context or misrepresented.

Schuyler Community Schools is a unique school district located at the crossroads of U.S. Highway 30 Expressway and NE State Highway 15 in Eastern Nebraska. The community of Schuyler, rich in tradition and history, has accepted the challenge of a young, vibrant population of recent arrivals to our country. Our student population at Schuyler Central High School has welcomed a shift in demographics where the population was 90% Caucasian in 1994, 50% in 2004, and 12% in 2017. Schuyler Central High School is now home to students from 11 countries, speaking 16 languages. The two articles included in your packet will help you better understand some of the barriers immigrant children and their families face when coming in search of safety, work, and the "American Dream".

Today, our district poverty level is over 80% and due to recent cuts in state aid of 3.5 million dollars over the past 4 years, Schuyler Community Schools has the 7th lowest cost per pupil in the state. Despite these challenges, Schuyler Central High School has been extremely successful in maintaining the 2nd highest graduation standards in the state (Columbus 260, Schuyler 255 other schools 210-245). Schuyler also maintains a graduation rate 20% higher than other highly diverse school districts

across the country and has the lowest unexcused absentee rates when compared to similar populations. In spite of these funding challenges, Schuyler Central High School has established strong community partnerships that support college scholarships and free tuition for college credit classes for all juniors and seniors.

In 2014, the board of education, with assistance from the Nebraska State School Board Association, brought teachers, parents, community members and business leaders together to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic planning process. The results of this four-year effort and plans for 2018 are included in your packet.

In 2015, Schuyler Middle School applied for and received a school improvement grant from the federal government. While the federal government funds the grant, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is responsible for evaluation and oversight. The first requirement of the grant was to replace our administration at the middle school level and employ the assistance of outside agencies to assist us in goal setting, establishing timelines, professional development, and evaluation of the process. This 3-year grant was validated by NDE officials as one of the most successful school improvement grants supervised over that period of time.

In the final year of the middle school grant, school administrators and the board of education began discussing the feasibility and benefits of applying for a similar grant at the high school. Knowing the complex issues associated with high school programs, this grant was spread out over 5 years. Once again, high school principals were replaced and a new administration hired to work with NDE and

outside agencies to improve high school programs. The main goal of the grant was to ensure, upon graduation, that our students would be college and career ready. We are currently in the second year of this grant and have gone through the process of conducting root-cause analysis, providing professional development and implementing programs to increase student engagement. The grant also focused on building stronger student/staff relationships, lowering truancy, improving classroom management, and reducing disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and expulsion.

In addition, despite limitations of a maximum tax levy and reduction in state aid, our high school continues to expand educational opportunities in the core academics, elective areas of the arts, foreign language, health, and vocational education. Central Community College officials report that Schuyler Central High School has more early entry college classes than other schools in our area.

The school improvement grant focuses on student performance in the core academic areas, our strategic plan goes beyond the classroom to support elective courses, and activities that meet the basic needs of our students and families. The majority of our students have traveled thousands of miles to a safe place where many have found familiarity and a home in Schuyler. We understand the importance of providing a challenging academic program, but have also learned that outside prejudices, poverty and language barriers greatly impact our students' academic performance.

The recent designation of "demographically changing" community is a target on our immigrant population at a time when our students and families are fighting for

their existence in our country. Our students face the reality of deportation, denigration, threats, racial slurs, and chants by opposing schools to "go home", or "build the wall". The "Scarlet Letter" of this "Priority" designation has jeopardized the trust of our community, caused our parents to question the quality of their child's education, and increased the difficulty of recruitment and retention of quality teachers.

As for performance on the Elpa21, many of our "newcomers" are non-English speaking students. Academic vocabulary for these students takes 5 years to reach a level of high school proficiency. Because of this language barrier, a number of English Language Learners have found a home in the Arts. It is the Arts that allow them a level playing field to participate, engage, and express themselves through clay, paint, pen, song, acting, and dance. It is also through the Arts that we can allow students to create and express their talent through visual arts that depict their thoughts, fears, hopes and dreams as cultural influences come alive on our walls. When student confidence is realized in one area, we can often get them to generalize and risk in other areas where success is limited due to language barriers and prior academic experience. We appreciate the recognition given our students in the Arts.

We ask the State Board of Education to respect our commitment to our current school improvement grant and allow us to continue with our goals, plans, and contracted providers for the remainder of our grant. We have spent over 1 million dollars on professional development over the past 4 years. We have a proven track record of improving student performance at the middle school and a high level of confidence we will realize similar results at the high school.

We request that you to consider more than data, taken out of context, in determining your recommendation for "priority" schools. In review of your study, Schuyler Central High School was the only high school in consideration. Data from the identified elementary schools are incomplete and cannot be compared to high school performance.

We want to thank Patsy Koch Johns for her belief in our students and continued interest in our school. Outside of Patsy, until one month ago, no one from NDE Leadership or the State Board of Education has been in our school, or took an interest in our district until the "Priority" designation.

We realize the State Board of Education can only take action based on the information provided. Our initial discussion with NDE Leadership welcomed a partnership that would provide additional resources to work with us to create a model high school. What has transpired since this initial meeting was negative press on our school district, realization of no additional funds or resources, and strained relationships between administration at NDE and Schuyler Community Schools.

We encourage you to review the information included in the packet. Please recognize the effort of our school and community to provide a quality education for all students. Finally, we request reconsideration of the "demographically changing" status based on the impact of current political discourse and blatant prejudice of this designation. We pledge our commitment to work with NDE officials as we have in the past. Our staff believes "There are easier jobs in other schools, but if you got into the business to make a difference, you are in the right place".

Schuyler Community Schools Fast Facts

1. **School Improvement Grant (SIG):** Currently in the 2nd year of a 5-year school improvement grant. Our high school teachers and administrators are committed to our school improvement and strategic plans. The "Priority" status creates another "unfunded" mandate and additional requirements on our high school staff and jeopardizes our current plans.
   a. Compliance with all federal requirements of SIG. (Supervised by NDE)
   b. Replaced high school administration. (2 principals)
   c. The grant is under the direction of Dr. Dave Gibbons. (Prior SIG Success)
   d. NDE approved plan, goals, timeline, professional development, evaluation.
   e. New teacher evaluation system (iObservation – Marzano Protocol)
   f. Focus on creating engaged instruction/classrooms.
   g. Professional development to support "project based" instruction.
   h. 1:1 Technology initiative in support of BlendEd individualized instruction.

2. **Report from NDE officials that "SIG plans ineffective in first year"**
   a. The first semester of the school improvement grant was in planning.
   b. Implementation of the plan did not begin until the 2nd semester.
   c. State assessment changed from NeSA to ACT. Cannot compare results.
   d. No other school with a "priority" designation has a SIG program.
   e. We already academically exceed many high schools not considered.

3. **ACT Composite Scores:** In 2015-16, 54 (1-ELL, 2 SPED) students took the ACT with scores ranging from a high of 29 to a low of 13 (Composite 19.9). In 2016-17, 147 (16 ELL, 8 SPED) students took the ACT with scores ranging from a high of 29 to a low of 10 (Composite 18.35). In 2016-17, nearly 100 additional students took the exam including ELL and special education students who traditionally would not take this exam and did not receive any accommodations.

4. **ACT Comparison:** In comparing ACT scores with the metro schools and schools in the "needs improvement" classification, we have evidence that Schuyler Central High School was not selected according to academic performance. Schuyler students scored higher than seven Metro high schools in all academic areas. Schuyler Central High is clearly an outlier when compared to other schools of similar poverty levels. There are many students in the other lower performing schools that could benefit from this "support". We believe this designation is racially motivated, unfair and indefensible.

5. **Middle School Improvement Grant:** Completed a successful 3-year school improvement grant at the middle school.
   a. Under direction of Dr. Dave Gibbons (demonstrated effectiveness in SIG process)
   b. Contract with Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC)
   c. Contract with Discovery Education to improve student engagement
   d. NDE Official (Randy McIntyre) reported that the middle school grant was one of the most successful grants supervised at that time.

6. **Graduation Requirements:** Schuyler Central High School requires 255 credits. This is the 2nd highest (Columbus at 260) across public high schools in Nebraska. Other schools across the state range from 210 to 245 credits. On average, Schuyler requires a minimum of one

additional semester of credits in comparison with many other public schools. This affects our 4-year cohort comparison graduation rate.

7. **Schedule/Periods:** High school schedules are not consistent across the state. Block schedules, modified block schedules, 8 period days, 7 period days. Schuyler has a 7 period day, therefore, maximum credits each semester is 35 credits. Schools with 8 periods or block schedules may earn up to 40 credits. (40 additional credits: 4 years)

8. **Students new to our country:** We realize that our graduation rates are a combination of high graduation requirements, schedules, and new arrivals (immigrants) needing a transition year before earning high school credits. While the 4-year graduation rate is below the state average, our overall cohort rates are at or above the state average.

9. **Student Enrollment:** Over the past 4 years Schuyler Central High School has experienced a dramatic enrollment increase from 475 to 575 students. Included in these enrollment numbers is an increase in English Language Learners from 73 to 129. This is an annual average of 51 ELL students each year who also have limited or interrupted formal education in other countries prior to enrolling at Schuyler Central High School. (Added on additional ELL teacher)

10. **College Credit Classes:** Schuyler Central High School presents a competitive curriculum to all students. Beginning in 2016-17, the Schuyler Education Foundation began supporting free tuition for all junior and senior students who enroll in dual and/or college credit classes. Students receiving a B or above may enroll in a second class or receive tuition reimbursement for successful completion. **See enclosed information*

	School Year	**Classes**
a.	2015-16	less than 10 students completed
b.	2016-17	160 classes
c.	2017-18	96 classes (first semester)

11. **ELL Rates:** From 2012-13 to 2015-16, the enrollment of Limited English Proficient students doubled from 9.27% to 19.76%, yet overall graduation rates remain constant.

12. **Work vs School:** Recent survey information indicates that 43 high school ELL students work full-time (40 hours) in addition to attending school. Many of these students work the night shift at Cargill in Schuyler, Madison or Hormel at Fremont and attend school during the day. Many of these students are either the major wage earner in the home, paying rent, or immigration debt. At times, we have students who can't keep the schedule, and need a semester to find a balance. These are amazing students who see the importance of education but are confronted with the need to work for their family.

13. **Absenteeism:** Chronic absenteeism (18 days) reported as 16% for 2016-17.

	Unexcused absences	**Average Daily Attendance**	
a.	2013-2014: 5.49%	2013-2014	93.38%
b.	2014-2015: 4.50%	2014-2015	91.63%
c.	2015-2016: 5.39%	2015-2016	91.98%
d.	2016-2017: 2.09%	2016-2017	92.62%
e.	2017-2018: 3.32%	2017-2018	93.40% August-February

14. **Cargill Vacation Schedule:** Over 80% of our parents are employed by Cargill Meat Solutions. Vacation time is scheduled by seniority and on a first-come basis throughout the

school year. Our absentee rates are affected by the work schedules of their parents. Many of them actually leave the country during their vacation (2 weeks).

