

WACO ISD Continued:

Secondary students will receive additional support from interventionists and from added time to focus on their academic and social-emotional needs. Deena said, “A big focus is on high-impact, aligned lessons and small group guided reading for Tier 2 intervention, refreshing that training for teachers so they understand how to use that time.” Middle school students will now have a 90-minute block for literacy. Waco ISD is also reviewing their math instructional framework to identify high-impact standards, pre-requisite skills, and skills where data shows students struggle. Intervention will be built into class time through small group work—“think of it as guided math,” said Deena. Four intervention teachers at each middle school will teach small group classes of no more than 15 students with a focus on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders.

High school students will have added opportunities for credit recovery, with Dr. Kincannon exploring options such as offering evening classes. Interventionists at high school will provide support for students in Algebra 1 and high school English classes, and small group Tier 3 classes will also be offered. High school students will also have weekly time for social-emotional learning. Middle and high school students will also have “WIN” time—What I Need Now--built into each school day—a strategy piloted successfully last year at University High School.

Both middle and high school master schedules have been optimized to provide time for these course offerings as well as time for PLCs for secondary teachers in all four content areas to support data-driven instruction.

Dr. Kincannon added that the district will continue to look at ways to communicate using the digital tools they learned to use this year, as the pandemic forced teachers and principals to grow in the ways they use technology. “Our campuses have used all kinds of resources to reach out to parents—recorded Zooms, Facebook, text messaging apps—and we learned that some parents will engage if we communicate differently.” Technology and webinars also led to more efficient communications within the district and make it possible for schools and even different school districts to collaborate.

With a clear focus on instruction, professional learning, and social-emotional support, Dr. Kincannon and Deena Cornblum will continue building upon the foundation that has been set in place in Waco ISD this school year with the ESSER 3 funds.