

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE ~ Monday, March 28, 2016

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, March 28, 2016 at 5:00 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley (Acting Chair), and Mrs. Emily Lebo. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Ms. Kristen Dwyer, Ms. Julie Graham, Ms. Sarah Harrington, Ms. Amanda Harris, Mr. James Mullaney, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Ms. Desiree Troy; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mrs. Perkins introduced the Pre-Kindergarten Pilot Initiative. A team met to look at the Pre-Kindergarten program (Ms. Connolly, Ms. Todd, Ms. McNeil, Mrs. Papile, Mrs. Perkins), specifically to address students who may spend three years in the Pre-Kindergarten program because of age and Special Education programming. Mrs. Perkins reviewed the current Pre-Kindergarten model, four days per week, half-day program, two sessions. 300 students district-wide attend at Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center and Snug Harbor. Of the 15 students in each integrated class, 7 are special education and 8 are typically-developing peers.

Mrs. Perkins also surveyed the programs available in neighboring cities and towns. Most have half-day integrated programs, 2, 3, 4, or 5 days per week. Full-day classes are typically substantially separate programs.

Mrs. Perkins introduced the proposed pilot for 2016-2017, aimed at 4- and 5-year old students who will be entering Kindergarten the following year. These students would be offered two full days per week (Monday/Thursday and Wednesday/Friday), servicing 120 students in 8 classes, 4 per site. The benefits would be that staffing remains the same, while students will have the full-day experience and a different model of instruction from their previous year(s) in the program. 3-year old students would remain in the half-day model. A Tuesday morning Speech & Language group would serve 12 3-year old students per site, meeting an additional demand for these services.

Mr. Bregoli asked for clarification whether students would only be attending 2 days per week, as opposed to four full days right now. Mrs. Lebo asked about whether this will make any changes in transportation and this is not expected. Mrs. Lebo asked about a Speech & Language Assistant, we have some already on staff. Mr. Bregoli asked if the assigned days will switch mid-year, but there are no plans to do this. Mrs. Lebo asked if parents were involved in planning and suggested that as the planning progresses, parental input be sought. Mr. Bregoli asked about if students would eat lunch with Kindergarten students. Mrs. Perkins said they will most likely eat in their classrooms.

Mrs. Hubley asked about teacher planning time since they currently have one hour between sessions, Mrs. Perkins said that these teachers have Tuesdays as their planning time.

The next item on the agenda was a review of the new Pre-Kindergarten Progress Report and the Kindergarten Report Card. During this school year, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten teacher teams worked on developing developmentally appropriate, electronic (for Kindergarten), and based on a revised grading rubric. As with the Grades 1-5 Report Card team redesign, multiple teams were involved: SLT, Principals, Instructional Technology, Kindergarten, Pre-Kindergarten, and Academic Program teachers.

The teacher teams have representatives from each building. Content is driven by standards: NAEYC Standards for Quality Early Childhood Programming and the Massachusetts Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten, Social and Emotional Learning, and Approaches to Play and Learning, as well as academic standards. The Design Team work included identifying the key standards and areas to assess; creating a report card and progress report that addresses standards, but also considers the developmental aspect of Early Childhood and developing a Report Card and Progress Report that is written in parent-friendly language. The team created a vertical alignment between Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten and Kindergarten to Grade 1 and developed common grading rubric and defining proficient on each standard.

Ms. Graham showed the prototype of the Pre-Kindergarten Progress Report format, which consolidated the previous format and featured more parent-friendly language. Categories include Social-Emotional Learning, early Literacy skills, Listening and Speaking, Math, and Visual Motor skills (from *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum). The Progress Reports will be issued to parents three times each school year. The students will be graded as Independent, Practicing, and Needs Help. Math skills have been consolidated and simplified.

The draft Kindergarten Report Card was also shared. Performance levels were redefined: E for Exceeding Expectations, M for Meets Expectations, P for Progressing towards standards, and N Not Yet Demonstrated Progress. Students are assessed three times per year on Social Emotional Learning, Gross Motor Development, Fine Motor Development, Handwriting, Physical Education, Art, Music, and Foundational Skills in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. For ELA and Mathematics, expectations are organized into domains, and there is also the opportunity for the teacher to assess student effort. For Mathematics, the terms in which skills will be introduced and expanded on are defined by shading.

Teachers are creating a glossary of defined terminology to assist parents to understand concepts and expectations. Parents will also receive a rubric that defines the performance levels for each category with specific examples. This new report card shows the high standards expected of children, while at the same time respecting the developmental appropriateness of the skills.

Mrs. Perkins praised the work of both the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten teams, much thoughtful discussion has gone into creating the Progress Report, Report Card, rubrics, and glossary. In

Kindergarten, teachers will have a range of students, from those who attended full-day academic Pre-Kindergarten programs to students who have no formal school experience at all.

Next steps include completing the parent rubrics and glossary; scheduling a Parent Academy for later in the spring (Welcome to Kindergarten); and Professional Development for all Kindergarten staff this spring and next fall for Aspen training,

Mrs. Perkins noted that teachers from Grades 1-5 will be presenting at the May 2 Teaching & Learning Subcommittee meeting to reflect on the first year implementation of the new report card. Communication to support the transition in these grades has been instrumental to the success of the rollout.

Mrs. Lebo complimented the group for the work, noting that Science and Social Studies may have to become more specific to reflect the new Science standards. Mrs. Perkins said the team will look towards defining specifics for each term in these areas. Mrs. Lebo said the glossary will be key to assisting parents understand the standards. Mrs. Hubley said particularly for parents who English is a Second Language. Mrs. Hubley said the ability to assess effort for each section is important.

Dr. DeCristofaro thanked the team of presenters, each teacher is warm and enriching, passionate, with great classrooms. School Committee has been very supportive of Early Childhood Education and we are all appreciative.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 pm. Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.