

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## TEACHING AND LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 26, 2012

A meeting of the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee was held on Monday, November 26, 2012 at 4:30 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at the NAGE Building. Present were Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. Dave McCarthy, and Mrs. Emily Lebo, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent Richard DeCristofaro, Assistant Superintendent Colleen Roberts, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Beth Hallett, Ms. Madeline Roy, and Mr. Keith Segalla.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Mrs. Lebo.

The first item was the presentation of the **Literacy Program Improvement Plan** by Curriculum Coordinator for Grades Pre-K through 5 and Title I, Ms. Madeline Roy. Ms. Roy started by offering her thanks to Edie Hughes for her hard work on the Literacy Program Improvement Plan. The Literacy program's focus is on Pre K-Grade 3 and student growth by Grade 3, where the switch is from Learning to Read to Reading to Learn. The Literacy staff's primary roles as interventionists are reviewing data, progress monitoring, and determining and providing resources for teachers.

Looking at DIEBELS Next, the focus is on phonics, accuracy and speed, and the 2012 benchmarks are more rigorous. Quincy Public Schools will follow these new benchmarks, which are connected to the Common Core State Standards and ultimately will be more beneficial for our students. However, this has increased the number of students in Tiers 2 and 3 who need services and monitoring. Teachers are being supported in doing some of this work in the classroom. The elementary school Integrated Learning Teams determine which group or student needs to participate in an intervention and which intervention is best. Teachers work to structure groups so that all students get what they need. These are truly flexible groups which allows more "just in time movement" to address needs from assessments. ILT's will continue to meet three times a year.

For 2012-2013, the Literacy Team is focusing on Progress Monitoring and the consistency of tools used across the district. The goals for 2012-2013 are: (1) During the 2012-2013 school year, the literacy team will continue its goal to decrease the number of Tier 3 students, those at risk, to represent 8% of the total district students in Grades K through Grade 5. (2) During the 2012-2013 school year, the Literacy Team will work with classroom teachers to increase the

number of students in Grades 2 and 3 who read above grade level by 10%. Reading above grade-level is defined by the Group Reading Assessment Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) as scoring at the stanine 7-9 levels in the passage comprehension subtest of the GRADE.

There was a question if the changes and the increased numbers in tiers 2 and 3 would require more literacy specialists and Ms. Roy stated that there is not a clear cut answer as some of the work is moving into the classrooms with support and we will have to determine how well that works.

There was a question about reaching out to parents. Ms. Roy stated that she was just getting to know the schools and she would be working with each school to determine ways to help each school assist parents in helping their children at home with literacy. She will ask the schools about Report Card Conferences and what assistance may be needed for parents.

In reflecting on 2011-2013 goals of decreasing the number of students in Tier 3, Ms. Roy said that we fell just short of the goal. Mrs. Lebo noted that the number of students moving out of at-risk categories was really substantial and indicates that we are having success with the program. A second goal of decreasing the number of students in Grade 2 and 3 who are reading below grade level, overall the district reached this goal with some grades at some school far surpassing the 5% that we were looking for. This was attributed to the Literacy Program and the Walk to Read component.

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

The second item on the agenda was the **Pre-Kindergarten Program Improvement Plan**. Ms. Roy thanked Ms. Bakis, Ms. Connolly, and Ms. Perkins for their assistance on the team which is focused on the Pre-K work at the Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center and Snug Harbor.

Their goals for 2011 were to write an integrated curriculum based on *Tools of the Mind* and *Literacy Express*. The teachers designed a curriculum map arranged by month and these are now being aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The second goal was to participate in training for the *Work Sampling System*; this was completed through the SPED department with the plan to improve IEP goals for students. The third goal was to design a transition model from Pre-K to Kindergarten and was done in conjunction with Head Start and other community-based providers and allowed staff to meet and share information that would make the transition easier for students. This was very well received and will be a permanent occurrence in the district.

The Pre-Kindergarten team's goals for 2012-2013 are to: (1) Complete a standards analysis and alignment to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics and continue to align instructional routines, assessments and tasks to the Work Sampling Guidelines. (2) To form a study group to increase the team's knowledge and expertise on effective, sustainable family engagement.

Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Pre-Kindergarten Program Improvement Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

The third item on the agenda was the **Curriculum Plan** which was presented by Mrs. Roberts, Ms. Roy, and Ms. Hallett. This plan was shared as a draft because it is evolving and action items are added as changes and more supports come out of DESE. The plan also shows the required timeline for implementation over four school years. The team shared the curriculum initiatives that have been taking place in the past year, the plans for this year, and the projected plans for the next two years. This plan also shows the related professional development initiatives for each curriculum initiative, and the work being done to align with the new state assessments and reviewed the accountability system. The Subcommittee was thankful for this comprehensive presentation, as it is apparent that the district is on target to get the implementation of the curriculum changes completed. Concern was expressed that there is not enough contractual professional development time, especially at the elementary level, to address these changes. Mrs. Roberts reported that many of our educators take advantage of the Professional Development opportunities outside the contractual time.

Ms. Isola made a motion to approve the Curriculum Plan. Mrs. Hubley seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to adjourn the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee meeting at 5:50 pm. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.