15. **Evidence Based Analysis (EBA):** NDE officials reported that Schuyler Central High School has asked for more help than any other school district on the EBA. The EBA is a set of subjective questions asking teachers and administrators their opinions on their current conditions at the school. The results used in this designation were compiled prior to the award of the high school improvement grant in the fall of 2016.

16. **Refund of Federal Funds for Professional Development:** NDE officials reported that Schuyler Community Schools returned funds designated for professional development for the 2016-17 school year. Professional development, supported by the Title III grant, was completed at a cost below the grant allocation. Remaining Title III funds, designated for professional development, were reallocated and approved in the 2017-18 application.

17. **Professional Development:** Over the past four years, Schuyler Community Schools has invested $1,082,577 in the professional development of our staff. This investment is evidence of the district's commitment to recruit, develop, evaluate, and retain staff. The suggestion that we do not invest in professional development for our entire staff is unfounded and absurd. We challenge any district our size to demonstrate this level of commitment.

18. **Staff Recruitment and Retention:** In 2014-15, teacher retention was below 75%. Over the past 3 years, teacher retention has been above 90%. Recruiting new teachers to live in the district is difficult. The "Priority" designation and press in the newspapers has already had an adverse effect on 2 new recruits to the district this spring.

19. **Option Enrollment Students:** Schuyler Community Schools has experienced an outward migration of Caucasian students since the early 2000's. Over the past three years, parents have begun to cancel options to other schools and the option enrollment trend is reversing. The "Priority" designation has had a negative impact on the confidence of our parents, patrons, and community.

20. **Elpa21 Results:** NDE officials reported that no Schuyler Central High students were proficient on the Elpa21 for the past two years. 2015-16 scores were **"not reportable"** due to the change from ELDA to Elpa21. In 2016-17, 3,339 Nebraska high school students took the Elpa21, 66 students were proficient (1.9%). This means that we needed 2 students proficient to meet the state average. From 2004-2015, 100 Schuyler Central High School students were proficient on the ELDA. Our ELL staff is highly educated and competent.

21. **Strategic School and Community Planning:** Over the past 4 years, the school district and community of Schuyler have collaborated on developing comprehensive strategic planning initiatives. These plans address many community issues that support housing, childcare, early childhood education, bilingual education, and parent & community engagement. The school district has enlisted the support of the business community, foundations, and grant opportunities to promote student & adult education, vocational education, expansion of the Arts, and college and career focused programs.

22. **Prejudice and Image:** Over the past two years, our students and community have come under increased scrutiny. Our students have been victims of prejudice, racial slurs, and

derogatory comments leading them to question their legitimacy in our country. This "Priority" status is another obstacle for them to overcome.

23. **Advance Ed Accreditation:** Schuyler Community Schools is an Advanced Ed Accredited school district. This is the highest accreditation status in Nebraska. We just hosted an external team to review all programs in the district and are awaiting the final results. In their closing interview, all members of the team expresses their high regard for our programs and the commitment of students, staff, parents, and community patrons to be engaged in contributing to the quality of our school. We had initially asked to wait for this presentation until April so that it could be included in our packet. We will provide a copy of this review when it is available to us.

In closing, we ask the Nebraska State Board of Education to review the information included in the manual and reconsider Schuyler Central High School's "Priority" status for 2017-18 school year. The data presented demonstrates our commitment to providing a quality education for <u>all</u> students in our district and our capacity for continuous improvement. We believe the creation of "Demographically Changing" schools, created by the Department of Education is another label that is racially motivated and promotes additional prejudices on schools of high immigrant populations.

School	School Type	Total Student Membership	EL Student Population	EBA Requests 2015 to 2017	Status 2015	Status 2016	Status 2017	Chronic Absenteeism	Improvement 2 yr. ave. 15 and 16	Growth	Reduction in Non-Proficiency	% Free and Reduced Lunch	Special Education	Years of Teaching Experience
Santee (K-12)	K-12	275												
Santee Elem.	PK-6	123		34	62.9	67.2	104.6	21.91%%	2.51	42.03	1.42			
Santee MS	7-8	76		41	57.3	61.8	93.1	36.38%	2.33	45.62	-7.2			
Santee HS	9-12	76		70	55.8	34.2		62.50%	-7.31	N/A	-6.32			
Loup County (K-12)	K-12	69												
Loup County Elem.	K-6	40		30	96.1	108.4	150	4.01%	-2.66	34.62	-11.84			
Loup County H.S.	9-12	29		30	90.3	108.3		3.23%	-6.75	N/A	-4.6			
Druid Hill (Elementary)	PK-6	331		54	70.3	76.3	125.4	16.30%	1.13	53.63	-4.7			

Improvement Adjustment (EBA)	Elem.	HS
Improvement	10.5723	11.914
Growth	85.635	N/A
Non-Proficiency	-11.549	-11.646

Chronic Absenteeism	High School	Middle School	Elem. Schools
Needs Improvement Schools	23.15%	18.45%	9.65%
All Schools in Nebraska	11.52%	5.68%	3.59%

Data used to report "priority" school designation are incomplete or unavailable. We struggle with the data used to recommend Schuyler Central High School as the school in greatest need among all schools in the "needs improvement" classification. Schuyler Central High is the only school considered with an EBA score. The EBA score is a subjective score based on a survey conducted prior to the implementation of the SIG program. The "Chronic" absentee data are taken out of context and misleading. Assumptions on student performance data are not possible with the change of academic assessments. Elpa21 data need to be considered in comparison with other school districts in Nebraska.

School	School Type	Total Student Membership	EL Student Population	EBA Requests 2015 to 2017	Status 2015	Status 2016	Status 2017	Chronic Absenteeism	Improvement 2 yr. avg.	Growth	Reduction in Non-Proficiency	% Free and Reduced Lunch	Special Education	Years of Teaching Experience
Howard Elementary	K-4 Elementary	267	7.0%	0	0	0	0	0	-5.425	43.64	-7.9	46.0%	27%	12.3
Sandoz Elementary	K-5 Elementary	312	42.9%	0	94.8	102.3	141.2	3.84%	4.62	71.7	-2.64	83.6%	14%	11.5
Average of all NI Schools (w/o OPS) (Urban and Demographically Shifting)		333		0	86.81	89.28	97.1	See Table Below	-0.98	52.38	-1.9	57.9%	11.64%	11.5
Schuyler Central	9-12 High School	573	25.0%	62	92.3	82.9		16.06%	-2.65	N/A	-0.24	68.4%	8.0%	11.6

Improvement Adjustment (EBA)	Elem.	HS
Improvement	10.5723	11.914
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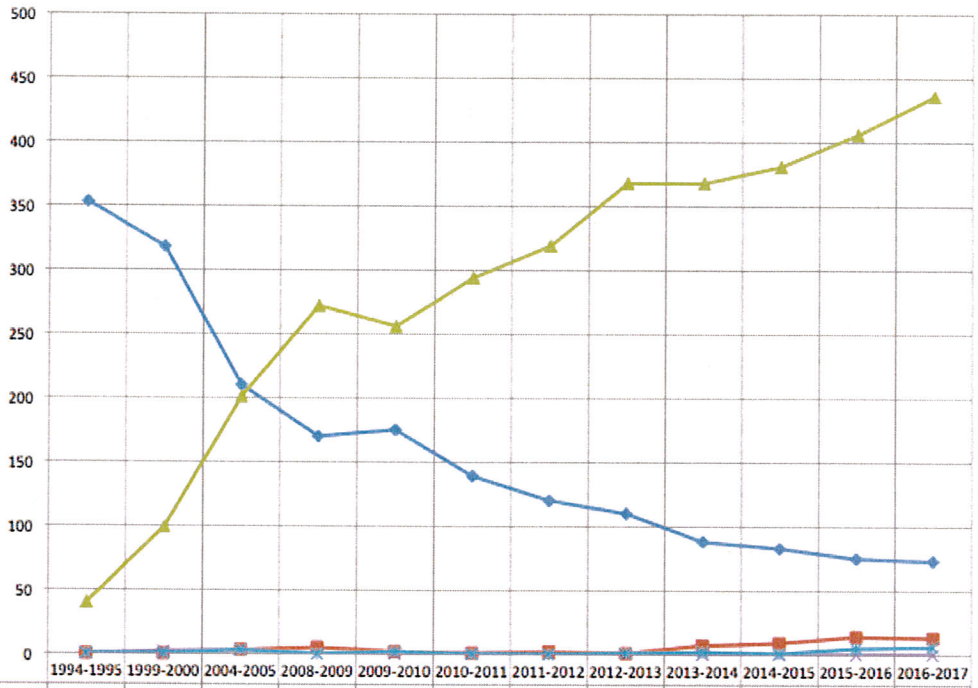
SCHS Enrollment by Ethnicity



	1994-1995	1999-2000	2004-2005	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
White, not Hispanic	353	318	210	170	175	139	120	110	88	83	75	73
Black or African American	0	0	3	5	2	1	2	1	7	9	14	13
Hispanic	40	99	201	272	256	294	319	368	368	381	406	436
Asian/Pacific Islanders	0	2	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	1	2	1	5	6

Comparison of ACT Percent Proficient with Metro Schools

School	Math	Science	English	Poverty	ELL
Elkhorn	55%	51%	62%	2%	0
Millard West	52%	53%	65%	7%	0
Gretna	53%	51%	60%	8%	0
Bennington	58%	52%	73%	10%	0
Elkhorn South	62%	61%	80%	12%	0
Platteview	41%	32%	43%	13%	0
Millard North	49%	44%	60%	14%	0
Papillion South	40%	35%	49%	17%	1%
Douglas West	47%	45%	48%	23%	0
Papillion	40%	37%	44%	26%	1%
Westside	37%	40%	52%	27%	1%
Millard South	34%	35%	47%	27%	2%
Bellevue West	34%	34%	42%	28%	0
Bellevue East	24%	24%	36%	39%	2%
Nebraska	30%	29%	39%	45%	7%
Omaha Burke	19%	25%	35%	46%	3%
Ralston	18%	20%	36%	49%	3%
Omaha Central	24%	24%	36%	54%	8%
Omaha North	16%	18%	24%	66%	1%
Omaha Northwest	4%	6%	8%	74%	10%
Omaha Bryan	4%	6%	10%	84%	11%
Omaha Benson	3%	3%	6%	84%	16%
Omaha South	9%	9%	17%	87%	14%

