

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING and LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 5, 2012

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, November 5, 2012 at 3:30 pm at Quincy High School. Present were Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. David McCarthy and Mrs. Emily Lebo, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent Richard DeCristofaro, Mr. Nick Ahearn, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Mr. Dan Gilbert, Ms. Beth Hallett, Mrs. Robin Moreira, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Ann Pegg, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd, Mrs. Ruth Witmer, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mrs. Lebo called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm

Mrs. Robin Moreira presented the **Atherton Hough School Improvement Plan** by reflecting on last year's goals. The three MCAS goals, which had focused on CPI levels for ELA, Math, and Science were not met, but the Assessment team has identified a cohort of High Needs Improvement students across the grades to focus on moving forward..

For 2012-2013, the schools goals are: (1) The number of students achieving proficiency, or Tier 1, on literacy assessments at each benchmarking period in Grades K-5 will increase and the percentage of students achieving or maintaining proficiency on the 2013 ELA MCAS will increase by 10% as compared to the 2012 results and the student growth percentile in Grades 4 and 5 will meet or exceed the state average. (2) There will be an increase of students achieving proficiency on benchmark assessments in Grades K-5 and the percentage of students achieving and/or maintaining proficiency on the 2013 Mathematics MCAS will increase by 10% as compared to the 2012 results and the student growth percentile in Grades 4 and 5 will meet or exceed the state average. (3) All students and staff of the Atherton Hough School will work in a welcoming, supportive, and caring community that consistently recognizes and celebrates student achievement, effort, and good moral character. (4) All students and staff of the Atherton Hough School will work together to help support the development of lifelong, healthy habits.

This year's goals are focused on raising the proficiency levels for ELA and Math. Teamwork and thought went into creating the school's goals, including discussions of best practices. Instructional initiatives include professional development, sharing best practices across grades and teams, sharing the language of common core standards, formative assessments and focused feedback, data analysis. The staff has worked with MCAS data on the two completed A days so that information informs their instruction moving forward. Action steps/initiatives for Math include common core language, math focus teachers, sharing best practices, Foundations of Numbers, formative assessments, instructional groups by skill level, *Go Math* online support, *Study Island*, and other online resources. Focus is on development of Open Response development skill. The school culture goal will be supported through

school-wide assemblies, family newsletter and calendar, school bulletin boards, and community service learning. The monthly newsletter has helped home-school communications and handled questions about curriculum issues.

Mrs. Hubley asked about classroom coverage for best practices discussions and observations; Mrs. Moreira is providing coverage for classroom teachers to observe each other. For Student Support Team meetings, the specialist schedule accommodates Monday meetings. Ms. Isola asked about Wellness goal and how healthy snack choices are being supported; Mrs. Moreira clarified that teachers are giving out stickers. Ms. Isola also asked Mrs. Moreira to follow up with information about the PTO contributions to the school.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Atherton Hough Elementary School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mr. Dan Gilbert presented the **Snug Harbor Community School Improvement Plan** by noting that the school's focus on improving instructional delivery has shown positive results. Snug Harbor's programs suit the diverse student body and the students respond to the climate based on high expectations. Last year, Snug Harbor was commended by DESE and with the assistance of Mrs. Hughes and Mrs. Roberts. wrote a commendation grant for implementing professional learning communities. Throughout the School Improvement Plan, the focus for collaboration and improving teaching is shifting from student performance to reaching all learners. Goals and action steps are more focused on global practices to lead to future student achievement. In reflecting on last year's scores, Mr. Gilbert expressed that the school's goals were ambitious, but achievable and Alternative Assessments for a percentage of students are a factor. Assessment and the data provided inform instruction on a weekly basis.

Goals for 2012-2013 are: (1) To increase the Composite Performance Index (CPI) score by 5 points from the previous year (76.7) for all students and to meet the target for narrowing the proficiency gaps for each subgroup. (2) To increase the Composite Performance Index (CPI) score by 5 points from the previous year (76.9) for all students and to meet the target for narrowing the proficiency gaps for each subgroup. (3) To create an active Wellness Council which will implement various policies and practices which promote healthy eating and living for students and staff.

Initiatives for ELA and Math include Walk to Read, Elements of Reading, a new focus on non-fiction, Study Island, Keys to Literacy. The Wellness goal has been supported by the fresh fruit grant (ongoing for last several years); Snug Harbor is working on a holistic approach that integrates wellness into the school culture.

Ms. Isola complimented the school's different approach to the School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Lebo asked about the Conditions for School Effectiveness; Snug Harbor is focusing on Aligned Curriculum, Effective Instruction, and Student Assessment being the three areas of focus. Mrs. Lebo also asked

about whether growth is calculated for students taking the MCAS Alternate Assessment and it is not. All students taking the Alt. Assessment received a rating of Progressing.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Snug Harbor Community School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Ruth Witmer presented the **Lincoln-Hancock Community School Improvement Plan** by reflecting on last year's goals and MCAS testing results. Since there is some disappointment about the results, the staff has decided to look at the goals differently going forward and focus on student growth rather than proficiency. Since Lincoln Hancock doesn't have Grade 5, they only have one year to show growth. Many initiatives are in place to help support the teachers to transition their focus; Mrs. Witmer, Mrs. Shaughnessy, and the guidance staff teach Lincoln Hancock Pride lessons that allow for collaborative teacher team time together. Teachers are also voluntarily using their Tuesday afternoons, collaborating on a Math vertical team professional learning community through the Snug Harbor commendation grant. A consultant from the HILL is at Lincoln Hancock every two weeks; substitutes provide rotating coverage so that grade level teams can work with the consultant on the new *Journeys* program. Lincoln Hancock's internal data shows student progress, but MCAS is still a hurdle. Mrs. Witmer spoke of the tremendous change in the school's culture: attendance is up, parent participation is very high for events with parent-children attendance; not as much for PTO meetings. The children are absorbing the message of success and pride.

