Expert Advisory Panel 1: Educational Excellence & Equity

Presentation on Focus Area 1

Thursday, July 30, 2020
3-4:30

Focus Area 1

PSB needs to consistently adapt best instructional practices to remote learning setting to promote educational excellence and equity.

This area will explore educational practices that have been shown to effectively promote learning across a wide range of students.

Focus Area 1 - Agenda

- Prioritizing students for in-person school (i.e., students with high needs)
- Ensuring accessibility of remote learning for all students
- Supporting all students with remote learning
- Maximizing learning in both synchronous and asynchronous modes
- Minimizing stress/anxiety during transitions between in-person/remote learning
- Offering specials in new ways

Which students will have great difficulty benefitting from remote instruction?

High needs students as defined by special educators in keeping with DESE guidance meet 2 or more of following criteria:

- Their primary learning setting is outside of the general education setting
- Their services are provided by special educators and related service providers;
- Their special education programming covers 75% of the school day.

Which other students *should* be prioritized for F2F?

- Students who cannot engage in remote learning due to their disability needs
- Students who are homeless or have housing and food instability
- Students in foster care or congregate care
- Preschool or Pre-Kindergarten students

Which other students *might* be prioritized for F2F?

- K-3 and possibly 4 and 5
- Students who cannot be supervised at home

How do we make remote learning more accessible for all students?

- Be Clear, Consistent & Early
    - Routines, learning platforms across grade level bands
    - Easy to read fonts
- Use limited and only high quality external resources
- Provide multi-modal directions (videos w captions, written, visual)
- Offer resources that are downloadable and accessible offline, text to speech and low-tech options
- Record synchronous sessions for future viewing

How do we support remote learning for all students?

- Offer tutors for students and parents to get help in real-time in-person, online, hotline
  - Paraprofessionals, older students, community members as tutors
  - Tutors are connected to educators, curriculum heads to ensure alignment individual teacher and district-widing teaching methods
  - Office hours in community locations
- Offer low-tech options (i.e., textbooks)
- Simple system (eg. daily journal) for tracking info+progress to enable 3-way communication

What gets done where? Leveraging live and asynchronous modalities

Synchronous/live: interaction, discussion, feedback, checking for understanding, questions, community building and socialization, teacher delivery of new content and instruction, instruction on organization and planning

Asynchronous: delivery of content (readings, videos, etc.), practice, projects, Online resources (e.g. Khan Academy) can help, but must be carefully curated and tightly connected with content.

What gets done where? Leveraging live and asynchronous modalities

BOTTOM LINE: Students need to SEE their teachers often, whether that's live synchronous or asynchronous pre-recorded video and students need to receive targeted explicit feedback

Key Evidence-Based Instructional Elements and Practices

- Knowledge-rich curriculum
- Ensuring that students know what they are meant to be learning
- Finding out what students have learned (checking for understanding)
- Providing feedback that improves student learning
- Having students help each other learn (collaborative learning)
- Developing students' ability to monitor and assess their own learning (self-regulated learning)

Dylan Wiliam, 2018

Incorporating best practices in remote teaching - Synchronous sessions

- Small groups-up to 12 students
- Active responding for ALL students
  - mini-whiteboards, response cards, hand signals
- ‘Think Time” with chat feature
- Exit tickets with Google Forms in chat feature

Incorporating best practices in remote teaching - Synchronous sessions

- Socrative: Quick quizzes, polls and exit tickets in real time
- Desmos: create slides with activities, questions, etc. for students to work through (also asynchronously). Can pause, check, give feedback. For math and much more
- Breakout rooms in Zoom (randomized or pre-set, jump around to check in and give feedback)
- Small group or individual check-ins via office hours or scheduled times

Incorporating best practices in remote teaching - Synchronous sessions - synchronous/asynchronous hybrid sessions

1. Teacher provides 10-15 min live overview lesson
2. Students hop off-line to watch a video or complete a task
3. Return to group for whole group feedback and wrap-up

During this time, students can access help from a teacher or paraprofessional OR para can 'push-in' to a breakout room for support

Incorporating best practices in remote teaching - Asynchronous assignments

- Embed pause points in videos/screencasts with an action item, then resume video
- Provide a Google Form/quiz task for readings so teacher can easily collate responses
- Use text-based chat for asynchronous discussions
- Provide audio feedback, whole class feedback

Incorporating best practices in remote teaching - Asynchronous assignments

- flipgrid: easy and quick video conversation tool
- edpuzzle: embed questions at pause points in video
- activelylearn: Can use their grab+go content or upload your own and embed questions
- insertlearning: Chrome app that allows you to insert content (questions/quizzes) into any website

Minimizing Stress & Anxiety During Transitions

- Clearly describe the details of in-person and remote learning so that students and families know what to expect using a graphic or matrix.
    - Physical set-up - What will the classroom look like? Where will lunch be?
    - Learning activities - What will students be doing throughout the day?
    - Safety - When do students have to wear masks? Will there be breaks? How will social distancing be enforced? When do students wash hands or sanitize?
    - Expectations - Routines, expected behavior
    - Help - How do students get help for learning and emotional support?

