

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, October 3, 2016

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, October 3, 2016 at 5:00 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Mrs. Emily Lebo, and Ms. Barbara Isola, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mrs. Kerri Connolly, Ms. Roberta DiTullio, Ms. Julie Graham, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mrs. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Team Administrators Julie Graham and Kerri Connolly presented the **Early Childhood Program Improvement Plan** for 2016-2017. Quincy Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs are funded through the Quincy Public Schools budget and grants. 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, a team of Pre-Kindergarten teachers developed a new Developmental Checklist (progress report) and Kindergarten teachers developed a new standards-based report card for implementation in the 2016-2017 school year. *Handwriting Without Tears* was successfully implemented in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classrooms and teachers began the process of aligning the materials with the *Journeys* and *Literacy Express* programs. This work will continue in this school year. For the third goal, teachers attended trainings and shared strategies and best practices in the area of social emotional development and self-regulation.

2016-2017 goals are: (1) The Kindergarten Team will successfully implement the new electronic standards-based report card and the Pre-Kindergarten Team will successfully implement the new developmental checklist that were approved in June 2016. (2) The Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten teachers will align the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum with their current classroom curriculum. (3) The Pre-Kindergarten Team will participate in Pre-LAS (Language Assessment Scale) training and administer the Pre-LAS to all current Pre-Kindergarten students who will be entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2017 and have been identified as an English Learner (EL).

Mrs. Lebo asked for clarification on the EL Assessment, all Pre-K students will be assessed this year and students new to QPS will be assessed in Kindergarten. Mrs. Lebo asked to see samples of assessment tools for self-regulation, are there baseline assessments given. Ms. Graham said samples can be shared and noted that PBIS has been introduced into the Pre-Kindergarten level, especially at Snug Harbor in support of school-wide initiative. Mrs. Lebo asked what percentage of Pre-Kindergarten students receive the Brigance assessment. Ms. Graham said any student referred

through Early Intervention receives this, just before they turn 3 years old. Ms. Graham said this is used again as a re-evaluation at the 3 year IEP benchmark. Mrs. Lebo suggested these assessment tools are a topic for further exploration at another subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Bregoli asked what ages the Brigance is normed for. Ms. Graham said aged 2.5 to 6 years old. Mrs. Connolly said that teachers have explored observation-based assessments (play skills, parent interviews). Ms. Graham said we have to be careful not to repeat assessments that Early Intervention has used.

Mrs. Connolly thanked School Committee for continuing to fund the Full-Day Kindergarten Paraprofessionals, so critical to student success.

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

Coordinator of Literacy & Title I Roberta DiTullio 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. Ms. DiTullio 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, MAP, MPG, DRA, Lexia Core 5, and Marie Clay's Observation Survey. 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 targeted in decreasing Tier 3 students by 5% and increase in Tier 1. Grades 1 and 2 met this goal, while Grade 3 did not. Grade 3 will continue to be an area of focus moving forward. For the second goal, Literacy Specialists increased the use of technology during literacy interventions to differentiate and customize instruction for students; new iPads and apps were implemented. For Goal 3, the Grade 3 pilot of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) was successfully completed.

Goals for 2016-2017: (1) Early Literacy students will improve their phonemic awareness and phonics skills as evidenced by an overall decrease in the number of Tier 3 students by 3% at each grade level Kindergarten through Grade 3, as indicated by the DIBELS Next. (2) The Literacy Team will support the district goal in the area of reading comprehension through the implementation of Guided Reading and Close Reading Strategies, as evidenced by an increase of 10 points on the RIT scale as indicated by the district-level results on the MPG and MAP. (3) So as to support classroom teachers in identifying and addressing the needs of the most concerning students, the Literacy Team will

analyze the Integrated Learning Team Meeting process and create a uniform comprehensive protocol as evidenced by the ILT Meeting Guide Document.

Mrs. DiTullio said in analyzing the MAP data, which is predictive. Mrs. Lebo asked if the reports are specific about areas of need. Mrs. DiTullio said the reports are by student, grade, school, and district. Mrs. Lebo asked about struggling readers who are not progressing, when do students move from Literacy to Special Education. Mrs. Perkins said this is the purpose of the third goal, developing a uniform protocol. Mrs. DiTullio said that many of the students have complex needs, English Language Learners plus Literacy issues. Mrs. DiTullio said this is one of the values of prescriptive intervention such as Orton Gillingham, this approach to teaching decoding skills and adapting it for small group instruction has made a difference. *Lively Letters, LIPS, Handwriting Without Tears* all have components that assist with this learning.

Mr. Bregoli said for Grade 3 students that are not making progress, are they lacking foundational skills that should have been taught. Mrs. DiTullio said that as students go up the grades, the increasing expectations make it harder for older students to make gains. Comprehension of more complex texts plus phonemic awareness and decoding. Mrs. DiTullio said the Grade 3 transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

Ms. Isola said that she can't imagine what QPS would be without the Literacy program, very glad that the program budget cuts have been more than re-instated. Mrs. DiTullio said the top-notch Professional Development in the last couple of years have allowed for great gains for students.

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

Ms. DiTullio then presented the **Title I Program Improvement Plan**. 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.

Reflecting on last year's goals, Mathematics achievement on MCAS increased by 2% for all grades at Snug Harbor and Grade 4 at Lincoln Hancock; the goal will be continued this school year.

Development of a consistent writing process for three modes of writing was completed. Increasing parent engagement opportunities were completed, including Brain Boosters for Breaks, where books and materials were shared with hundreds of families.

Parker is Level 1, Clifford Marshall and Snug Harbor is Level 2, Lincoln Hancock remains Level 3, but is close to moving up to Level 2. More detailed Assessment data will be shared during the individual School Improvement Plan presentations.

Goals for 2016-2017: (1) The Title I team will continue to develop a deeper understanding of the 2011 Mathematics standards and further support and enhance the implementation of instructional practices such as Guided Math in an effort to increase student achievement in the area of Math by 2%. (2) The Title I team will explore the use of Close Reading strategies, in grades 3-5, utilizing mentor texts, in support of elevated reading comprehension as it relates to author's craft in opinion/argument, informative, and narrative genres. (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.

Mrs. Lebo asked about Title I funding allocation, how are schools selected. Mrs. Perkins said that based on information provided by the March 2016 Economically Disadvantaged Report, the school order is pre-determined. Wollaston is very close to the four schools already part of the program, is eligible to participate in Professional Development and the Bridge to Reading summer program.

Mrs. Lebo asked about analysis of assessments. Parker is a Level 1 school, yet low level of achievement in MCAS in Grade 4. Mrs. Lebo said this is very frustrating, the schools' levels do not reflect actual performance.

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. Ms. DiTullio 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 complimented parent engagement goal, and asked and received confirmation that the Title I schools will continue to host parent academies this year.

Ms. Isola asked about analysis of assessment presented in the Program Improvement Plan. Proficient or Above and Warning are stated, would like to see all categories charted out.

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

Ms. Isola reviewed the Superintendent Evaluation process. Dr. DeCristofaro will present his self-evaluation on completed goals and proposed new goals, along with QPS MCAS achievement data at the October 19 School Committee meeting. School Committee will complete their individual evaluations by November 2 and Ms. Isola will present the composite evaluation at the November 9 School Committee meeting.

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