Schuyler High School	21%	25%	27%	80%	20%

Comparison of ACT Scores of Needs Improvement Buildings

High School	% FRL	% ELL	ACT Reading Scale Score	ACT Math Scale Score
Exeter-Milligan	20.65%	*	19.3	20.2
Callaway	29.59%	*	20.2	21.4
Wilcox-Hildreth	35.48%	*	18.7	21.3
Perkins County	36.63%	*	21.3	21
Bancroft-Rosalie Jr/Sr	41.51%	*	21.3	21.7
Dundy CO Stratton	41.61%	6.71%	17.2	17.6
Allen	43.30%	*	17.2	17.8
Omaha Burke	45.38%	2.64%	17.4	17.5
Loup County	46.43%	*	-	-
Pawnee City Secondary	48.89%	*	18.6	21
Ralston	49.77%	2.70%	17.1	17.4
Omaha Central	50.84%	7.66%	17.6	18
Lewiston	51.09%	*	14.6	15.9
Lynch Secondary	53.57%	*	-	-
Omaha North Magnet	59.53%	0.99%	15.3	16.6
Omaha Northwest Magnet	68.75%	10.49%	12.3	14.3
Lexington	74.00%	18.93%	16.1	17
Bryan	74.12%	10.76%	13.6	15.3
ELBA Secondary	75.00%	*	14.2	14.7
Winnebago	75.45%	*	12.7	14.7
Benson Magnet	78.79%	16.64%	12.8	15.2
Schuyler	**80.49%**	**20.45%**	**14.7**	**16.4**
Omaha South Magnet	82.42%	13.57%	14.4	15.6
Minatare	85.71%	9.52%	15.6	17.4
Walthill	95.17%	11.04%	8.1	9.6
Santee	98.67%	*	11.6	13.1

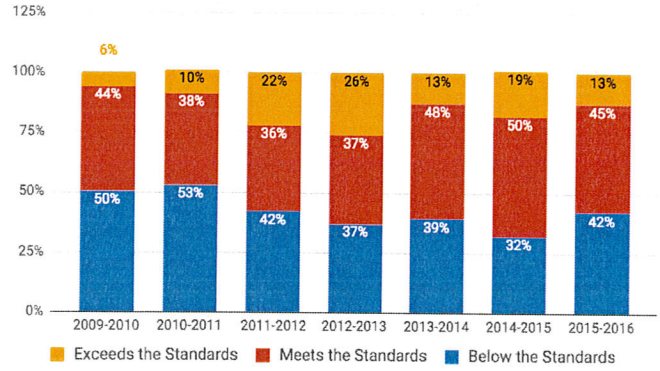
Percent Proficient in Reading - District							
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
3rd	41%	67%	86%	87%	92%	84%	90%
4th	39%	57%	49%	82%	75%	83%	87%
5th	44%	46%	45%	67%	87%	78%	88%
6th	44%	62%	59%	56%	75%	81%	79%
7th	60%	74%	64%	59%	79%	62%	81%
8th	53%	62%	57%	78%	65%	73%	68%
11th	49%	48%	58%	63%	61%	69%	58%

2017 Change to NeSA ELA – Scores not to be compared

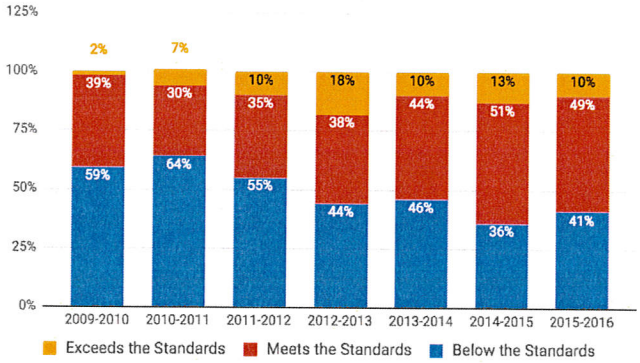
Percent Proficient in Math - District							
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
3rd	73%	87%	89%	91%	88%	84%	82%
4th	42%	41%	85%	85%	91%	90%	86%
5th	27%	41%	79%	87%	74%	85%	82%
6th	38%	46%	36%	62%	77%	71%	78%
7th	54%	51%	52%	61%	61%	76%	57%
8th	43%	44%	61%	60%	62%	53%	67%
11th	44%	49%	52%	37%	44%	36%	

SCHS Nesa Results

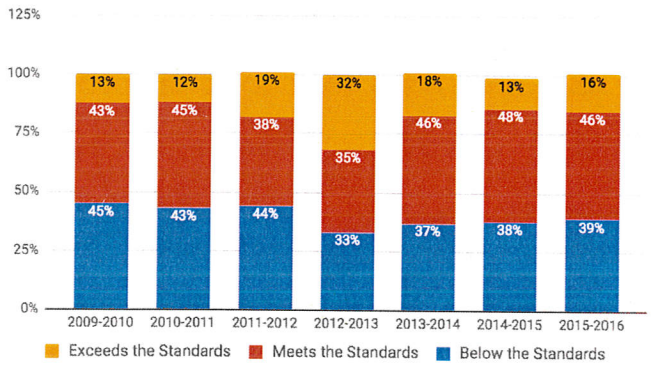
11th Grade NeSA Reading Data All Students



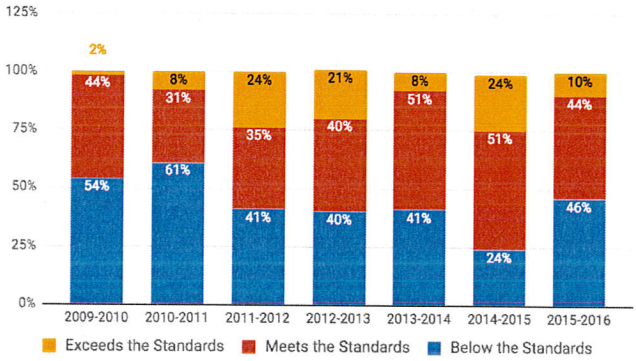
11th Grade NeSA Reading Data Low Income Students



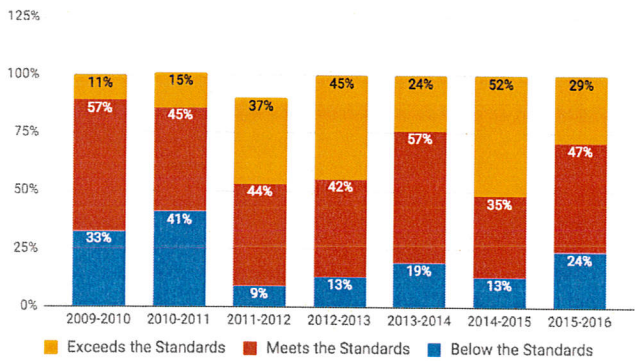
11th Grade NeSA Reading Data Female Students



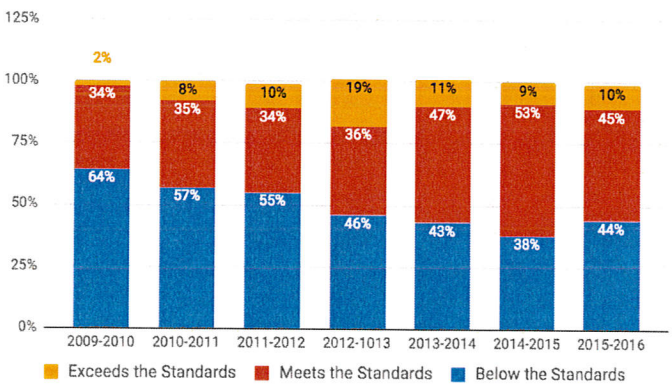
11th Grade NeSA Reading Data Male Students

