

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING and LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, November 14, 2013

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee was held on Thursday, November 14, 2013 at 3:30 pm in the Teacher's Dining Room at Quincy High School. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, and Mrs. Emily Lebo, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mr. Nicholas Ahearn, Mr. Peter Dionne, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Margaret MacNeil, Mrs. Robin Moreira, Mrs. Diane O'Keeffe, Mrs. Maryanne Palmer, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, 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.

Principal Maryanne Palmer presented the **Parker Elementary School Improvement Plan** by reflecting on last year's goals. On the Spring 2014 MCAS, Parker School met the goal to decrease the number of students in the Needs Improvement and Warning categories by 4% for ELA but not for Mathematics. A significant number of students did move out of the Warning category. 44% of Parker's students are English Language Learners and 74% are making effective progress on ACCESS. The Parker staff worked as a team to develop model curriculum units and common assessments; the majority of the staff has participated in WIDA training. WIDA is applicable to all students as a model for differentiating instruction.

Goals for 2013-2014 mirror the district goals and are implemented in the school across grade level teams. The grade level teams developed their own action steps and these led into their individual educator goals. The goals are: (1) The F.W. Parker School's total average percent correct will increase by 2% over one year, in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standing for Reading, as measured by June 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU406) from a basis of 64%. (2) The F.W. Parker School's total average percent correct in Mathematics will increase by 2% over one year, as measured by the June 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU406) from a basis of 70%. (3) Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, the Parker School staff will work collaboratively to increase our two-way and culturally proficient communication with families about student learning and performance through monthly written communication and oral translation.

Mrs. Lebo asked how the basis was calculated for each school; Mrs. Fredrickson said that the basis is an average of Grades 3-5 percentage correct on the 2013 MCAS for ELA and Mathematics. For the third goal, Mrs. Palmer said that first steps include translated lunch menus, and continuing the partnership with the 36 North Quincy High School students who assist with homework and

tutoring. Mrs. Palmer said now that she is in her 8th year as principal, she is seeing familiar former Parker returning to give back to the younger students. For the Parker staff, this is a great reminder of how far these students have progressed by the time they get to high school.

Mrs. Hubley asked about translating of monthly newsletters; Mrs. Palmer said that critical information will be translated and other items will be in English. The school is also looking towards partnering with QARI to establish English language classes for adults. The school's parents have very high expectations for their children and we want to support their enthusiasm for education. Parker also has an active parenting course which has been successful in establishing relationships between the school and families and giving the parents confidence to advocate for their children. Parker Staff members do outreach in the home language for specific activities to be sure parents are informed. Mrs. Palmer spoke about the Mandarin Hotline where parents can leave a message and be called back by a native speaker.

Ms. Isola asked about the distribution of ELL students and Mrs. Palmer said the majority are in Kindergarten and Grade 4. Ms. Isola asked about the 2 classes that are above 22 students; both are 4th grade and have 24 students each. Mrs. Lebo complimented the performance of the high needs subgroup at 83.9% on ELA. For facilities issues, the removal of the vines is underway. Mrs. Palmer said that PTO involvement is small, but the parents are dedicated. New outreach efforts are underway including providing babysitting for meetings. Mrs. Hubley asked whether wellness and outreach to parents would be translated; menu translation is the first step.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Parker Elementary School Improvement Plan and Ms. Isola seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Principal Peter Dionne presented the **Bernazzani Elementary School Improvement Plan** noting that the school year has started off successfully. He thanked the school committee for new staff members including a half time ELL teacher and mentioned that the school benefits from a very supportive parent group. In reviewing the 2013 MCAS results, the school's Composite Performance Index (CPI) for ELA is 85.2, the 2nd highest in school history. In Mathematics, the CPI was 83.3, the highest in school history and 6th straight year of growth in student performance. For Student Growth Percentage, average growth is between 40% and 60%. Bernazzani's Grade 4 ELA SGP was 70% and Math was 77%; for Grade 5 ELA the SGP was 70% and Grade 5 Math is 59%.

For PPI, Bernazzani received a 93 and is a Level 2 school in need of narrowing the proficiency gap for subgroups. Differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students is the goal of this year's School Improvement Plan. In Grade 4, fluid grouping is being used to address the wide range of abilities in this grade level for Math and ELA. Formative assessments and data are used to shift

students based on changing needs. The new Reading program has integrated leveled readers to support this grouping; professional development will allow for sharing of best practices. The new Educator Evaluation process is also a key component of professional development; the staff is very receptive for the opportunity for growth this affords. Teachers are looking at parent involvement: MCAS overview at PTO, Grade 4 Curriculum Night, including a Math lesson; Curriculum and Parent Newsletters on the school level, plus individual teacher newsletters. Many staff members are participating in the district-level DDM Teams. PTO funding has provided laptops, LCD projectors, and document cameras for every classroom. Teachers are using the online resources for the new Reading and Math programs through ThinkCentral for classroom instruction. Mr. Dionne thanked School Committee for the recent security upgrades, wireless access, and roof repairs.

