

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ~ March 6, 2017

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, March 6, 2017 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, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Ms. Elizabeth Hallett, Ms. Maura Papile, Ms. Erin Perkins, Ms. Kimberly Quinn, Ms. Madeline Roy, Ms. Bridget Vaughn; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Director of Special Education Erin Perkins and Elementary Curriculum Team Administrator Kimberly Quinn presented on Guided Math at the elementary school level. The goal of Guided Math is meeting student needs based on their zone of proximal development: what a learner can do with guidance. Guided Math is flexible, data-driven, small group instruction for all students, not just those who are struggling. It is independent, meaningful practice; hands-on learning; and differentiates instruction. Ms. Quinn reviewed a typical Guided Math block: teachers will begin with an activator (an activity to engage students in math), followed by a mini-lesson on the topic for the day. Small group instruction focused on where students are in their learning occurs at the teacher table, followed by independent, differentiated hands-on activities. The lesson concludes with a wrap up where students share and reflect on what they have learned. Students may complete an informal assessment (exit ticket) and this assists in forming groups for the next day. For some grades, the formal assessment is the normed MAP Benchmark Assessment which provides data on achievement and growth, the learning continuum where students are performing against a certain standard.

In reviewing the Guided Math implementation with teachers, challenges cited include time to develop materials and centers (addressed through professional development opportunities where teachers shared materials); classroom management (keeping students not involved in the small group instruction focused on their tasks); and organization of materials (evolving over the school year, teachers may group by standard or month to match scope and sequence). Ms. Quinn shared the website developed to share Guided Math tools and materials for assessment, fluency, and math apps and websites. Reference materials and resource links are also found here, including the common pacing guide.

Mrs. Lebo said this is an incredible endeavor for our students, thanked the presenters. Mrs. Lebo asked about assessments, the MAP is the formal assessment, exit tickets are teacher-created informal assessments. The *Go Math!* program has assessments, and teachers are also asking for time to develop assessments. Mrs. Lebo asked about what percentage of elementary teachers are using this;

all teachers are have implemented this model. Schools have the goal to do this twice per week and this was part of School Improvement Plans; many teachers are doing it every day.

Mrs. Hubley asked if students at the younger grades have issues with the multiple transitions. Ms. Quinn said that teachers are developing flexible approaches to allow for individual students to move quickly or slowly through the options as students feel comfortable, but for most students this is an amazing demonstration of independence.

Mr. Bregoli asked about engagement of students, will some students not be self-motivated when they are not in the small group with the teacher. Mrs. Perkins said there are students who have a more difficult time with independence, teachers can support them more by directing the rotation. Mrs. Perkins said that the activities are engaging so that assists with the reluctant student. Some teachers are having students self-assess as a way towards reinforcing the expected behaviors. Mr. Bregoli asked about how much time is allotted for Math. Mrs. Perkins said, depending on the day, 60-90 minute blocks. In the shorter blocks, the teacher may not be able to spend time with all groups, will schedule time with them over two days.

Mrs. Lebo asked how will Mrs. Perkins and Ms. Quinn will determine the success of the program. Mrs. Perkins said through the assessments. Guided Math was piloted in Title I schools last year, Snug Harbor in particular showed high growth in Mathematics.

Senior Director of Curriculum Madeline Roy and Middle School Curriculum Team Administrator Bridget Vaughn presented the Close Reading skills being implemented at the elementary and middle school levels. In consultation with literary consultant Dr. Nancy Boyles, teachers are instructing students on recognizing author's tone or perspective, the implications of the author's word choices, and why a text is structured or organized as it is. Additionally, readers should go beyond a text, evaluating its quality or value, comparing it with other text, or determining its implications. By using purposeful annotation during close reading, students are learning to pause after reading a section and leave a "trail of breadcrumbs" that will assist them in constructing an essay.

Ms. Roy said that new text resources at the middle school level supported by School Committee's budget allocation is the *Collections* program, available in print and digitally. This program is a balance of complex texts with collections of fiction, nonfiction, informational, plays, and short stories. There are interactive lessons and student resources. The program is fully implemented at Grade 8, where curriculum alignment is underway. Grades 6 and 7 are piloting the digital resource. In a lesson Ms. Roy observed, students participated in collaborative discussions, analyzed the text, speaking and listening, and there were opportunities for the teacher to add information. Special Education teachers can provide lesson scaffolding, accommodations, and support during the inclusion block. An additional resource is *Inside the Text*, a supplemental resource full of high interest informational text for Tier II support in fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Next steps include creating flipped classroom activities, professional development and training for new users, and teacher-created

professional development for advanced users. Grades 6 and 7 materials will be purchased this summer for fall 2017 implementation.

Mrs. Lebo asked about moving towards the digital components and asked about online annotation. This is a private feature that students are able to utilize. Ms. Isola said she likes to hear how we are integrating technology, especially these sidebar features, into classroom instruction to assist students.

Mrs. Perkins presented an update of the Kindergarten Report Card rollout; the first term of report cards and parent conferences are completed. Teacher feedback about the efficacy of assessment led to the creation of a standards spreadsheet that teachers can print and use as an observation checklist. At the end of the school year, feedback will be incorporated as

Mrs. Lebo asked to see a Kindergarten report card and asked about surveying parents about their thoughts. Ms. Isola agreed and said she'd like to hear from parents who have Kindergarten students and older children for a comparison of newer Kindergarten report cards to former system.

Ms. Roy presented an update on the upcoming Digital Learning Week, March 27-31. This is a week to celebrate the things happening every day in QPS classrooms. Digital learning lessons will be featured on SchoolTube. After school trainings will be scheduled for teachers where veteran technology educators can share technology insights with their colleagues.

Ms. Isola introduced the last item on the agenda, Homework Assignments During School Vacations. Dr. DeCristofaro said that a reminder will be shared with all principals about not assigning projects or homework due immediately after vacation per the School Committee Policy.

Ms. Isola agreed and said it is important that the policy be consistently implemented; we request parents not take their students out of school for vacations so we need to respect the need for family time during the scheduled breaks.

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