

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE ~ Monday, January 25, 2016

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, January 25, 2016 at 5:00 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, and Ms. Barbara Isola, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Beth Hallett, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Ms. Judith Todd; Quincy Education Association President Ms. Allison Cox; Mr. Scott Alessandro Citywide Parents Council Co-President, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Director of Data & Analysis Mary Fredrickson and Senior Director of Student Support Services Maura Papile presented the Annual System Profile for Quincy Public Schools for 2015-2016. With the exception of enrollment statistics, all other statistics are a lookback to 2014-2015 school year. Statistics categories include Students Eligible for ELL Services by grade, percentage of students receiving Special Education (16.9% district-wide) and English Language Learner services (14.9% district-wide). For students whose families' first language is not English, 35.7% district-wide.

In looking at the percent of children from economically disadvantaged, Mrs. Fredrickson explained the new method of calculation introduced at the state level using enrollment in benefit programs, beginning in 2013-14. Under federal guidelines, 49% of students are eligible for free or reduced meals, under this new state calculation, 34.8% of families are considered economically disadvantaged.

For 2014-2015, Quincy Public Schools showed an increase in the 4-year graduation rate to 90.1%, above the state level. For five year graduation, the class of 2014 improved to 88.4%. For 2015 graduates, 85% are attending 4- or 2-year colleges (65% for 4-year, 20% for 2-year).

High Risk Referrals for 2014-2015 were a total of 125, a slight decrease from the previous year. For Abuse and Neglect, 464 students are being followed. 216 students were reported as homeless over the course of the 2014-2015 school year.

Mr. Bregoli asked whether this new calculation will affect grants. Mrs. Perkins said every city and town has had their percentage recalculated proportionally. For the first year, cities and towns were held harmless and nothing changed. We have yet to receive information about upcoming years. Mr. Bregoli asked whether the change in the percentage of families whose first language is not English will impact Title I funding allocation, but that is based on economically disadvantaged families percentage. Mrs. Fredrickson said that FLNE families often need different types of support, understanding homework and classwork expectations. Mr. Bregoli asked about Title I services being extended to other schools, but it is based on economic need and academic underperformance, so no other elementary schools meet this criteria at this time.

Ms. Isola asked for a follow up agenda item for Food Services Director Joanne Morrissey to present on the effect of this new method of calculating economically disadvantaged families on Free & Reduced Lunch eligibility.

The next item on the agenda was an update on the Next Generation Assessments. Assessments take place throughout the school year for many different reasons, annual Summative Assessments, Common Benchmark Assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, and formative assessments directly related to the curriculum. Over time, Assessments have been evaluated and some have been dropped and new assessments piloted.

In considering pilot Assessments, question types, time required, student experience, information provided by results; and the norms, reliability, and validity are all considered. Massachusetts is moving towards online assessments, so piloting new assessments in this format provides opportunities for student practice, gives staff the opportunity for immediate assessment results, and provide opportunities to assess district technology readiness.

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) was piloted for Grade 3 this year. Developed by an established non-profit organization founded by educators, the Northwest Evaluation Association, the MAP is an adaptive assessment, the test adapts up and down as students answer to find the zone of proximal learning. The MAP is accurate and reliable based on nearly 40 years of research; a stable scale measures student growth over time; provides timely reports and actionable data; is one assessment that meets a variety of needs, freeing up instructional time; and a robust support system dedicated to teacher and student long-term success, including Professional Development.

Ms. Roy talked about the second phase of the pilot of the iReady Diagnostic tool. The pilot began at Broad Meadows last winter, and expanded to identified students at all middle schools this fall. An adaptive assessment with progress monitoring, iReady provides support for classroom instruction and personalized learning and interventions for school and home. Data that can be accessed informs teacher instruction, providing a personalized learning path with next steps for instruction.

The online instructional component can be used for whole or small group instruction or individual explicit instruction and guided practice. Formative assessments can be given in intervals to monitor progress. The iReady pilot was funding through the QPS Budget and planning for 2016-2017 is underway, including decisions on how widespread to use this.

Mr. Bregoli asked about accommodations for students with reading issues. At the middle school level, the iReady is not appropriate for all students and only identified students for which this will be appropriate are utilizing it. Mrs. Fredrickson said the Literacy specialists were very involved in the MAP pilot assessment, evaluating where students struggle. Mrs. Perkins confirmed that Math and Reading are being assessed by MAP currently. During the pilot process, SLT members are observing the test takers and the student experience. Mrs. Fredrickson said right now, only Grade 3 is being

assessed with the MAP and there is some discussion about doing the assessment in Grade 2, since earlier access to the information allows for earlier interventions.

Mr. Bregoli asked whether the adaptive tests results translate into individualized instruction. Mrs. Fredrickson said there is individual information provided and this allows for grouping within classrooms for students with similar abilities. Mrs. Perkins said that using the data at ILT meetings has been important in giving teachers opportunities to adapt instruction for student needs.

Mrs. Hubley asked about teacher feedback, if they felt the MAP accurately captured student capabilities. Mrs. Perkins said that teachers felt very positive, comprehension strengths were shown that are not surfaced with DIBELS. Teachers felt the data was generally reliable.

For the ELC Screening, Mrs. Perkins reviewed the criteria for successful ELC students and that the selection process will be similar to last year: the top 20% of Grade 4 students district-wide will be identified for screening based upon a combined score on the MCAS English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessment. These identified students will be administered a Reasoning (Cognitive Ability) test in their home school.

As the age of the SAGES-2 test has become more advanced, the criteria for selecting a new assessment were defined: on-demand equitable assessment that assessed multiple reasoning modalities; the security of the assessment; the presence of up-to-date question content; and nationally norm-referenced items were all considerations. 160 students in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 ELC program have participated in a two-year pilot of an online Reasoning assessment, the Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP), developed by the non-profit Educational Records Bureau (ERB) with norms developed in 2015. There was a strong correlation between the students already identified as gifted through the SAGES-2 ELC screening process and their performance on the CTP. Acceptance decisions for 2016-2017 ELC students will be based on the demonstrated academic achievement (MCAS) and this cognitive reasoning assessment (CTP)

Mr. Bregoli asked about the WISC; this has not been used for several years. He also asked about teacher recommendation and this is not a factor in ELC student placement.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 pm. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.