Mrs. Lebo asked about Level 2 status; Mr. Dionne said that the high needs subgroup CPI must be above 75 to change the level. Mrs. Lebo suggested developing a consistent format for data presentation for School Improvements going forward. Mrs. Lebo said that while she has heard about parent concerns, the School Improvement Plan shows the school's achievement.

Goals for 2013-2014: (1) The Bernazzani School's Total Average Percent Correct will increase by 2% in the College and Career Readiness Reading Anchor Standards for Reading and Language from a base of 71% as measured by June 2014 MCAS standards report (CU306). (2) The Bernazzani Elementary School's Total Average Percent Correct in Mathematics will increase by 2% over one year from a base of 71% as measured by June 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU306). (3) The Bernazzani Elementary School, in keeping with new federal guidelines, will maintain existing health and wellness practices as well as institute new current practices.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to approve the Bernazzani Elementary School Improvement Plan and Ms. Isola seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Lebo requested a demographics chart that includes enrollment and subgroup information for all schools.

Principal Robin Moreira presented the **Atherton Hough Elementary School Improvement Plan** by noting that Atherton Hough is a small neighborhood school with strong parent and community support. Reflecting on last year's goal for ELA, Grade 5 struggled, but average growth overall was up significantly. Strategic test-taking skills and use of common graphic organizers were instrumental in growth. As with other schools, this year's goals are focused on percentage correct. With Mrs. Moreira's background in Literacy, her instructional leadership is focused on Action Steps that utilize common planning time; leveled, flexible reading groups; the *Journeys* reading program plus supplemental resources; common graphic organizers; and reading response journals.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the citywide Language Development program at Atherton Hough. Mrs. Moreira spoke of the value of the strong Language Development professional staff and their importance in the school's goal development. There is more mainstreaming than ever of students into Science and Social Studies grade level classes. Mrs. Lebo asked about performance; Atherton Hough did not meet the target for any group and is a Level 2 school.

Goals for 2013-2014: (1) The total average percent correct in the Reading Anchor Standard will increase by 2% (from a baseline of 68%) at grades 3, 4, and 5, as measured by the 2014 MCAS Standards report (CU 406). (2) The total average percent correct in the area of Mathematics, with a focus on persevering and using reasoning to solve increasingly complex problems, will increase by 2% (from a baseline of 65%) at grades 3, 4, and 5 as measured by the 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU 406). (3) All students and staff will work in a welcoming, supportive, and caring community that consistently recognizes and celebrates student achievement, effort, behavior, and good moral character.

Ms. Isola asked how the lunch period was increased by 10 minutes. Based on parent feedback, students were rushing through lunch, so the schedule was adjusted from three lunches to two lunches. Teachers and parents are seeing the benefits; teachers are shortening snack and afternoon breaks to accommodate this schedule and not affect time on learning.

Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Atherton Hough Elementary School Improvement Plan and Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Lebo asked for the Facilities issues to be compiled to be shared with the Maintenance Department and the Facilities and Security Subcommittee.

Principal Nicholas Ahearn presented the **Clifford Marshall Elementary School Improvement Plan** by reflecting on last year's goals: CPI goals were met for both ELA and Mathematics. Overall progress is good; average SGP is 62% for ELA and 36% for Mathematics. Curriculum surrounding healthy choices and wellness initiatives provided opportunities for all students to participate.

Goals for 2013-2014: (1) Clifford Marshall Elementary School's Total Average Percent Correct will increase by 2% points over one year in ELA as indicated by June 2014 MCAS Report. This will be evident by an increased focus in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for ELA (from a base of 70%), specifically Key Ideas and Details as monitored through the use of common grade level writing benchmark assessments and rubrics. (2) Clifford Marshall Elementary School's Total Average Percent Correct will increase by 2% points over one year in Math (from a baseline of 73%) as

indicated by June 2014 MCAS Standards (CU406) report. This will be evident by an increased focus on Standard for Mathematical practice #1 which asks students to make sense of problems and persevere in solving increasingly complex math tasks. (3) The Clifford Marshall Elementary School will implement PBIS program to create a healthy school environment by promoting positive behavior interventions and consistent expectations and consequences during the 2013-2014 school year for 100% of the school population. (4) Clifford Marshall Elementary School Wellness Team will utilize the Healthy Schools Program to create a healthy school environment by promoting social, emotional, and physical well-being. This will be accomplished by providing nutrition, education, increased physical activity and student, staff, and family wellness initiatives during the 2013-2014 year.

