

# D211 POST: TO IMPROVE STUDENT READINESS, TEACHERS MEET WITH LOCAL PROFESSIONALS



Township High School District 211 is always adjusting its programs to ensure students graduate ready for whatever pathway they choose to pursue. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, students will have access to the new student readiness plan. Part of that plan helps guide them to a pathway of classes which will help them explore a variety of career areas.

In an effort to ensure the course groupings match a realistic idea of the skills and knowledge students will need, District 211 has been hosting meetings with business leaders in the various career fields. The business leaders and teachers compare notes and discuss what works and doesn't work.

"Every year we have 3,000 18-year-olds that are leaving us and heading to their next steps," said Lisa Small, Associate Superintendent for Instruction. "We want to do everything we can to prepare them for when they leave here."

In a meeting Dec. 7, participants focused on Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. During the meeting, representatives from businesses which focus on food and environmental sciences discussed the current student readiness programs with teachers.

Robert McHugh with Chicago Biofuels said these meetings are important because they help create a student's first interest.

"This is where the imaginative ideas are going to be created, engineered, and implemented by kids who have passions they didn't know they had until they were introduced to it," McHugh said.



Dan Pilguy with Arlington Crest Farms said from an agricultural perspective meetings are important because it gets the students thinking of local agriculture early.

"[Agriculture] is one of the most difficult pathways to tackle, especially in an area like this, where there is nothing to look back on," said Pilguy, a 2008 Palatine High School graduate. "I really commend them for taking a step in the right direction."

McHugh said he was interested to see how different departments are working together to see how some aspects from agriculture spans multiple disciplines.

"The interconnectedness between the classes is just a neat thing to see," said McHugh. "The excitement with the interconnectedness is great."

District 211 will continue with similar meetings for the remaining topics throughout the student readiness plan throughout January and February. The updated student readiness program is scheduled to be in use by all District 211 students beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