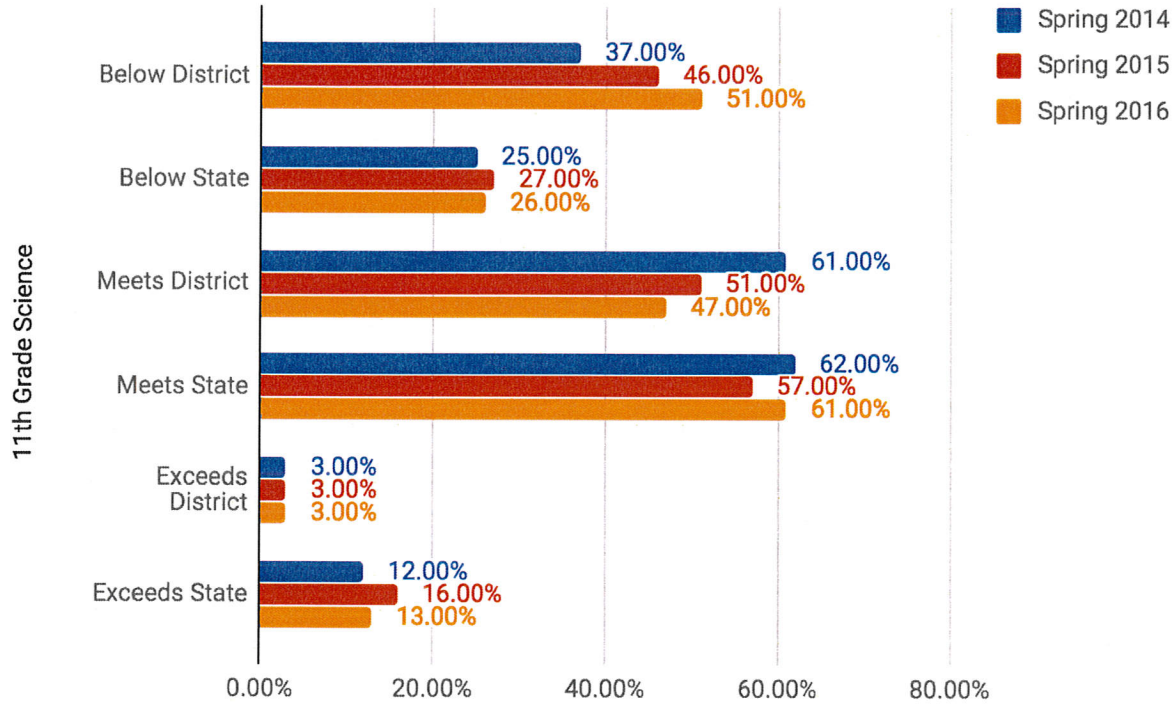


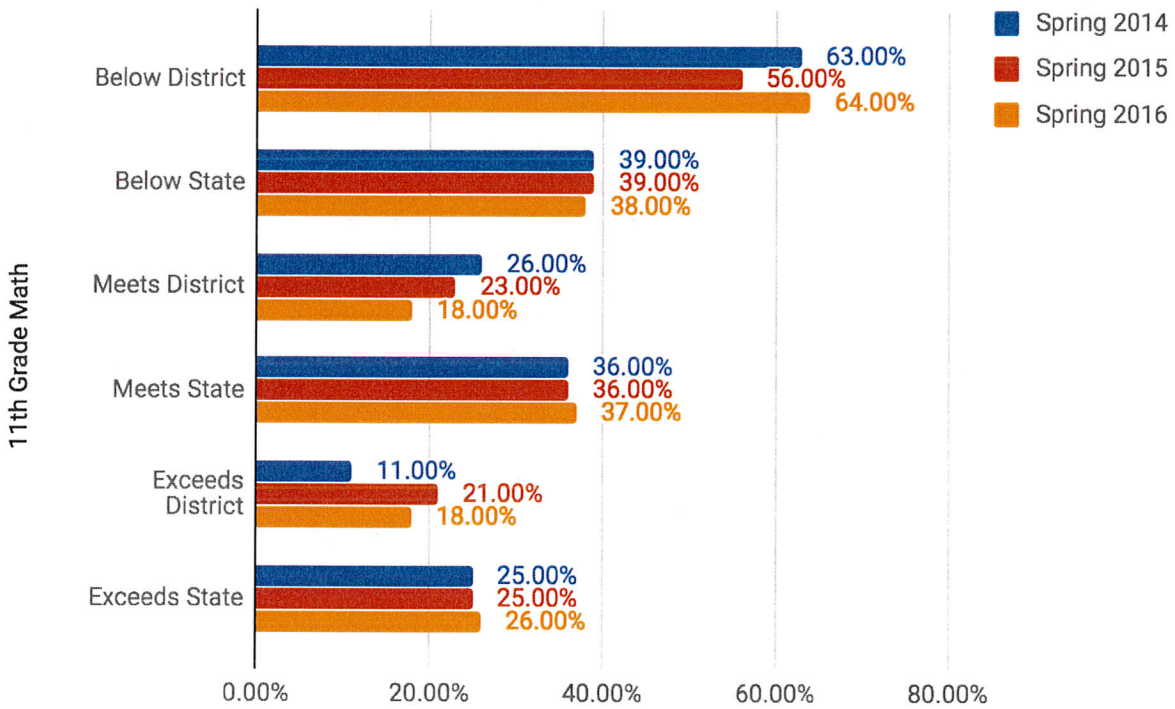
11th Grade NeSA Reading Data White Students

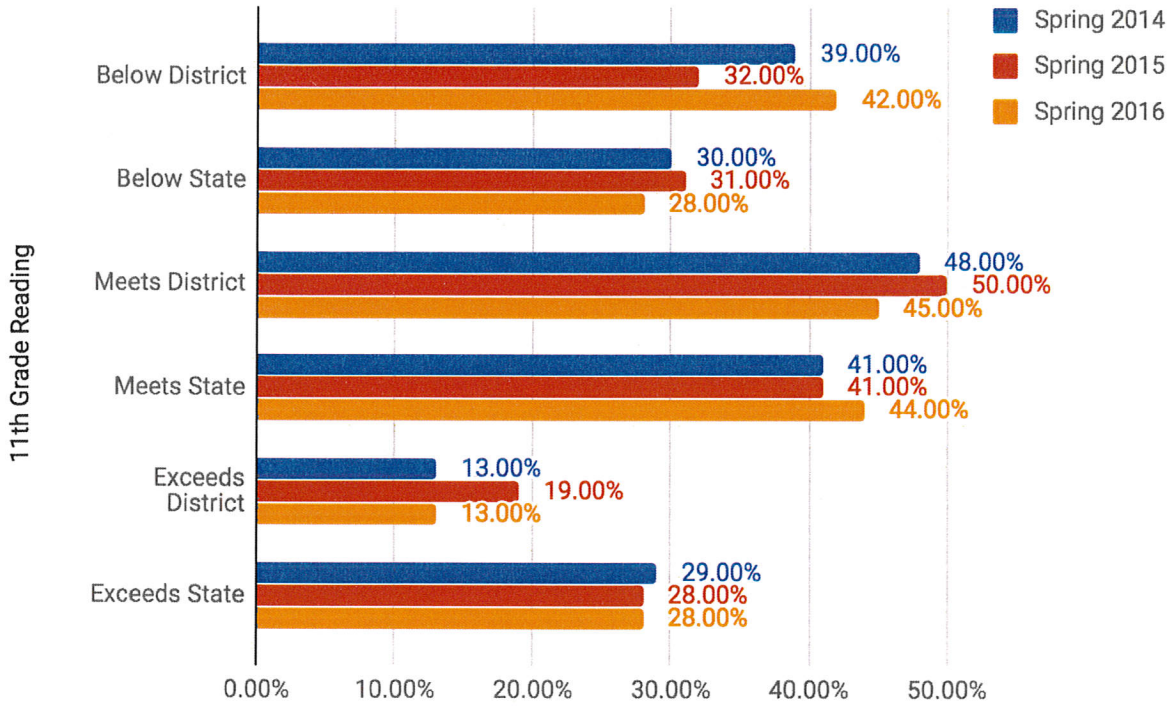


11th Grade NeSA Reading Data HIspanic Students

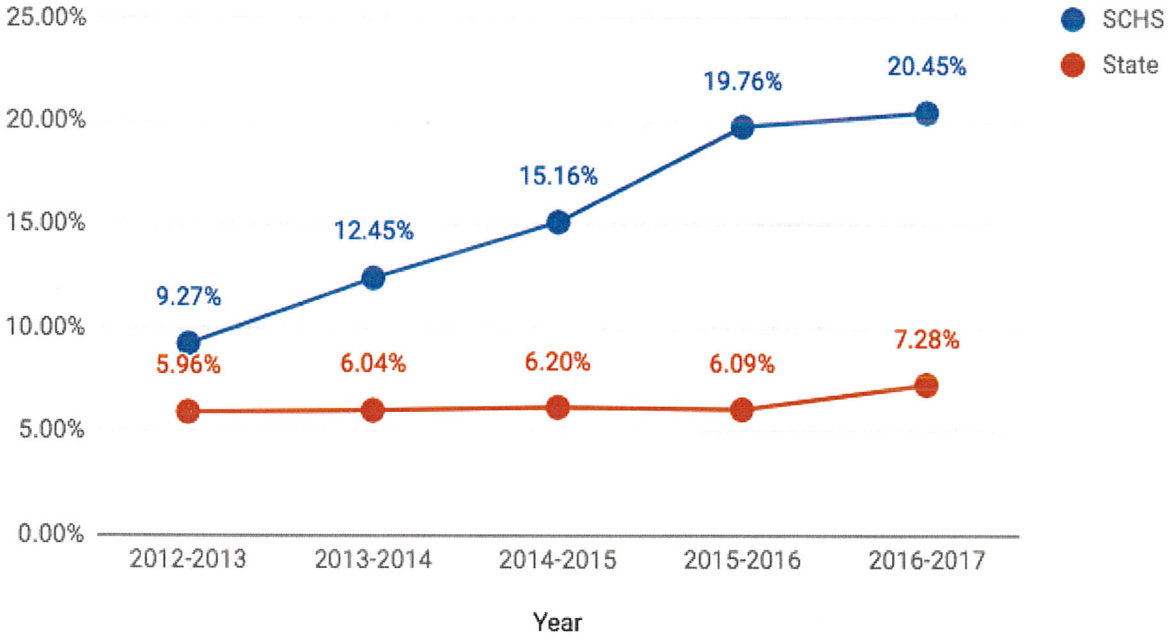



11th Grade Science
Spring 2014
Spring 2015
Spring 2016
Below District
37.00%
46.00%
51.00%
Below State
25.00%
27.00%
26.00%
Meets District
61.00%
51.00%
47.00%
Meets State
62.00%
57.00%
61.00%
Exceeds District
3.00%
3.00%
3.00%
Exceeds State
12.00%
16.00%
13.00%
0.00%
20.00%
40.00%
60.00%
80.00%

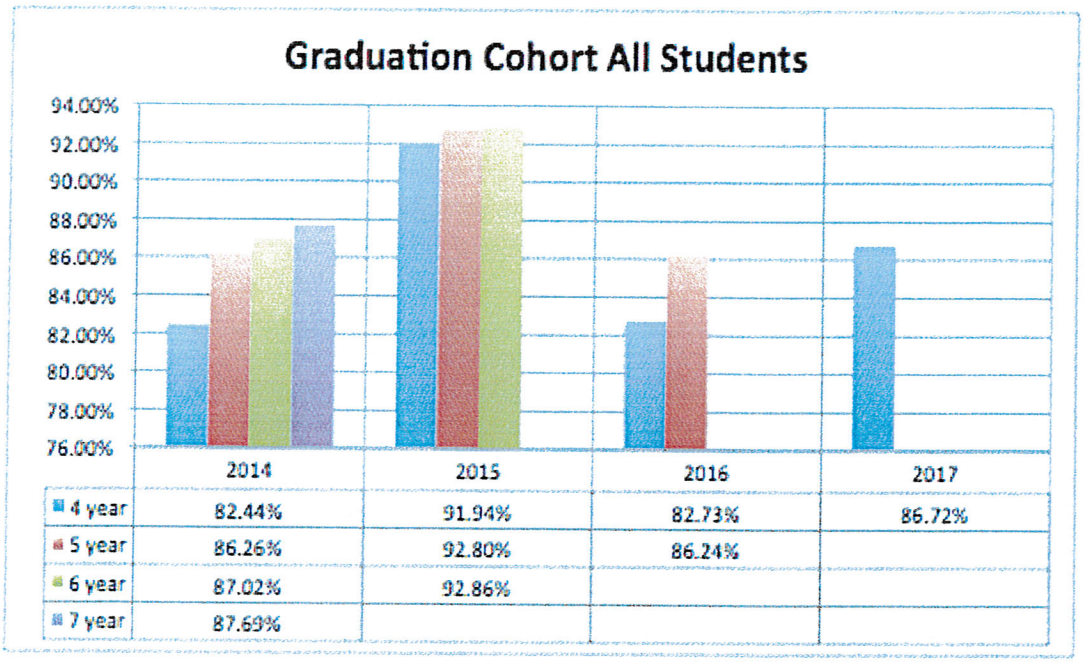

11th Grade Math
Spring 2014
Spring 2015
Spring 2016
Below District
63.00%
56.00%
64.00%
Below State
39.00%
39.00%
38.00%
Meets District
26.00%
23.00%
18.00%
Meets State
36.00%
36.00%
37.00%
Exceeds District
11.00%
21.00%
18.00%
Exceeds State
25.00%
25.00%
26.00%
0.00%
20.00%
40.00%
60.00%
80.00%



Percentage of Limited English Proficient Students



Graduation Rate Information
Schuyler Central High School



Schuyler Central High School has also maintained a high level of rigor for graduation requirements.

TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION

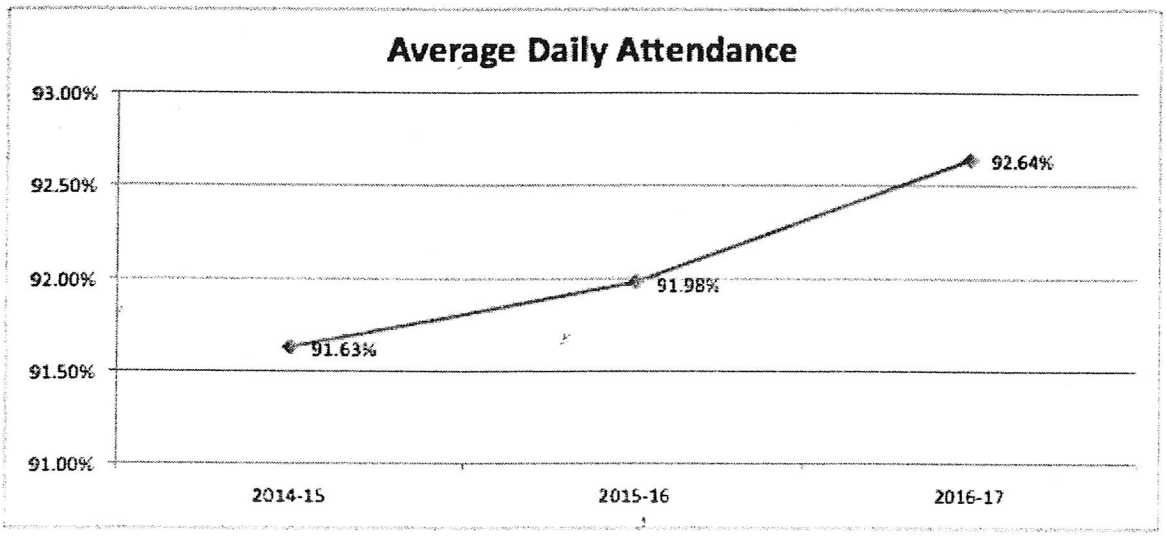
School	Graduation Requirements
Columbus High	260
Schuyler	**255**
OPS	245*
David City	240
Lakeview	240
Ralston	240
Callaway	240
Seward	235
Lexington	220
Crete	220
North Bend	220

*OPS calculates each year-long course as two credits. They require 49 total credits in their system.

Chronic Absence Report

Year	Total Chronic Absent	Total Students	Percentage of Chronic Absent
2013-2014	27	492	5.49
2014-2015	22	489	4.50
2015-2016	28	519	5.39
2016-2017	12	574	2.09
2017-2018*	20	603	3.32

*From August 7, 2017 to February 2, 2018



Chronic Absenteeism is just one stat. Average daily attendance measures the percentage of students who are in school on average each day. The average daily attendance has been increasing every year over the last three years.

17-18 Drop Out Summary

Total Dropouts by Year:

15-16 = 21
16-17 = 12
17-18 = 12

Dropout Ethnicity:

Whites = 8.9%
African American = 2.2%
Hispanic = 88.9%

Dropout by Gender:

Males = 62%
Females = 38%

Dropouts by Location:

Guatemala = 36%
Mexico = 4%
Honduras = 2%
El Salvador= 2%
Texas = 2%
California = 2%
Schuyler = 29%
David City = 2%
Rising City = 2%
Lexington = 2%

Dropouts by Guardianship:

Lived with parents = 51%
Lived with guardians (may or may not be related) = 44%
Lived on own = 2%

Dropout Reasons (reasons may overlap; e.g. lack of formal education AND needing to work, etc.)

Lack of formal education (Completion of Gr. 6 or less in home country) = 65%
Working to support self, family/children, and/or others = 57%
No reason given = 33%
Moved within or outside of U.S., no record of enrollment in other school = 13%
Academic and/or Attendance reasons (sped, TBI, etc.) = 13%
Homeless/Ran away = 4%
Incarceration = 2%
Academic and/or Attendance reasons (sped, TBI, etc.) = 13%
Mental Health issues = 2%

Enrollment Age:

15 yrs. = 9%
16 yrs. = 13.%
17 yrs. = 44%
18 yrs. = 29%
19 yrs. = 4%
20 yrs. =9%

Age at time of withdrawal:

Below 18 yrs. = 20%
18 yrs. = 16%
19 yrs. = 11%
20 yrs. = 9%

College/Dual Credit Classes through Wayne State and Central Community College

College Class	2016-17 Enrollment	2017-18 Fall Enrollment
Human Biology	4	0
Public Speaking	41	17
Work Specialist	5	0
Advanced Chemistry	14	14
English Composition	32	19
American History	14	16
Intro. To Business	6	12
Intro. To Entrepreneurship	9	1
American Government	8	4
Intro. To Humanities	8	7
Intro. To Sociology	8	0
Intro to Psychology	11	6
Total College Classes	160	96

Grades Earned	2016-17 Year	2017-18 Fall Sem.
A	88	30
B	45	6
C	10	2
D	6	0
F	9	1
Incomplete	3	0

Credits Earned	2016-17 Students	2017-18 Students
3 - 5 College Credits	34	30
6 - 8 College Credits	18	8
9 - 11 College Credits	9	3
12 - 14 College Credits	7	13
15 - 18 College Credits	2	0
19 + College Credits	1	0

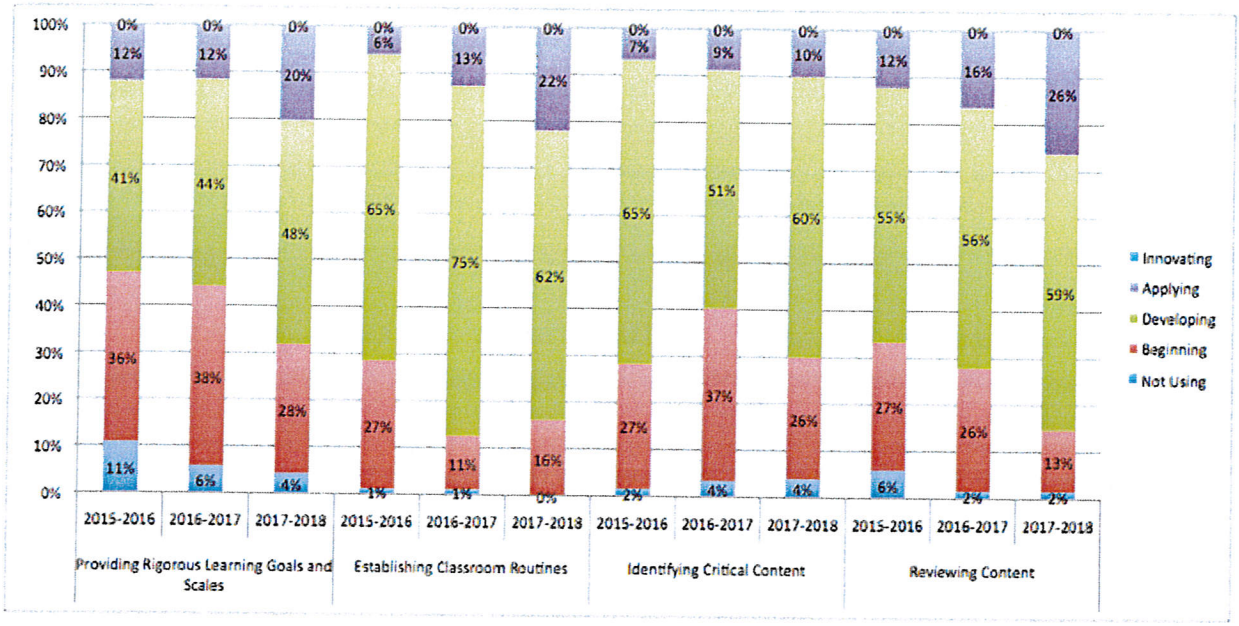
*** Juniors and Seniors are eligible for College Credit Classes

*** 2017-18 Enrollment is Fall Semester Only

***Did not include students who received a C or below in credits earned

*** Less than 10 students earned dual credit in 2015-16

iObservation Data



This chart demonstrates improvements that have been made at Schuyler Central High School in the last three years of observation data. Within our observation system, teachers can be scored on a five point scale. The levels of the scale are:

- Not using - the strategy was called for but not exhibited.
- Beginning - Uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing
- Developing - Uses the strategy, but the majority of students are either not monitored for or not displaying the desired effect of the strategy.
- Applying - Uses the strategy and monitors for evidence of the extent to which the majority of students understand and display the desired effect of the strategy.
- Innovating - Adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations in order for the desired effect to be evident in all students.

The goal is to get teachers to the applying level. As can be seen, the percentage of teachers scoring in the not using and beginning levels have decreased while the developing and applying levels have increased.

Nebraska School District Per Pupil Cost 2016-17

District	PPC
Bennington	$9,137
Gretna	$9,356
Millard	$9,549
Elkhorn	$10,009
Norris	$10,108
Papillion	$10,280
Schuyler	$10,378
Waverly	$10,516
Blair	$10,586
Scottsbluff	$10,591
Alliance	$10,608
Kearney	$10,627
North Platte	$10,671
Amherst	$10,732
Norfolk	$10,786
Fremont	$10,852
Gering	$11,144
Grand Island	$11,187
Lincoln	$11,274
Bellevue	$11,291
Ralston	$11,319
Wayne	$11,347
Holdrege	$11,365
Milford	$11,367
McCook	$11,487
Omaha	$11,582
Gothenburg	$11,630
Hastings	$11,675
Wahoo	$11,728
Arlington	$11,768
Westside	$11,780
Columbus	$11,790
Beatrice	$11,981
Northwest	$11,982
Ashland	$12,031
Sidney	$12,126
Louisville	$12,159
Lakeview	$12,169
Mitchell	$12,285
Malcolm	$12,339
So. Sioux City	$12,358
Chase County	$12,409
Plattsmouth	$12,518
Johnson	$12,524
Seward	$12,583
Wilber	$12,590
West Douglas	$12,633
Palmyra	$12,642
York	$12,734
Cozad	$12,833
Syracuse	$12,922
Nebraska City	$12,956
Overton	$12,984
Lexington	$13,004
Hershey	$13,045
St. Paul	$13,132
Chadron	$13,160
Gibbon	$13,177
Minden	$13,183
Crete	$13,219
Aurora	$13,303
Ord	$13,437

District	PPC
Ogallala	$13,450
Sutton	$13,509
Doniphan	$13,554
Auburn	$13,608
Logan View	$13,612
Ponca	$13,631
Pierce	$13,644
Raymond	$13,669
Springfield	$13,713
Wakefield	$13,740
Yutan	$13,953
Freeman	$14,049
Battle Creek	$14,072
Gordon	$14,186
Conestoga	$14,212
Pleasanton	$14,225
Arapahoe	$14,240
Tekamah	$14,243
Cedar Bluffs	$14,245
West Point	$14,316
Centura	$14,349
Madison	$14,387
O'Neill	$14,395
Elmwood	$14,402
Adams Central	$14,411
Kenesaw	$14,477
Ravenna	$14,503
Falls City	$14,538
North Bend	$14,591
Superior	$14,627
Bayard	$14,632
Fairbury	$14,648
McCool Junction	$14,692
Elm Creek	$14,708
Sutherland	$14,738
Fort Calhoun	$14,765
Cross County	$14,779
Morrill	$14,779
Palmer	$14,803
Oakland	$14,808
Johnson County	$14,855
Pender	$14,856
Cambridge	$14,911
Broken Bow	$14,920
Maxwell	$14,974
Hitchcock County	$15,008
Randolph	$15,114
Homer	$15,164
Alma	$15,263
Wood River	$15,268
Loup City	$15,268
Blue Hill	$15,329
Central City	$15,519
Fullerton	$15,540
Stanton	$15,566
Osmond	$15,676
Meridian	$15,719
Humphrey	$15,766
Creighton	$15,787
Anselmo	$15,787
Elkhorn Valley	$15,807
Burwell	$15,890

