

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## TEACHING & LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

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

oooooooooooooooo

Senior Director of Curriculum Madeline Roy presented an update on the Girls Rising Initiative, an expansion of the pilot developed at Sterling Middle School to other middle and elementary schools. The goal is to be inclusive, focus on goal-setting and accomplishments, and develop leadership skills with a STEM focus.

Some examples include the Lincoln Hancock Swim Club for Grade 4 girls. At Point Webster, the Quincy Girls Empowered and Motivated to Succeed (Q-GEMS) is working on clean water initiatives and recently visited MIT for the graduate student STEM fair focused on water, along with Point Webster Robotics team. At Broad Meadows, the Operation Days Work project will align with clean water focus. There will be a community celebration of all projects on May 30.

Mrs. Lebo asked whether all middle schools are participating in Girl Rising, and they all are to various extent at Grade 8. The grant received last year provided copies of the books and curriculum supports and webcams and microphones to assist in Skyping.

Mr. Gutro asked if Girl Rising is part of class instruction time. Ms. Roy said the unit is an end of the year option for ELA teachers with opportunities to integrate reading and writing skills.

oooooooooooooooo

Ms. Roy then presented an update on the Advanced Pathways initiative. Middle and high school teachers are continuing to collaborate on the scaffolding of instruction. For example, high school teachers are very interested in the integrated units that ELA Grade 8 teachers have developed, and middle school teachers are increasing the writing focus. A new placement assessment for Grade 8 students was implemented for high school Science and informed the course recommendation process.

Mrs. Lebo asked if the assessment results will be used to alter the content or pacing of instruction. Ms. Roy said this assessment gave the Grade 8 team opportunity to give input to the high school teachers about content expectations and pacing and there will be some adjustment

to the assessment going forward so that the results are reflective of the timing. The assessment is given in February because high school scheduling begins in early March.

Mr. Andronico ask if the new assessment made a different in the numbers of students recommended for different levels. Mr. Smith said that the assessment was more about preparation for the courses offered in Grade 9, Life Science or Biology.

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Ms. Roy, Ms. Perkins, and Mr. Smith presented on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Digital Literacy & Computer Science Frameworks. These standards represent the core elements of digital literacy and computer science and are broken into four grade spans: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The four strands are Computing and Society, Digital Tools and Collaboration, Computing Systems, and Computational Thinking.

Mrs. Perkins reviewed that the elementary grades are expected to instruct students safe usage of technology, learning basic functions, and creating digital items into the curriculum areas. For example, elementary students should be taught concepts of online responsibility and internet safety, web browsing, online assessments, mouse work and keyboarding, using a printer, coding, exploring online tools and search engines, building presentations, investigating basic data sources for problem solving. Digital learning standards are referenced throughout the curriculum frameworks, for example, research and writing for ELA.

For middle schools, building on the elementary school skills, there is an expanded focus on the responsible use of technology and consequences for inappropriate use, learning how to evaluate digital bias, moving beyond basic skills into more advanced research and producing more complex project-based learning outcomes. The standards also look for students to create, modify, and manipulate data and write and analyze algorithms and basic programs.

Mr. Gutro asked where are all these taught, Ms. Roy said this is what is expected to be accomplished. The frameworks are fairly new and Quincy Public Schools Digital Learning Teams are working on the integration with core curriculum areas as well as academic support programs, such as Library/Media.

Middle school students are already working on many of these topics, including online responsibility, safety, and cyberbullying; using web searches and presentations for assignments and projects; and collaboration with students and other classrooms

Mr. Smith reviewed Project Lead the Way, which is currently taught through seven courses at Quincy High School. North Quincy High School will have two courses beginning in 2018-2019 and add courses each year. Through recent grant funding, all middle schools will implement a Project Lead the Way course for Grades 6 through 8. Grade 6 will begin with Design & Modeling,

Grade 7 will have Computer Science for Innovators and Makers; and Grade 8 will have Energy and the Environment.

On March 26, the Governor's STEM Advisory Council met with high school educators and STEM Business representatives from the South Shore to discuss the goals of expanding work-based learning opportunities in STEM fields, developing and implementing early college/career pathways, broaden access to high-quality computer science and engineering; and strengthen and align the work of the regional STEM networks. The advisory council is proposing a \$350,000 grant program to incentivize schools and/or districts to adopt evidence-based curricula and teacher professional development. In addition, the STEM advisory council is proposing a \$250,000 grant to assist high schools in identifying students ready for AP courses who are not enrolling.

Mr. Smith explained the Quincy Public Schools Digital Literacy Matrix Project, where a team of middle and high school teachers are looking to map where and how students are exposed to digital literacy standards. Next steps include planning the extensive professional development needed to implement this new curriculum over multiple years. An end of year review of Digital Learning and Principal Teams, researching related resources for quality and cost, and present ideas and recommendations to the Superintendent and School Committee.

Mr. Gutro asked when the framework was released, it is dated 2016 but was released to districts in January 2018. In the past DESE has shared a timeline for implementation, but this is not yet available online. Ms. Roy said the transition to computer-based testing is compelling us to immediately address basic computational skills, including keyboarding. Library media teachers and middle school library media specialists are working with students on keyboarding. All of the elementary schools are working on keyboarding and computer skills at Grades 3-5, most consistently using typing.com.

Mr. Gutro made a motion to consider the appropriate grade level for introducing keyboarding and a uniform technology curriculum for all schools. Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion with the concern that there are not elementary school technology teachers and this issue is bigger than keyboarding. Mrs. Lebo said that all students need a baseline education in these topics but not all students need to be advanced; those needs depend student interests in for their post-secondary opportunities.

Mr. Bregoli said this is another example of more tasks being layered onto our staff and is concerned about the amount of time of library/media at the elementary level, which is a minimum of 30 minutes per week. Mr. Bregoli feels that the state did not consider the ramifications of moving to computer-based testing model.

Mrs. Lebo said that instructional time considerations is in Policy Subcommittee and questioned that Digital Literacy & Computer Science framework was developed to justify online testing.

Mr. Gutro said these are aspirational skills to prepare students for the working world, and is looking for uniform expectations across all schools.

Mrs. Lebo asked for specifics on the new middle school Project Lead the Way courses. Mr. Smith said the new courses will replace the current Technology & Engineering courses and meet the grade level standards. The Project Lead the Way grant is for equipment, teacher training, and online curriculum.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the Engineering classes recently introduced at North Quincy High School. Mr. Smith clarified that there are currently Engineering courses at NQHS and two will now follow Project Lead the Way curriculum. Mr. Bregoli asked if implementing the full program is a staffing or funding issue. Mr. Smith said the courses build on pre-requisite course completion so that next year's NQHS Grade 9 students will have the opportunity to take the full program as courses will be added as they move through high school.

oooooooooooo

Mr. Gutro made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm. Mrs. Lebo seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.