

BOARD UPDATES
Winnebago Programs
9/23/2015

Programs

-Students and staff are settling in to their new environments. For some students, it has been a struggle given the new environment and the new staff. Student behaviors are escalated more than typical for this time of the school year. It is difficult to know where this escalation is coming from as it could be multiple factors.

Staffing

-We have had 2 paraprofessionals resign within the first 3 weeks of school. We are currently working to fill these positions. Feedback suggests that it may be a compensation issue.

-Bridges added a 3rd classroom for the middle/upper grades. Students were placed in classrooms based on areas of disability and identified needs. Staff report and I have observed that this change has made it much more effective in meeting student needs. We have small groups right now due to multiple students being in residential placements, but this is working to our advantage right now given the very high level of behavioral issues.

-The addition of the School Resource Officer (SRO) has been a very helpful resource. Given the extreme nature of student behaviors right at the beginning of the school year, It has been helpful to set an appropriate tone right away before students become too set in a routine.

Students

-The student numbers at the ALC continue to fluctuate. This is unusual for this time of the school year. We typically see this fluctuation after the second semester due to concerns regarding a student's graduation status. We are at the highest we've been in student numbers for this time of year for the past 4 years since I've taken on the position of Administrative Coordinator. Class size numbers are higher than typical. Typical class size is anywhere from 9 to 15 students. This may seem like a small number, but given the issues students come to us with (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Anxiety, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)), smaller class sizes are necessary for student success. The smaller class sizes are necessary due to the student's difficulty in being around large numbers of others. Some of the classrooms are on the smaller side, so a class of 20 gets very cramped very quickly. In addition, 50% of the current ALC student body is on an Individual Education Plan (IEP). If I add in the number of students on a Section 504 plan, this number would be closer to 60%.

-As previously mentioned, student behaviors have been at extreme levels. 90% of these behaviors have been in our Special Education Programs with 10% being at the ALC. Sarah reported to you about our flooding incident. A student has not admitted to doing this, so restrictions have been put in place for the use of the boys restroom. These restrictions include staff escorts and bathroom checks. Thus far, the students have

welcomed the restrictions as they do not want to be accused of something they did not do.

-The Pathways program will go from having 3 high needs students to 4 high needs students very soon. We are busy moving students and furniture around to best accommodate this new student and his needs.

Stephanie's Comments

-Even given all that I've reported on above, staff morale is high. Being together in one building has increased the feelings of support for staff. It is much easier to weather a storm when other staff are there to help you through it.

-I note the extreme nature of student behaviors. While the behaviors have been quite extreme, they are not unpredictable. These behaviors are coming from the students we expect them to come from.