District	PPC
Crawford	$15,948
Boone Central	$16,010
Crofton	$16,077
Emerson	$16,092
Southern	$16,178
Hemingford	$16,208
Diller	$16,219
Rock County	$16,233
Wisner	$16,261
Cody	$16,268
West Holt	$16,293
Bloomfield	$16,302
Neligh	$16,323
Sargent	$16,344
Minatare	$16,349
Hay Springs	$16,362
Callaway	$16,456
Kimball	$16,498
Heartland	$16,507
Bancroft	$16,542
Thayer Central	$16,588
Bertrand	$16,671
Weeping Water	$16,754
Twin River	$16,784
Ainsworth	$16,798
Axtell	$17,066
Pawnee City	$17,287
Plainview	$17,328
Sterling	$17,350
Lewiston	$17,361
Allen	$17,371
Shelby	$17,684
West Boyd	$17,698
Howells	$17,728
Wauneta	$17,734
Giltner	$17,775
Mead	$17,900
Wynot	$17,918
Shelton	$17,943
Lyons	$18,078
Osceola	$18,079
Elwood	$18,111
Fillmore	$18,124
Bridgeport	$18,153
Franklin	$18,194
David City	$18,203
Valentine	$18,290
Loomis	$18,365
Hartington	$18,367
Leigh	$18,369
Niobrara	$18,412
Friend	$18,477
Walthill	$18,491
Stapleton	$18,506
Deshler	$18,520
TriCounty	$18,538
Laurel	$18,540
Newman Grove	$18,559
Stuart	$18,611
South Central	$18,641
Paxton	$18,651
Unified One	$18,665

District	PPC
Perkins County	$18,700
Wallace	$18,733
Scribner	$18,751
Winside	$18,860
Leyton	$18,861
Red Cloud	$18,994
Dorchester	$19,068
Garden County	$19,195
Centennial	$19,259
Clarkson	$19,305
Harvard	$19,337
Umonhon	$19,342
St. Edward	$19,442
Hampton	$19,531
Eustis	$19,548
Southern Valley	$19,705
Sumner	$19,705
Silver Lake	$19,740
Southwest	$20,000
Arnold	$20,066
Dundy County	$20,157
Creek Valley	$20,253
Medicine Valley	$20,381
Maywood	$20,659
Humboldt	$20,932
Hyannis	$20,979
Ewing	$21,211
Brady	$21,300
Mullen	$21,533
East Butler	$21,859
South Platte	$22,164
Ansley	$22,267
Chambers	$22,413
Wilcox	$22,538
Arcadia	$22,660
High Plains	$22,765
Potter	$22,852
Riverside	$23,105
Winnebago	$23,152
Elba	$23,508
Arthur County	$23,633
Elgin	$24,452
Thedford	$24,578
Shickley	$24,714
Banner County	$24,754
Central Valley	$24,820
Sandhills	$26,315
McPherson County	$26,929
Bruning	$27,069
Exeter	$27,278
Wausa	$27,543
Sioux County	$28,864
Keya Paha	$29,345
Litchfield	$29,451
Loup County	$31,156
Wheeler Central	$31,577
Hayes Center	$31,672
Santee	$34,213
Lynch	$40,047

BERT PETERSON

1058 S. ST. JOSEPH AVE. / HASTINGS, NE 68901 / (402) 462-7315
br_peterson@charter.net

February 15, 2018

Mr. Daniel Hoesing, Ed.D
Superintendent Schuyler Public Schools
401 Adams St.
Schuyler, NE 68661

Re: 2016-17 NeSA and ACT Performance

Dear Superintendent Hoesing,

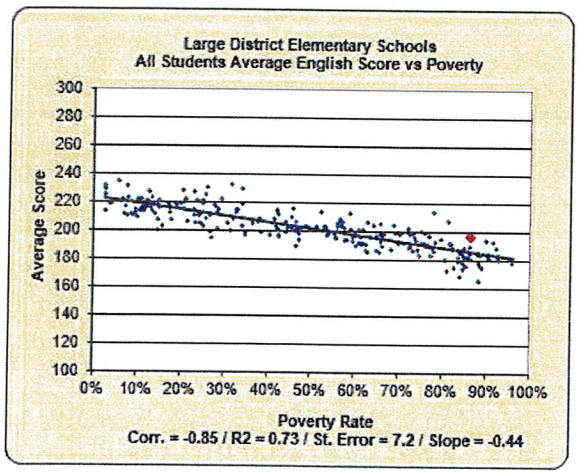
It was good to talk to you on Tuesday, as I later indicated there is available data from the Nebraska Educational Portal to do the comparisons with adjustments for the high poverty rates within the Schuyler Community School district as we discussed.

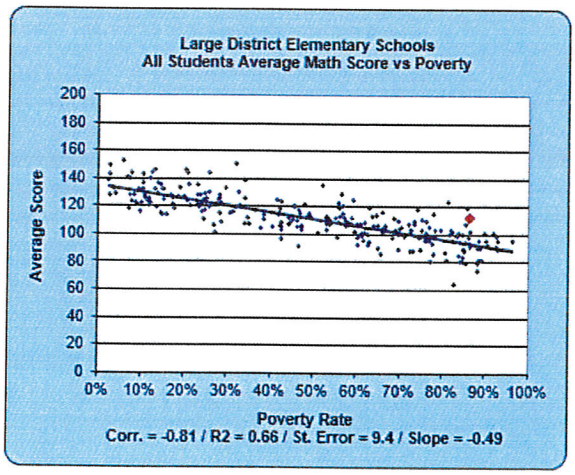
You all have done such a great job against some formidable odds such as high FRL rates (and high depth of poverty) and high ELL rates. As you know I hate comparisons of educational data because every district, every school, every teacher faces different, mostly unmeasurable challenges. But this comparison is at least a bit fairer than those we see today. I have only included the English and math results in the NeSA test results (elementary and middle school) but have expanded that to also include the science and composite results for the ACT test (high school.)

As a step to making a fairer comparison we can compare schools in the Schuyler district with the schools in the 24 large districts that have similar FRL rates. Again, note that every school faces different challenges and this work only accounts for the poverty impact. It does not include the impact of depth of poverty, high ELL rates, mobility rates or even rates of homelessness.

Elementary Schools:

Schuyler Elementary School is shown in **RED** along with the other 267 large district elementary schools in Nebraska. Each of the 268 elementary schools (267 large district elementary schools plus Schuyler Elementary) is shown as a dot on the chart positioned vertically based upon its average test score and horizontally by its poverty rate. The blue line is a best fit line[2] to the 268 schools. This best fit line is known as the regression line.[3]





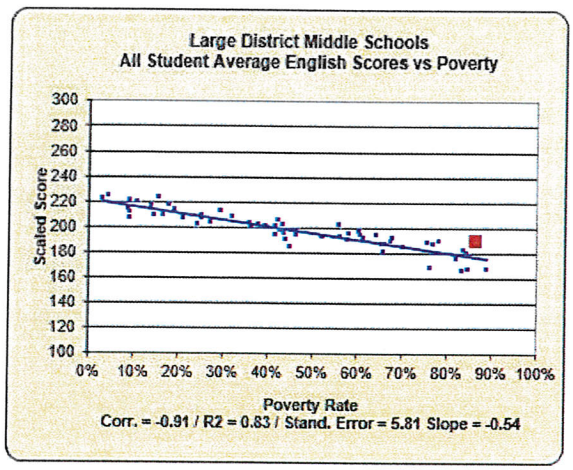
For Schuyler Elementary School we see:

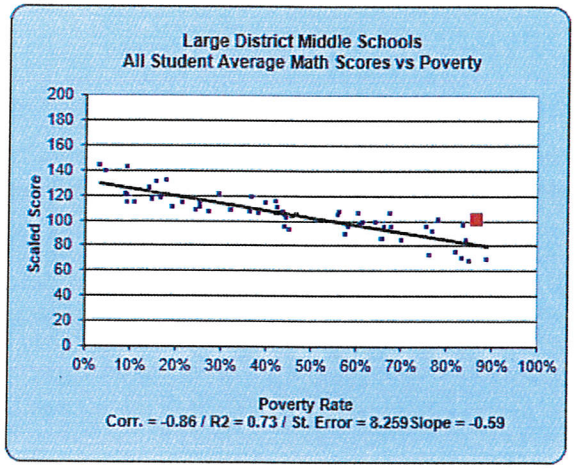
- English - A score of 9.6 points above the regression line or 1.3 standard deviations above the regression line and
- Math - A score of 18.1 points above the regression line or 1.9 standard deviations above the regression line

This performance is well above any chance variation. In my view this is fantastic performance for any district but particularly outstanding given that we are ignoring so many other challenges that your district faces. The higher level of math performance is likely due to math being less language dependent. This is also seen in middle and in high school

Mr. Daniel Hoesing, Ed.D
February 15, 2018

Middle School:



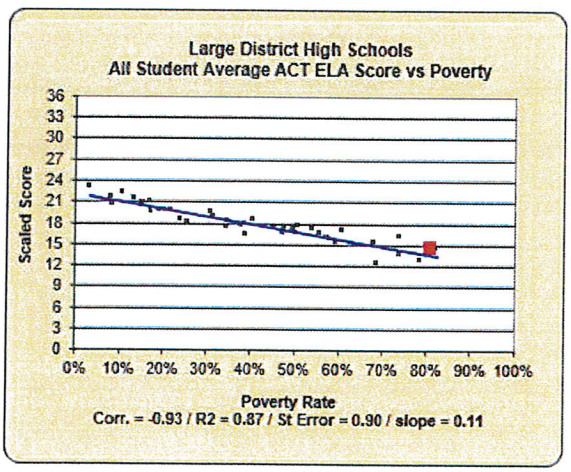


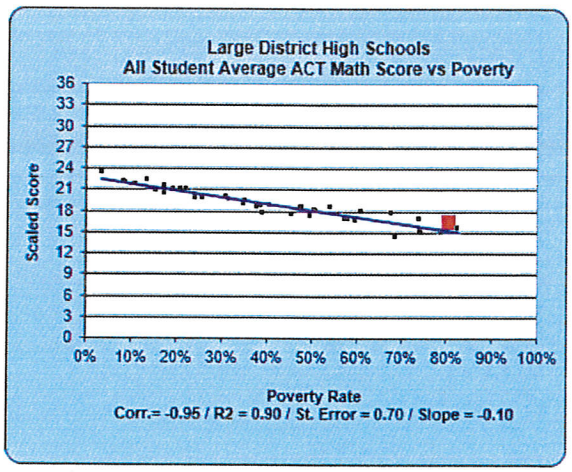
For Schuyler Middle School we see:

- English - A score of 13.3 points above the regression line or 2.30 standard deviations above the regression line and
- A score of 19.6 points above the regression line or again, 2.3 standard deviations above the regression line

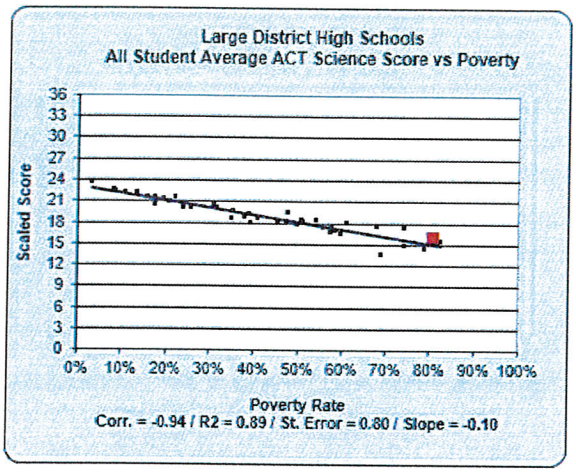
Clearly your middle school did well compared to the other large district middle schools in Nebraska at comparable poverty levels. Again, this is fantastic performance given that only poverty is being accounted for.