Mrs. Lebo asked whether raising the average by 2% is enough to raise the level for all students and asked for clarification on why the ELA goal is focused on reading, but the Action Steps are focused on writing. Mr. Ahearn said that writing is interwoven with reading and the writing process is based on understanding the details of the complex texts students are reading. Mr. Ahearn spoke enthusiastically about the PBIS program which is being introduced this year as a school-wide initiative.

Clifford Marshall is a Level 3 school that showed incredible growth for the second year in a row. The achievement gap needs to be further narrowed for subgroups. Mrs. Lebo asked about DIBELS Math and Walk to Math; two Math Interventionists work with Grades 3 and 4 students. Clifford Marshall is a Title I school; this year, there are so far 40 new students in Grades 1-4. The Walk to Read model is used in Grade 2; teachers have worked collaboratively to develop grade-level benchmark writing assignments and common scoring rubrics. Over 30 languages are spoken among the 249 ELL students in Clifford Marshall.

Mrs. Lebo asked that mobility rate data for all schools be included in the data chart requested earlier in the meeting.

Kindergarten classrooms have the highest population in the school; all Kindergarten classrooms have full-time aides.

Mr. Bregoli said that at another time, he would like to have a discussion about moving to a K-4 elementary school model citywide.

Technology initiatives are ongoing and PTO is supporting installing projectors in classrooms. Mr. Ahearn concluded by noting this year's challenges of integrating new curriculum in math and reading and technology into each classroom. Some of the many positives of the school include the PTO, the school's partnership with the New England Aquarium, and the work done on developing common benchmarks for writing.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to approve the Clifford Marshall Elementary School Improvement Plan and Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Principal Ruth Witmer presented the **Lincoln Hancock Community School Improvement Plan** beginning with reflecting on last year's goals. The ELA goal was not achieved, as the number of students scoring in the Advanced category did not increase; Math saw a jump from 9.1% to 20.1%. The Positive Behavioral Intervention System was very successful in decreasing the office referrals for discipline.

Goals for 2013-2014: (1) By the Spring of 2014, the students at Lincoln Hancock will improve their average percent correct by 2% or more in the areas of the Anchor Standard of Reading from a base of 66% as determined by the 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU 406). (2) By the Spring of 2014, the students at Lincoln Hancock will improve the average percent correct by 2% or more in Open Response from a base of 59% and the area of Number and Operations -- Fractions from a base of 77% as determined by the Spring 2014 MCAS from the Standards Report (CU406). (3) Positive behavior intervention system will decrease the office referrals for discipline by 5% by the spring of 2014.

Lincoln Hancock is a Level 3 school that improved CPI to 66 (up 14 points). Interventions include Orton Gillingham, Walk to Read, Walk to Math. SGP increased in Mathematics from 15% to 51%. Lincoln Hancock is on target for narrowing proficiency gap for ELA and above target for every subgroup in Mathematics. As a Title I school, all students are eligible for the services of the interventionists. Flexible grouping for reading and math are analyzed at Integrated Learning Team meetings; model curriculum units have been developed, along with common assessment tools.

Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Lincoln Hancock Community School Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Principal Diane O'Keeffe presented the **Beechwood Knoll Elementary School Improvement Plan**, noting that Beechwood Knoll continues to be a Level 1 school. Reflecting on last year's goals, there was a mix of achievement across the grade levels. Subgroup performance continues to be strong and Mrs. O'Keeffe cited the school's committed and talented staff. Beechwood Knoll's Wellness goal was not fully implemented due to scheduling issues, but will be integrated into the school's daily opening routine this year. Ms. Isola asked about a before-school fitness program that will be held in the spring. Mrs. Lebo complimented the incredible scores. Ms. Isola asked about the school's population stability, very low mobility. Mrs. O'Keeffe said that the strength of family involvement was critical to Beechwood Knoll's success; there is a very active and supportive PTO.

Goals for 2013-2014: (1) During the 2013-2014 school year, students will demonstrate a growing understanding of increasingly complex text. This will be evident by an increase of 2% on the school-wide average percent correct in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Craft and Structure as measured by Spring 2014 MCAS Standards Report (CU406). (Missing baseline) (2) During the 2013-2014 school year, students will demonstrate an increased ability to persevere and use reasoning to solve increasingly complex math tasks. This will be evident by an increase of 2% or more on the school-wide average percent correct in Number and Operations -- Fractions with a base of 81% as documented on the Spring 2014 Math MCAS Standards Report (CU406). (3) The entire school community will take part in an indoor fitness program called "Fast Breaks" on a daily basis. The breaks are a simple way to create an environment of physical activity and reduce childhood obesity.

Mr. Bregoli asked about class size; with growing in-district enrollment, half of Beechwood Knoll's classes have 22-24 students. Mr. Bregoli asked about space for service providers; space is an ongoing issue, every classroom and office space is full.

Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Beechwood Knoll 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 Teaching and Learning Subcommittee meeting at 6:15 pm.
Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.