

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 6:00 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, and Mrs. Emily Lebo, Chair. Also attending were Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Dr. Beth Hallett, Ms. Maura Papile, Ms. Erin Perkins, Ms. Kim Quinn, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Edward Smith, Ms. Bridget Vaughan; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

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Curriculum Team Administrator Kim Quinn introduced a review of Differentiation in the Math Classroom, the concept of teachers attending to the learning needs of a particular student or small groups of students. Senior Curriculum Director Madeline Roy shared some of the research behind the comprehensive Professional Development plan and the impact for teachers and students on their daily instruction. Mathematics can be a source of anxiety, so the basis of successful instruction is to create a supportive learning environment and use data to align classroom practices with instructional purpose.

The comprehensive Professional Development Plan for Mathematics Differentiation is multi-year and builds on prior learning, addresses grade level needs, is both site-based and system-wide, is collaborative and goal-oriented, and inclusive (classroom teachers, special education, and math interventionists). The three goals for the Professional Development are (1) meeting the needs of all students; (2) incorporating rigorous tasks; and (3) more student dialogue.

Mrs. Lebo asked if the Integrated Learning Teams were a place for discussion about math differentiation. Ms. Quinn and Ms. Perkins agreed that this is one of the places, these meet three times a year, plus there are mini-ILT opportunities between.

In meeting the needs of all students, teachers use a Guided Math approach and formative assessments to create flexible and small teaching groups. No matter where students are in their development of math concepts, there are always areas of rigorous learning that students can explore. Ultimately, students will need productive struggle, more involved problems, opportunities to work in groups, questioning techniques to push thinking, and to develop and practice perseverance to become students of mathematics.

Mrs. Hubley asked whether the more rigorous questions would be done in class, rather than as homework. Ms. Roy said these would be more likely done in class with teacher support; most teachers use homework as practice of concepts students worked on mastering in class.

In encouraging student dialogue, teachers become facilitators of learning, helping students expose and explore alternative ways of thinking. Math vocabulary is practiced and understood through this practice, along with identification and correction of misconceptions.



Director of Special Education Erin Perkins and Coordinator of English Language Arts Bridget Vaughan updated on the Close Reading initiative, reviewing that close reading is analytical reading that encourages students to read and reread deliberately. Students reflect on the meanings of individual words and sentences, the order of sentences, and the development of ideas which leads to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Dr. Nancy Boyles is continuing her consultancy with Quincy Public Schools, building on her work with Grades 3-8 on whole group close reading and developing text dependent questions last school year. This year, Dr. Boyles is working with Grades 1-2 on the same topic; with Grades 3-5, she is focusing on small-group instruction and developing independent close reading strategies. In Grades 6-8, Dr. Boyles is working with teachers on integrating digital close reading lessons.

Mrs. Lebo asked if all teachers have access to the Grade 6-8 *Collections* online resources. Ms. Vaughan said all teachers have access and all students have accounts as well.

Grade level teams are working on units of study, along with pacing and alignment guides in order to incorporate texts that are aligned to the MA Curriculum Frameworks for Language Arts & Literacy. In addition, benchmark assessments have been developed to measure student progress.



Executive Director of Information Technology Keith Segalla introduced the Google Classroom for Educators presentation. Google Classroom that offers a blended learning environment for teachers and students; in the online classroom, teachers can share their lecture notes, post announcements and differentiated assignments, and review/provide feedback for submitted student work. All students and teachers have usernames and passwords and the classrooms are secure to the teacher and students in a class. For students, all of their classrooms are integrated, so the calendar feature can be utilized to help students organize their work.

Elementary school teachers are using the Google classroom to assist with the Guided Math model and Reading centers. Using the Google classroom benefits students by increasing their comfort of constructing projects and completing assignments online, supporting skills that will aid in demonstrating achievement on computer-based testing. At the middle school level, the Google classroom is assisting with homework management, building background, and managing complex assignments such as writing tasks with prompt, organizers, and rubric. For middle school students, managing multiple classes and teachers for the first time, nothing is ever lost as

all communications are permanently posted. At the high school level, teachers are use Google classroom to streamline their interactions with students, daily instruction and assignments posted for all sections of a teacher's classes, assignments submitted and private feedback are easily shared.

Throughout Quincy Public Schools, teams and groups are using the Google Classroom to share information, activities, and updates, including the SW/Sterling Junior Building Committee, the Superintendent's Leadership Team, Vertical Teams, the Girl Rising and Q-GEMS initiatives, and the Atlantic Middle School STEM Fair.

Mrs. Lebo asked about access to resources. Mr. Segalla said some schools are using the Google classroom to schedule the shared carts of Chromebooks. Ms. Vaughan said the technology is often used in small group activities, so fewer resources needed at one time.

Mrs. Hubley asked if Principals feel that the students are comfortable with this tool. Mr. Smith said the students are very comfortable and confident. Ms. Vaughan said that is especially beneficial for those with OT issues and difficulty with handwriting.

Mr. Bregoli asked how Google classroom was implemented; Mr. Segalla said system-wide Grades 3-12 began in the fall and is now being rolled out to Grades K-2. There are over 10,000 user accounts across Quincy Public Schools.

Mrs. Lebo asked about this being optional, mentioned that Aspen Gradebook usage being optional is an issue for many parents. Mrs. Lebo asked about where should a parent look to monitor their student's work, these are two great tools with some similar capacity. Mrs. Lebo said that parents' frustration stems from not having information in a timely fashion

Mr. Segalla said Aspen is the primary system for student information and grading, but does not have the assignment specific detail possible in Google Classroom. Ms. Perkins said that Google Classroom allows you to see the content and specifics of each assignment.

Mrs. Lebo suggested that there should be some parent training opportunities for the Google Classroom tool, this will assist in understanding the difference between the two.

Mrs. Hubley said that parents may feel that students who are in classes that don't use Google Classroom are at a disadvantage.

Mr. Mulvey said that the goal is always to collaborate with our educators so that through training and professional development, there will be a better product for all of our students.

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Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm. Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.