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Schools post personal learning plans for students

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Customized online profiles among first in metro area

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SHOREVIEW — To provide another communications tool between high school and middle school students, their parents and their deans, the Mounds View School District have posted online personal learning plans for each student. The plans were discussed at the Oct. 27 School Board meeting.

The plans, known as PLPs, are based on the students' past achievements and set specific goals in different subject areas, allowing room for comments and updates by parents, students, and deans. The goals include a list of recommended actions that might include course suggestions, tutoring opportunities, practice tests, increased homework check-ins, etc.

That information is added to limited-access, online information about the students' attendance, grades, class schedules, test histories and other personal information. One of the goals: to allow more monitoring of whether each student is on track to achieve proficiency, to graduate and to plan post-secondary options.

Superintendent Dan Hoverman noted that deans will be aware of which students likely need more monitoring throughout a school year, and which ones likely require other forms of communication with parents.

"The deans have spent a considerable amount of time setting goals," said Mary Roden, the district's director of assessment. She noted that the system will eventually be programmed to automatically notify deans when parents and students post comments to the PLPs.

Roden said Mounds View is among eight metro-area school districts working on implementing PLPs. "I would say we have the most comprehensive system of them all," she said.

Also discussed at the meeting: a report by RoAnne Elliott, director of curriculum and instruction, on curriculum review processes in ninth grade English and social studies.

Elliott said after reviewing information about student assessment data, the district instructional support team began working with the high school English department to create an instructional model to better serve the entire continuum of student needs, in accordance with state academic standards in language arts. New course descriptions are being drawn up for ninth-grade English course offerings, and next year a new honors English class will be added to one already in existence.

"The primary difference in the two highly rigorous advanced and honors level courses will be the depth of the reasoning processes (such as critical reading and analysis) and the degree of independence required of students," she explained.

The next School Board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10.

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