Mrs. Lebo asked about the goal focus being Grade 4 and is concerned that the targets are too low as they are below the average growth target of 40%. Mrs. Witmer feels that the staff is focused on achievable goals. Mrs. Lebo, without being critical, wants the goals to be comparable to other schools. Mr. McCarthy agrees that a higher goal is a better option. EL reiterated that the School Committee doesn't want to be critical, but they want to see higher goals. Mrs. Fredrickson said that given the new curriculum and initiatives, teachers are understandably worried about the goals. Dr. DeCristofaro talked about the new teacher evaluations as an issue concerning teachers. Mrs. Lebo reiterated the respect that the School Committee has for the Lincoln Hancock staff and their challenges and requested that they rework the goals to encompass average growth. A revised Lincoln Hancock School Improvement Plan will be presented to the School Committee at an upcoming Teaching and Learning Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Nick Ahearn presented the **Clifford Marshall Elementary School Improvement Plan** and reflected on the school's 2011-12 goals. The MCAS goals were both met or exceeded for both Math and ELA; for ELA, the school had an increase of 8% proficiency. The third goal of school culture and climate was also completed. The school's goals for 2012-13 are: (1) During the 2012-2013 school year, the Clifford Marshall staff and students will meet or exceed its CPI target of 78.5 CPI points on the ELA MCAS Test. (2) During the 2012-2013 school year, Clifford Marshall staff and students will meet or exceed its CPI target of 80 CPI points on the Math MCAS test. (3) The Clifford Marshall School

Wellness Team will utilize the Healthy School Program to create a healthy school environment by promoting healthy eating, increased physical activity, staff wellness and nutrition education during the 2012-2013 school year for 100% of the school population.

The school has an active Wellness Team and multiple initiatives are up and running. Clifford Marshall is a Level 3 school that showed incredible growth, especially in ELA. Mathematics growth was 23%. Clifford Marshall ends at Grade 4, so student growth is limited to this year. The school utilizes different initiatives such as interventionists, Walk to Read (Grades 2-4), working with the HILL Consultants, Keys to Literacy, Elements of Reading, *Fast Math*, and *Study Island*. Teams are developing common grading language/rubrics to provide consistency across grade levels. The school has a transient population, five new students in the last six days. Many ELL students and across the grade levels, many students are below grade level for fluency in English. Clifford Marshall also is the home of the citywide STARS program.

In terms of facilities, progress has been made with exterior security issues, additional lighting, and cameras. Technology upgrades include MimioTeach units in five classrooms and the new email system, plus 15 new classroom/administrative computers. Traffic concerns are ongoing and some small maintenance items are needed.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Clifford Marshall Elementary School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Ann Pegg presented the **Merrymount Elementary School Improvement Plan** by reflecting on the 2011-12 goals and looking forward to the full implementation of the Common Core standards. The school's ELA goal was met; Merrymount shows high achievement, but work needs to be done to close the proficiency gap. For Math, the goals were not met; looking forward, the new approach to problem solving and critical thinking under Common Core should aid in raising achievement. In terms of data analysis, the Assessment team is using data to look at individual students and the High Needs subgroup. The High Needs subgroup average PPI and CPI are much lower than the aggregate.

Looking forward to 2012-13, the goals are: (1) Teachers in Grades K-5 will implement Common Core-aligned reading initiatives to increase student success in ELA. Initiatives will result in seventy-five percent of students in each grade level scoring at a proficiency level of 80% or above on year-end Trophies assessments. Additionally, the CPI of Grades 3-5 High Needs subgroup will increase to 81.0 and the CPI of the Grades 3-5 Special Education subgroup will increase to 61.0 on the 2013 ELA MCAS. (2) Teachers in Grades K-5 will implement Common Core-aligned Math initiatives to increase student success in Math. Initiatives will result in seventy-five percent of students in Grades 1-5 scoring at a proficiency level of 80% or above on Common Core-aligned year-end assessments. Additionally, the CPI of the Grades 3-5 Special Education subgroup will increase to 67.0 on the 2013 Mathematics MCAS. (3) The staff of the Merrymount School will provide a safe and nurturing learning environment, offering opportunities that promote physical and emotional wellness.

Merrymount's goals for ELA and Math are focused on increasing the CPI for the High Needs subgroup by aligning their Action Steps with the Conditions for School Effectiveness (CSE). The language of the conditions was reflected in the crafting of the action steps. The SPED Resource Room teacher will also be an active part of the study groups formed in order to increase the understanding and implementation of the Common Core Curriculum.

Mrs. Hubley asked about the Wellness goal action step that mentions Health and Safety Bags. Mrs. Pegg explained these are bags containing class lists and any necessary medications for the students in that class including Epi Pens. These bags travel with each class as they move about the building to specialists and to lunch/recess.

Ms. Isola made a motion to accept the Merrymount Elementary School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Ms. Isola made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 pm. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.