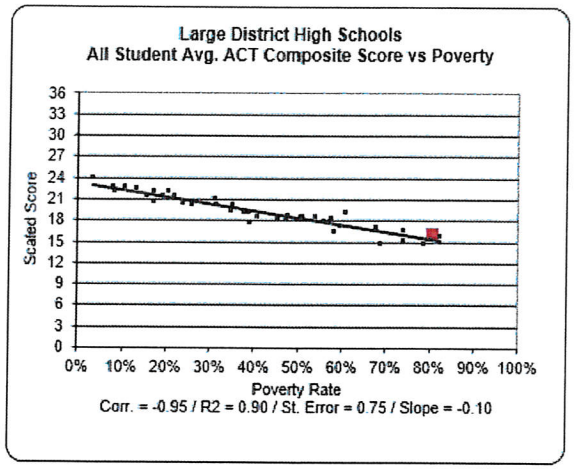
High School:





Mr. Daniel Hoesing, Ed.D
February 15, 2018





The only high school in my 24 large district universe with a higher poverty rate was Omaha South High School at 82.42%.

For Schuyler High School in the 2016-17 ACT tests (with a maximum score of 36.0 points) we see:

- English Language Arts - A score of 1.06 points above the regression line or 1.2 standard deviations above the regression line
- Math - A score of 1.18 points above the regression line or again, 1.7 standard deviations above the regression line
- Science - A score of 1.12 points above the regression line or again, 1.4 standard deviations above the regression line
- Composite Score - A score of 0.73 points above the regression line or 1.0 standard deviations above the regression line

Your high school also did well compared to the other large district high schools in Nebraska at or near your poverty level. This is especially impressive in that this is a college readiness test, not the usual test that your students see.

It is interesting and a bit frustrating how the media and the public don't understand that Schuyler is not Elkhorn or Bennington school district, yet they denigrate your district when you don't get the same results as these more affluent districts and presumably less challenged districts.

Congratulations on a great year. It makes me so proud of the quality of educators we are blessed with in Nebraska.

Sincerely,

Bert Peterson

NASB
Nebraska Association of SCHOOL BOARDS

March 1, 2018

Nebraska State Board of Education
301 Centennial Mall South No. 6
Lincoln, Nebraska

Dear Members of the State Board of Education,

As a Director for the Nebraska Association of School Boards for the past 12 years, I am writing in support of the Schuyler Community Schools. I have worked collaboratively with the Board of Education, district and building level administration, the certified staff, and community stakeholders to engage in the discussion and development of a working plan to progress the school district. The Association embarked upon a cooperative working relationship, more than four years ago, with the Board of Education, administration, certified staff, students, and community in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan to guide decision-making and budget development to support growth of instruction and learning for all students. Annually, thereafter, the SCS Strategic Plan is reviewed, updated, and adopted to ensure the indicators provide progressive and purposeful action to support the growth of education district wide.

In my role as Director for the Association, I have the occasion to work with a vast array of school districts across the state. While the Association is a strong advocate for school district leadership who adopt a strategic plan and engage stakeholders, this is not as common as we would prefer. Schuyler has modeled this form of proactive and progressive leadership to the benefit of the community and to ensure the district goals reflect the expectations of the community. Schuyler Community Schools is an action-oriented and student-centered school system and community. Most recently, I had the occasion to once again facilitate a district/community discussion to align the school district and community strategic plans. The attendance, participation, discussion, and outcome of this meeting is a true reflection of the unified commitment to the students of Schuyler Community Schools. The priorities identified included, but are not limited to early childhood education, childcare, and the community's role and support of career/college readiness (internships, job shadowing, mentorship, etc.).

In closing, I urge the Board to consider the progress and success the district has realized as a result of the ongoing and continued commitment to a district strategic plan that reflects the values and importance of providing students of Schuyler with a quality education in a safe learning environment.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia R. Herring

NASB Director of Board Leadership

From: Abbie Kretz <abbie@heartlandworkerscenter.org>
Subject: Re: letter of support
Date: March 1, 2018 at 8:56:42 PM CST
To: Dan Hoesing <dan.hoesing@schuylercommunityschools.org>
Cc: Sergio Sosa <sergio@heartlandworkerscenter.org>

Hi Dr. Hoesing,

Thanks for sending us this information.

It's been a long, hectic work week, and I just realized that I was to write a letter to support SCS. I apologize for not getting one to you.

However, please know that you have full support from the Heartland Workers Center and Comite Latino de Schuyler as you pursue this case. And the arguments you all write in the report are quite compelling, but we've also been able to see first hand the good work the schools are doing to bring people together.

We would like to see if we (Sergio, Mynor, and myself) could meet with you as soon as possible to further discuss possible strategies to address the issue.

We look forward to hearing from you soon and best of luck tomorrow.

--
Abbie Kretz
Lead Organizer
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Nebraska State Legislature

SENATOR BRUCE L. BOSTELMAN

District 23
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4604
(402) 471-2719
bbostelman@leg.ne.gov



COMMITTEES

Vice Chairperson - Natural Resources
Transportation and Telecommunications
Building Maintenance

February 12, 2018

Schuyler Community Schools
c/o Dr. Dan Hoesing
401 Adam Street
Schuyler, NE 68661

Dear Dr. Hoesing and Schuyler Community Schools,

Congratulations once again on your accomplishment of the 2017 NebraskARTS award. I am enclosing two copies of the congratulatory Legislative Resolution 305 that I introduced before the 105th Nebraska Legislature.

You all should be very proud of your achievement. All the best for your future.

Sincerely,

Senator Bruce L. Bostelman
Legislative District 23
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

February 18, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I have had the pleasure of working with the teachers and administration of Schuyler Central High School for the last year and a half. As an instructional technology coach for Discovery Education, I have worked closely with four teachers in particular, as well as with the entire staff, along with my colleague, Judy Martin. One of the main focus points of the all-staff sessions has been an introduction to pedagogy and various strategies and tools that will lead to a student-centered learning environment in their classrooms. Teachers looked at student engagement and how to provide opportunities for students of varied learning needs and abilities using a variety of resources and strategies. Learning targets, success criteria and effective feedback are some of the strategies introduced. Blended learning is another topic discussed, specifically how to purposely integrate technology as well as classroom management techniques. At each of the sessions, teachers collaborated on projects modeling techniques that can be implemented in the classroom.

The teachers that I have worked closely with over the last year and a half have made instrumental changes in their teaching methods and classrooms. They are providing more opportunities for the varied learning styles of their students with strategies such as group discussions, choice of assessment tools, screencasts, text-to-speech, and online websites. Using different strategies and online tools, teachers are now able to receive feedback from all their students, not just the few that volunteer to answer in class. Chemistry and physics students have been using the Discovery Education Science Techbook which includes embedded video, simulations, images and hand-on activities along with text that can be read aloud, has a changeable reading level, and online highlighting and note-taking tools. Students in all the classrooms I have worked in are aware of their learning targets and show what they have learned in various ways, often using assessments other than the traditional paper and pencil methods. They have created videos, presentations, surveys and movie trailers. Students who previously did not participate in class discussions often became group leaders for their small groups. Students have taught their classmates after researching topics and then learned from each other. The classrooms are much more learner-centered than when I first began working at Schuyler Central High School. They are more engaged in their learning and are held accountable for it. Change is occurring in classrooms throughout the school. I look forward to continuing this work having seen growth in the teachers I coach as well as in other classrooms.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Wesp
Professional Development Consultant, Discovery Education
San Juan Capistrano, CA

During my time at SCHS I have seen the following changes:

Teachers are using technology to engage students in the learning process but having them explore, create and collaborate rather than just listening to the teacher

Students are engaged in conversation and exploration regarding topics. They are questioning and debating topics and challenging information as fact or assumption

Teachers are exploring various methods of teaching such as flipped classroom, student lead discussion, student presentation using various methods of delivery, addressing various learning modes, and hands-on exploration.

Few classrooms are in industrial rows and lecture delivery is very limited. Collaboration throughout the lesson is focused

Various levels of language and learning are being addressed through visual and verbal methods rather than rote memorization.

Teachers are more comfortable with trying new methods and taking chances in their instruction

Teachers strive to instill in students responsibility for their actions and provide them with extra help and time

The level of questioning asked of students has increased beyond simple regurgitation into giving an answer and then citing evidence to back up that answer

Teachers are forcing students to think

Judy Martin
Discovery Education

What it is like to Be A Schuyler Warrior

As our current Athletic Director, former Head Coach of 22 years and a parent who raised three boys who competed in numerous activities in this district I would like to give you a little perspective on what it is like to be a "Schuyler Warrior". I have been is this district forever, I graduated from Schuyler High in 1984 when our population was 98% white and mostly comprised of farm kids. We look much different today, with nearly 80% Hispanic along with students from 27 other countries. I have watched our district change over these years and believe even more today that kids are kids regardless of their color, their language or their place of birth.

So why am I writing this, I probably have not told you anything you already do not know. I am writing this so you have a little insight on what our district deals with on a regular basis. First of all our parents who attend games hear the comments from other fans on a regular basis. "Ya we are playing a bunch of Mexicans, it should be an easy game." "Those kids can't even speak English." "Wait until Trump sends them all home." Those are just some of the things that our fans hear about their kids.

Our coaches have a team that in many cases does not have the experience, skill level or resources to compete with many of their opponents. Our kids do not go to summer camps, lift weights or work on skills in the off-season because their families do not have the resources to do this. Our coaches have to tell our kids to use good sportsmanship and not retaliate regardless of how they are treated.

