

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, October 5, 2015

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, October 5, 2015 at 5:00 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Ms. Barbara Isola, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mrs. Kerri Connolly, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Elizabeth Hallett, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Director of Elementary School Curriculum & Programs Erin Perkins was joined by Special Education Team Administrator Kerri Connolly in presenting the **Early Childhood Program Improvement Plan** for 2015-2016. Quincy Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs are funded through the Quincy Public Schools budget and grants (Title I; Full-Day Kindergarten; and the Integrated Preschool Environment Grant). The Pre-Kindergarten sites at Snug Harbor and Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center each have five integrated classrooms; all eleven elementary schools have full-day Kindergarten, a total of 36 classrooms, each staffed by a teacher and full time paraprofessional.

Reflecting on last year's goals, NAEYC accreditation was successfully completed for all Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten sites (Goal 1). Goal 2 focused on the MKEA assessment, which was a mandated requirement from DESE. Once the Full-Day Kindergarten grant was cut last spring, Quincy Public Schools withdrew from participation in this labor-intensive initiative. Going forward, QPS will use an alternate plan of observations and assessments. For Goal 3, Pre-Kindergarten staff developed interdisciplinary curriculum units and are working on finalizing resource guides. For Goal 4, teaching strategies for emotional development and self-regulation skills were supported through professional development and an outside consultant.

Early Childhood Goals for 2015-2016: (1) The Kindergarten Team will develop a new electronic standards-based report card and the Pre-Kindergarten Team will develop a new developmental checklist; both to be implemented in the fall of 2016. (2) The Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten teachers will be trained in and begin to transition to the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum. (3) The Pre-Kindergarten Team will continue to analyze and assess their use of strategies that support and develop social-emotional and self-regulation skills. The team will work to develop a collection of assessments and materials that support the development of this important domain, including participation in the implementation of PBIS.

Mrs. Perkins emphasized that *Handwriting Without Tears* has a Pre-Kindergarten component that crosses multiple domains to prepare for School Readiness and addresses OT and PT needs. Forty

teachers voluntarily attended training in August and staff will work on aligning the program to *Journeys* for Grade 1 and *Literacy Express* for Pre-Kindergarten.

Mr. Bregoli asked about D'Nealian writing; this style of printing is thought to assist students into cursive and is still used in some classrooms. Ms. Isola requested information on teaching cursive writing in Quincy Public Schools, specifically grade level and whether it is universally taught.

Mrs. Perkins said Grade 1 teachers are interested in *Handwriting Without Tears* and we are exploring the cursive components to the series for older grades.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked Mrs. Connolly, the Pre-Kindergarten programs at Della Chiesa and Snug Harbor run very smoothly, serve 270 children, many with Special Education and transportation needs.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Early Childhood Program Improvement Plan. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Perkins then presented the Literacy Program Improvement Plan. Through the Quincy Public Schools budget and Title I grants, there is at least one full-time Literacy teacher at all elementary schools. Mrs. Perkins reviewed the three tiers of Literacy Interventions: Tier 1 students are able to master appropriate grade-level reading achievement in the regular classroom setting; Tier 2 students are at some risk for low reading achievement; and Tier 3 students are at risk for low achievement, and receive Literacy services at Grades K-3.

Literacy program assessments include the DIBELS Next and Developmental Reading Assessment; Observation Survey to measure growth and outcomes. Multiple interventions are available for Literacy instruction in the areas of Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. Orton Gillingham instruction has been extended to ELL and classroom teachers.

Reflecting on last year's goals, Goal 1 was exceeded: 12% of Grades K-3 students were moved from Tier 3 to Tier 2 or 1. In Kindergarten, the benchmark shifts at the end of the year and so growth is trickier to document. Grades 1 and 2 showed tremendous progress, but Grade 3 remained flat and so will be a targeted focus for this year. Goal 2 focused on increasing the use of technology in Literacy interventions; each Literacy Interventionist received an iPad. In collaboration with Special Education, licenses for Lexia, Read Naturally, and Earobics were purchased. Literacy staff shared best practices at Literacy Team meetings.

Literacy Program Goals for 2015-2016: (1) The Literacy Team will support the district goal of developing proficient students, through the building of foundational skills in Grades K through 3 so that students read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. Included in this work will be a targeted focus on Grade 3 intervention, instruction, and progress toward benchmark.

