

Definitions of Success

original wording

What does success look like?

- Is it AP classes and Ivy League acceptances?
- Is it happy, well-rounded students who are engaged in meaningful learning experiences?

These are questions we must ask and debate more frequently! The Board and Administration are committed to hosting this dialogue.

3.22.2013

Hi Kris –

I hope it's no secret that for some years now a number of us here in IUFSD have pressed for higher individual student achievement (*every child, every day!*) and for greater school accountability.

To my mind, Richard DuFour's work at Adlai Stevenson High School is the model, but if there are other approaches that work – terrific.

Given our district's recent history, I feel it's important to respond to Slide 4 in the Superintendent's Proposed Budget presentation of 3.5.2013.

Slide 4 asks residents to define success. That may be a good question, but the wording biases the answer toward “happy students” as opposed to academically successful students – precisely the philosophy that caused parents and taxpayers to question district practices in the first place.

Eliminate the biased language, and the difference is striking

Academic achievement and happiness aren't opposites, and shouldn't be pitted against each other in a district “conversation.” For most students, academic achievement and happiness in school are intimately related.

If you want to see a happy teenager, talk to a senior who's been accepted by the college he or she hoped to attend. Doing well in school isn't the only path to a happy life, but it's an important path, and it's a path Irvington taxpayers value highly.

Thanks!

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evaluative adjectives highlighted

What does success look like?

- Is it AP classes and Ivy League acceptances?
- Is it happy, well-rounded students who are engaged in meaningful learning experiences?

Definitions of Success (revised)

evaluative adjectives removed

What does success look like?

- Is it AP classes and Ivy League acceptances?
- Is it students who are engaged in learning experiences?

Definitions of Success (revised)

evaluative adjectives added

What does success look like?

- Is it **enriching** AP classes and **gratifying** Ivy League acceptances?
- Is it happy, well-rounded students who are engaged in meaningful learning experiences?

The debate many of us have been waiting for

The first three questions on the next slide originate with Richard DuFour. The fourth was added by another school leader.

The four questions

1. What is it we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. How will we respond when they have not learned it?
4. How will we respond when students already know it?

Richard DuFour

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