What about our athletes. They are called racist names; they are spit on by other opponents and told to go back home or wait until Trump builds the wall. They see other student bodies bring dozens of Trump signs to our games and watch their administration do nothing and say this is just freedom of speech. They see other opponents specifically target our players to intentionally take them out of the game and in some cases the officials look the other way while this happens. When a locker room has been left a mess and unflattering comments are written on the board we are the first team to be accused of this and when it is found that it was another team who is 95% white our kids get no apology.

So when I see our parents, our coaches and our students walk on to a field, a court or a mat and compete as hard as they can with dignity, respect and great sportsmanship it makes me very proud to be a Warrior. When I see other teams who treat our kids poorly, I know that these actions are fostered by the comments that these kids hear at home or from their coaches. When I see one of our Hispanic kids being treated poorly and I see my son and some of his white friends stand up for their team mates I know we have done something right here at Schuyler. It is hard to really give you perspective on what it is like to grow up in a district like ours. You can really only understand it if you are from Lexington, Madison, South Sioux City, Omaha South or the other hand full of districts who are like us.

Our kids do not want your pity, they do not want you to take it easy on us, they do not want any apologies. All we want is for you to have a little perspective on what it is like to be a parent, a coach and a student in our district. "Walk a mile in our shoes" and you may think a little more before you act and you may think about what example you are setting for others to see.

Jim Kasik, Assistant Principal & Athletic Director, Schuyler High School **"Proud to be a Warrior!"**

Leading Serving Supporting
ESU 7
2657 44th Ave. • Columbus, NE 68601
402.564.5753 • FAX 402.563.1121
www.esu7.org
Larianne Polk, Administrator

March 1, 2018

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Schuyler Community High School in the capacity of Chief Administrator of the Educational Service Unit 7 (ESU 7) in Columbus, NE.

The ESU works with Schuyler Community Schools at all grade levels. They are an active part in determining the services provided by the ESU to their district. Decisions for services are made after considering their data, identifying their challenges, and prioritizing their needs. Schuyler Community Schools has participated in special education support, professional development, early childhood support, production, technology support, and most recently instructional coaching.

Schuyler has unique needs that they have spent numerous hours studying, learning about, developing relationships around, and developing plans for growth and change. The commitment to the Schuyler community is a high priority for the school district. As a partner, Schuyler Community Schools has invited us to take part in their strategic planning process. They also involve us in grant opportunities so there is an established sustainability plan, that should it need the ESU's support after it's completion, we are involved from the start.

The ESU's mission is to provide leadership and services supporting the improvement of teaching and learning. We are here for Schuyler Community High School to support them in the capacities their data directs us. Schuyler Community Schools are visionary stewards for their students, families, staff, and community.

Thank you for this opportunity to share these thoughts with you.

Sincerely,

Larianne Polk, Administrator
Educational Service Unit 7

September 13, 2017

Doug Zbylut
Nebraskans for the Arts
1004 Farnam St., Plaza Level
Omaha, NE 68102

RE: NebraskARTS Award

On behalf of my team at Nebraska Loves Public Schools, I am writing in support of Schuyler Community Schools for your NebraskARTS award. We were introduced to the staff and students in Schuyler while shooting for our latest film, Seeds of Hope. The film covers several districts but we wanted to see what things looked like in a community that had undergone significant changes with the growth of Nebraska's meat processing industry. Schuyler turned out to be the perfect place.

For the 86% of the student body coming from 11 countries and speaking 15 languages, change and upheaval have been the norm rather than the exception. The majority of them have arrived in Schuyler because of employment opportunities at the local Cargill plant. Whether it's high school students themselves working at the plant or their parents, the hours are long and the work is difficult. But for immigrants and refugees, this is what needs to be done to make ends meet. Challenges are abundant in their lives.

Schuyler Superintendent Dr. Dan Hoesing and High School Principal, Stephen Grammer realized early on, that in order for students to be successful, they would need to provide opportunities for them to release their stress and trauma. Especially for those students who spend each day struggling with language and applying their new language in rigorous academic settings. Schuyler Community Schools have found arts-based activities for students to participate in that allow them the space to express themselves and find their inner joy and peace.

As we have learned along our 7-year journey into Nebraska's schools, the most successful schools are those with strong community partnerships. Schuyler's partnership with Flood Communications is just one of their many partnerships. Not only are students exposed to careers in broadcasting, but they can see that creativity comes in many different forms. It's not just traditional art and music but writing and editing and performance art that are mediums within their reach.

For students who've spent most of their lives feeling like outsiders, Schuyler's diverse arts program has brought students into a community where they can be recognized as individuals with unique gifts to share. We applaud Schuyler public schools for their holistic approach to student success. What they've done goes far beyond art class, band, music, and theater -- they've accomplished the essence of arts education which is allowing kids to look within, find their truth, and express it in a way that is most authentic for them.

By recognizing Schuyler Community Schools with your NebraskARTS Award, you can help Schuyler become known as the district with the strong arts program rather than the district with all of the "diversity". Just imagine what that might mean to each student.

Respectfully,

Sally A. Nellson Barrett
Director/Executive Producer
Nebraska Loves Public Schools, Inc.
1112 Applewood Drive
Papillion, NE 68046

Schuyler Central High School Program and Data Summary

1. **School Improvement Plan:** Schuyler Central High School is currently in the 2nd year of a 5-year school improvement grant (SIG). We are in compliance with the requirements of the grant, changed our administrators, designed and implemented a school improvement plan, provided two years of professional development, and changed our teacher evaluation instrument. The change from NeSA to ACT complicates year-to-year comparisons of student achievement on state standards. In addition, it is unfair to judge the effectiveness of the 5-year plan on one year and one class.
    a. School Improvement Grant Goals
    b. Discovery Education Plan (August 2016 – September 2021)
    c. Discovery Education Contract (August 2016 – September 2021)
    d. Discovery Education Professional Development Plan
    e. Discovery Eduation Professional Development Summary and
    f. 2016-17 Teacher Evaluation Report from iObservation

2. **Chronic Absentee Rate:** We currently are in a cooperative agreement and grant with Colfax County and work closely with a truancy officer and county attorney to reduce the number of unexcused absences.
    a. Chronic Absentee Summary Report
    b. Crime Commission Grant (Community Based Aid Grant)
    c. Inter-Local Agreement with County of Colfax
    d. Data from NSSRS website for 2016-2017 and YTD 2017-2018

3. **Title III Funds:** Title III office reported that funds for professional development were unspent and returned. The remaining Title III funds were not sufficient to support the approved professional development grant. Updated plans for professional development were approved by NDE and 2016-17 funds were reallocated in 2017-18 Title III application.
    a. Title III professional develop summary for 2016-17 and 2017-18.
    b. Title III section from 2016-2017 Consolidated Grant
    c. 2016-17 expenditure audit report that shows PD.
    d. Title III section from 2017-2018 Consolidated Grant
    e. Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model to support English learners Workshop

4. **Graduation Rate:** The graduation rates for immigrant students often do not compete with their counterparts of non-immigrant status. Many of our students need more time to remove language, academic, economic, age, and social barriers that interfere with their academic progress toward meeting graduation requirements.
    a. Graduation requirements comparison with other Nebraska high schools.
    b. Graduation summary and data from NSSRS Validation
    c. Enrollment and drop-out summary
    d. Schuyler Central High School graduation requirements

5. **Elpa21 Results:** The Elpa21 was never used to determine designation of previous "Priority" schools. The ELDA paper/pencil assessment was changed to a computerized Elpa21 in 2015-16 and a new company took over the test in 2016-17. Since 2004, 100 high school ELL students successfully exited from the ELL program prior to graduation.
    a. ELPA Results form 2016-17 compared to state
    b. Student demographics
    c. Number of students working full-time jobs and attending high school. 42.6% of ELL students currently not living with either parent (55 of 129)

6. **Success of Middle School SIG Plan:** In 2014, Schuyler Middle School received a school improvement grant (SIG), removed the principals, and implemented a school improvement plan to increase academic performance of middle school students. The 3-year grant was validated by NDE Officials as one of the most successful school improvement grants supervised over that period of time.
    a. Discovery Education Final Report
    b. Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) Final Report

7. **Experience of SIG Director:** Dr. Dave Gibbons was the director of the middle school improvement grant (SIG). During the final year of the middle school grant, Dr. Gibbons submitted a 5-year SIG application for the high school to accommodate the learning styles, programs, and academic growth achieved in the middle school grant.
   a. Information from Middle School Grant
   b. Information from AdvancED visit

8. **Escalating prejudice against immigrant students:** With the current political climate escalating prejudice against immigrant students, we ask the State Board to be sensitive to this situation. While there are 78 schools identified in the "needs improvement" classification, there are only 3 "low performing" schools labeled as "priority". Schuyler Central is not the lowest performing school in the state. This "priority" designation has already resulted in increased option enrollment applications for 2017-18 and impacted our ability to recruit new teachers. Our students and community do not need nor deserve this additional scrutiny. Included in this section are two research articles that shed some light on the need to promote a positive image of our students and reduce anxiety for an already stressed student population.
   a. **Barriers to Educational Opportunities for Hispanics in the United States (Research Document)**
   "For Hispanics in the United States, the educational experience is one of accumulated disadvantage…For Hispanics, initial disadvantages often stem from parents' immigrant and socioeconomic status and their lack of knowledge about the U.S. education system…Initial disadvantages continue to accumulate, resulting in Hispanics having the lowest rates of high school and college degree attainment, which hinders their chances for stable employment…Despite high educational expectations, Hispanics are among the least educated group in the United States… The goal is to identify some of the barriers to educational advancement experienced by Hispanic students in the U.S. today…"

   b. Adaptation of Immigrant Children to the United States (Research Document)
   "Over the last several years, as new waves of immigrants have continued to enter the United States, the effects of immigration on the nation's economy and society have been hotly debated. Largely ignored in the debate, however, has been the "wellbeing of immigrant children". Little is known about the adaptation process that these children must navigate, or the unique health, educational, and psychological consequences that emerge as they learn a new culture, new community, and often a new language… Research confirms that immigration results in enormous stress for children…These children have to balance two different worlds and move fluidly between them. Experts agree that being connected and accepted is an important component of adolescent development…Recent studies have demonstrated that a "positivist" approach to immigration and acculturation yields important information about not only the risks but also the strengths that result from the immigration experience… Many immigrant students appear to overcome their obstacles and excel academically. But what is the toll on their mental health? How are they adapting psychosocially?...Recently, however, researchers have begun to argue that supporting the psychological adjustment and mental health of immigrant students is just as important as education-related interventions…"

9. **Board of Education Evaluation, School and Community Strategic Plan**
   a. Board of Education Characteristics and Standards Evaluation
   b. 2014-17 Strategic Planning Documentation
   c. 2018 Strategic Planning Targets and Action Plans
   d. 2018-22 Community Strategic Planning Document