

Superintendent's Report

November 10, 2014

Chairwoman Diane Porter, members of the Board; it is my pleasure to call your attention to a few items of special interest.

- Friday was an extraordinary day in the history of Jefferson County Public Schools.
At Atkinson Academy, U of L's President, Dr. James Ramsey, announced an unprecedented **grant** of \$5 million from Mary K. Oxley Foundation—matched by a \$2.5 million grant from the U of L Foundation — for a total of \$7.5 million. Chairwoman Diane Porter attended along with Board Member Debbie Wesslund.

The money will boost the Signature Partnership Initiative, created by U of L's College of Education, to support teachers who serve students from West Louisville. The schools sharing this generous grant are Atkinson Academy, Portland Elementary, Cochran Elementary, the Academy at Shawnee, and Westport Middle School. The funds will be used to expand professional development for teachers, the Teacher-in-Residence Program, and to create summer learning opportunities to increase student achievement.

We are grateful for the generosity of the Mary K. Oxley Foundation and Trustee, Debby Oxley, who is a graduate of U of L. Thank you to Dr. Ann Larson, Dean of the U of L College of Education and Human Development, to Dr. Ramsey, and the U of L Foundation. We are honored to have this investment in our teachers and our students.

Pictured are (left to right):

Rev. Kevin Cosby, St. Stephen Church; Dr. James Ramsey, President, U of L; Debby Oxley, Trustee, Mary K. Oxley Foundation; Jack Oxley, Trustee, Mary K. Oxley Foundation; Dr. Ann Larson, Dean, U of L School of Education and Human Development; Dr. Blake Haselton (U of L School of Education and Human Development)

- The **Project AWARE** (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) Grant's purpose is to assist schools to begin to support the training of school personnel to detect and respond to mental illness in children, including how to encourage seeking treatment. Individuals will be trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) or Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA).

In a nutshell, the purpose of the grant is:

- To increase mental health literacy,
 - To train nine JCPS personnel as Mental Health First Aid Trainers, and
 - To train 150 school personnel to detect and respond to mental illness as First Aiders the first year of implementation.
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- The **Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)** created a tab on Infinite Campus to assist schools in recording appropriately planned interventions to help more students reach college readiness benchmarks, increasing College Career Readiness (CCR) rates.

JCPS will be entering **all** academic interventions.

At this time, schools have entered over 27,000 intervention records for over 19,000 students.

- JCPS is an active participant with the Kentucky Department of Education in the **Strategic Data Project (SDP)**, an initiative of the Center for Education Policy Research (CEPR) at Harvard University. The goal is to bring together the right people, assemble the right data, and perform the right analysis, help leaders make better decisions—ultimately improving student achievement significantly.

This is about:

1. Building a ***network of top-notch data strategists*** who serve as fellows for two years,
2. Conducting ***rigorous diagnostic analyses*** of teacher effectiveness and college-going success, and
3. Disseminating ***our tools, methods, and lessons learned***.

— Dr. Dena Dossett and Dr. Marco Munoz, two senior level JCPS Research and Planning staff, are SDP Agency Fellows.

— Dr. Bo Yan, an SDP Data Fellow, recently joined JCPS staff for a two-year fellowship, where he will do rigorous data analyses of areas critical to improving district performance.

- Update from **Louisville Linked** — Second Month

2013-14 9,451 Students 12,474 Links

2014-15 11,656 Students 16,566 Links

Increase of 2,205 Students and 4,092 Links

- Per state statute, there is a requirement for districts to have their financial statements reviewed by an independent external auditor. The **Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (“CAFR”)** is on the consent agenda for your acceptance.

It resulted in an unmodified (clean) auditors’ opinion of the financial statements, which is the highest opinion.

We have provided for transparency in the report a ten-year trend data in five areas: financial trends, revenue capacity, debt capacity, demographics and economics, and operations

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has given its highest award to this report since 2007. After your acceptance, we will submit this Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (“CAFR”) for consideration of the same award.

The findings note the importance of an internal audit function that maintains independence and reports regularly to the Board and that works from an audit plan.

We agree!

Today, we have issued an RFP for audit services to bring for approval on December 15.

Chairwoman Porter, at this time, I recommend the consent calendar for the Board’s consideration.