This will be evident by a decrease in the number of Tier 3 students by 5% at each grade level, K-3. (2) The Literacy Team will continue our goal of incorporating the use of technology during literacy intervention sessions by monitoring technology currently in place, tracking student progress through online resources, and the creation and monitoring of the technology and implementation plan. (3) The Literacy Team will assist in the implementation, proctoring, and analysis of the Grade 3 pilot of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. The MAP Assessment progress monitors for ELA and Mathematics, provides Lexile levels for comprehension. Literacy Interventionists were trained and assessment is underway. Through upcoming professional development, teachers will learn about analyzing reports.

Mrs. Hubley agreed that having the Math literacy assessment is very important. Mrs. Hubley requested additional breakdown of the Grade 3 numbers, are some ELL students or new students. Mrs. Perkins said the end of the year benchmark is a big leap from the fall, there is some further data analysis needed about how far off the benchmark these students are. Literacy Interventionists will also look at other underlying issues, Special Education, ELL, or other factors.

Mr. Bregoli asked about scheduling for the MAP: benchmark assessment in September/October; progress monitoring in January and May/June.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Literacy Program Improvement Plan. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Perkins then presented the **Title I Program Improvement Plan** for 2015-2016. The Coordinated Program Review (CPR) was completed last year, and no corrective actions were requested. Quincy Public Schools was cited as a documentation and implementation model and was invited to present at a DESE conference.

All Title I schools are school-wide model meaning that all students are eligible for services at Lincoln Hancock (and ECC), Parker, Snug Harbor, and Clifford Marshall for Grades Pre-Kindergarten through 3. Assessment benchmarks include DIBELS, DRA, curriculum-aligned from *Journeys* and *Go Math!* and QPS staff-developed writing rubrics.

Reflection on last year's goals: (1) Title I staff collaborated on the development and implementation of a writing process for writing across the curriculum; assisted in developing student writers' "voices" through the writing workshop model. (2) For parent engagement, the Title I team participated in many activities designed to increase parent engagement, such as Parent Academy and Math & Literacy Nights, monthly parent-child Kindergarten days, and attending PTO meetings.

For 2015-2016 goals, (1) The Title I team will develop a deeper understanding of the 2011 Mathematics standards and explore and implement instructional practices such as Guided Math in an

effort to increase student achievement in the area of Math by 2%. Professional development will be supported by mathematics instruction consultant Sue Looney. A vertical team will be convened to look at the current pacing guide, make decisions about adding rigor and depth to instruction. All Math focus teachers will participate in this. (2) The Title I Team will continue to development of a consistent, coherent, and systematic writing process implemented in Grades K through 5 with a focus on writing across the curriculum to support their progress in opinion/argument, information, and narrative writing. (3) The Title I Team will work together to increase and sustain family engagement by increasing opportunities for parents to engage in the Title I program.

Mr. Bregoli asked about Grade 5 students at Point Webster and Sterling; funding for after school programs is allocated for these students. The Grade 5 teachers will also participate in consultant professional development paid for from Title I funds. Mrs. Perkins clarified that most of the Title I funding is used for staffing at the Grades K-3 levels (Literacy and Math Interventionists). Any after school or summer programs include all K-5 students as does professional development for staff.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to approve the Title I Program Improvement Plan. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Ms. Isola complimented Mrs. Perkins for her Program Improvement Plan preparation and summaries.

Ms. Roy spoke about the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee goals, at last week's Special School Committee meeting, there was discussion of the many initiatives underway and areas of focus were defined. The proposed goals for the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee are: *(1) The Teaching and Learning Subcommittee will review the Academic Program and School Improvement Plans, the system/site assessment information and the District Profile during the 2015-2016 school year. (2) The Teaching and Learning Subcommittee will be informed and updated on all issues regarding standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment and related professional development while analyzing, researching and determining curriculum and assessment needs and their cost by March/April 2016. (3) The Teaching and Learning Subcommittee will be informed and updated on all issues regarding technology planning and training for digital learning, instruction, assessment, student management, and home/school communication while analyzing and determining technology needs and their cost by March/April 2016.*

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to accept the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee goals for 2015-2016 as presented. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 pm. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.