

My name is Susan Collins. I am a 7th grade teacher at Eastview Middle School. For the past 6 years I have served U-46 as a member of the Instructional Council. In the Manual of Procedures for District U-46 Instructional Council, page 5, the Rationale for Instructional Council states that “It is important to engage multiple stakeholders in the development of curriculum.” The Scope of Instructional Council as outlined in the Manual of Procedures includes that its role is “to facilitate, monitor, and assist with providing support, directions, and appropriate communication as district curriculum is developed or modified.” The first responsibility listed for Instructional Council in the Manual of Procedures is to “maintain consistent, appropriate and uniform programs available across the district.”

Recently a newly created program, that did not follow the process agreed upon by the school district as outlined in the Manual of Procedures for District U-46 Instructional Council, pages 20-21, came to the attention of Instructional Council. This is not the first time Instructional Council and the agreed upon process have been ignored in the implementation of new programs or the introduction of a pilot program.

Ignoring Instructional Council and the agreed upon process has been a consistent problem throughout my tenure on the council. Whenever questions are raised about ignoring the process, the questioning is considered insubordination rather than the needed review by those who are with students every day and best understand how programs can be implemented at the building level. The excuse is always that such processes take too long. They do take time. Mistakes, however, can be made much more quickly and at added expense.

I would like the Board of Education to answer whether they are truly interested in facing our challenges together. If we were truly collaborative, we would shape the decisions together using the depth of expertise that is available in the district at no extra expense. What may at first take a bit longer will pay off in long term benefits both financially and educationally.