Minimizing Stress & Anxiety During Transitions

- Plan activities that are similar across in-school and remote and function to maintain peer-to-peer and teacher/student connections:
  - Morning meeting format in-school and remote for k-4
  - Social times
  - Frequent individual teacher/student check-ins
  - Lunch bunches with friends during remote learning

New Approach to Specials

- Creatively engage students offline with outdoor events
- Offer students inexpensive kits for specials (i.e., art, PE, music)
- For k-4 - virtual library card and weekly read alouds with the librarian
- Virtual performances by BHS performing arts groups and local groups

References

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More Detailed Recommendations

How do we make remote learning more accessible for all students?

- Provide **SIMPLE, CONSISTENT** routines and formats, consistent learning platforms at least across grade level bands
- Limit external links; use consistent high quality external resources
- Provide clear, multi-modal directions (via video with captions AND in writing, use visuals)
- Use easy to read fonts, no underline, no colored backgrounds, OCR capable text, Well ahead of time, provide resources that are downloadable and accessible offline, text to speech options
- Skeleton notes, visual schedules in easily accessible location,
- Synchronous sessions recorded for later viewing and/or slides, materials posted for offline access

How do we make remote learning more accessible for all students? (cont.)

- Support line(s) for students and/or parents in real time (technology, academic supports, organizational skills, counseling). Person on call can connect caller to appropriate person.
- Open office hours throughout week with specialists, educators, paraprofessionals, subject-based grade level based, etc.
- Tutors available at school, other community location, or remotely
- ALL HANDS ON DECK! Community partnerships to help with subjects or navigating remote learning: Junior mentors (middle or HS students can mentor elementary); volunteer parents, community members, retired teachers can provide academic support, mentoring, etc. Leverage community spaces (e.g libraries)
- Regularly scheduled mentoring times for younger students (K-4)

How do we make remote learning more accessible for all students? (cont.)

Examine low tech, low maintenance, highly accessible solutions that worked well historically, that enable multiple functions, and also port well across in-person, hybrid and remote models.

Example 1: textbook-centered coursework. Textbook holds the introduction of new concepts, classwork and homework problems for gaining proficiency, and is a reference (record) of all previously studied material.

A textbook is only one example of such device. Next slide shows analysis of strengths that are amplified by the hybrid model.

Example 2: student journal (diary) that holds schedule, homework assignments, teacher's feedback (and grades), parents feedforward to teachers, ALL ON ONE PAGE (one page per day). Enables daily progress tracking and three-way communication. Can be paper or electronic.

Hybrid enabling resources - textbook - strengths

1. Low tech, good resilience to disturbance (quarantine, sudden sickness, internet outage)

2. Supports the same pace at home as in class, minimizes impact of switching from in-person to hybrid or remote. The book is open on the same page whether in class or at home (or in the car, subway, etc).

3. Is both a real-time presentation (when being read in class), and a record of it (when being re-read at home), so covers two modes of instruction. In contrast, an oral instruction needs an extra step to generate a record of itself for later study: a video recording, note taking, etc.

4. Lends itself to translation for non-native speakers, so serves as a backup to things missed in class.

5. Facilitates help at home by anybody outside school (and away from internet) who can read and understand the textbook: parents, older siblings, etc. This same function facilitates teacher-parent communication: parents know which page the student is on.

6. Very low digital footprint, very low risk model of data intrusion. Offsets an otherwise increased digital footprint in the online or hybrid model.

Strengths of print materials-further support

- Scrolling and navigating use up valuable brain capacity, so comprehension can suffer
- Referring back to old material is easier with a book than with a collection of websites
- Singapore Ministry of Education study found that the same high-quality textbook was less effective when available electronically than as a print book
- Some evidence that print books are better for developing long-term memory

Oats, 2016

Minimizing Stress & Anxiety During Transitions

- Clearly describe the details of in-person and remote learning so that students and families know what to expect using a graphic or matrix.
    - Physical set-up - What will the classroom look like? Where will lunch be?
    - Learning activities - What will students be doing throughout the day?
    - Safety - When do students have to wear masks? Will there be breaks? How will social distancing be enforced? When do students wash hands or sanitize?
    - Expectations - Routines, expected behavior
    - Help - How do students get help for learning and emotional support?

Hybrid Guide	In-Person	Remote Learning
Physical Set-Up	- Desks 6 ft apart - Group meetings on individual rug squares 6 ft apart	Home
Learning Activities	- Morning meeting - Check-ins for understanding - Presentation of new material	
Safety	- Everyone wears masks - Washing hands or sanitize regularly	- Wash hands for 20s before eating
Expectations	- Be kind - Listen to others when they are taking - Make only expected comments - Follow teacher instructions - Do your best work	- Be kind - Listen to others when they are taking - Make only expected comments - Follow teacher instructions - Do your best work - Stay muted unless talking - Use chat function only for subject related comments
Getting Help	- Talk to the teacher - Talk to the counselor	- Technology - Social-emotional - Content questions