

Teaching and Learning Update February 2016

Curriculum / Materials Implementation –

The instructional materials adoption process for K-12 English/Language Arts/Literacy continued this month. Regularly Scheduled Late Student Arrival (RSLSA) time is being utilized to meet separately with elementary, middle school and high school teachers. All participants have been given access to a shared folder in order to comment and keep track of progress.

Elementary team representation is growing. The March meeting included more teachers interested in participating in the process and conversation. Each grade level representative reported back on their team's input regarding the three sets of sample materials supplied last month. The team overall were not impressed with any of the curriculum sets thus far. A fourth set of sample materials (K-5) were distributed and another vendor has sample materials on the way. The focus is on providing identifying instructional materials that will meet student needs in reading and writing without being lock step. Again the conversation was meaningful and robust as we strive to maintain balanced learning environments in the light of more rigorous standards.

The middle school and high school English Language Arts teams are interested in exploring reading intervention. To this end three secondary teachers hope to visit a nearby district that reports long-term success with a well-known reading intervention program. Neither the high school nor middle school ELA teachers believe it is necessary to adopt new anthologies, however engaging non-fiction and informational texts are needed in order to respond to new Washington State Learning Standards. Neither team is considering a full-scale textbook adoption, but rather realigning already adopted materials and filling gaps and holes in the curriculum.

After attending a course on how to utilize the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET), I am prepared to support a deep analysis, aligned with current standards, of potential adoption materials prior to recommendation to the school board.

Professional Development –

Preparations for the April 22nd Learning Day are well underway. A survey will go out this month that outlines many of the available work options. In addition to K-8 MindUP follow-up training, there will be an evening for parents and community members to learn about mind up on April 21st. Kristina Wambold, certified Google Trainer, will be available all day to support our technology instructional needs. Secondary English Fellows and Math Fellows will team it up to offer updates from their regional and state-wide meetings through a train-the-trainer model.

Our own Stephanie Holmes continues to support teachers with classroom technology needs through occasional full-day, in-building coaching as well as after school Tech Cafés and much more on-demand support.

Highly Capable Program (HiCap) –

The elementary HiCap staff and parent group has revised and updated the identification process for Highly Capable students. Not only will it provide a more inclusive process, but will inform the update of the secondary HiCap program as well. Thank you for all your hard work.

Testing / Assessment –

On March 29th and 30th all Test Administrators, certificated and classified, will receive proctor training for the Smarter Balanced Spring Assessment. This will ensure a smooth testing experience for all students 3rd through high school as well as comply with OSPI training and compliance expectations. Many teachers have opted to utilize available online SBA interim assessments, both comprehensive and block, to provide experience and support to learning. SBA Summative assessment season will kick off after Spring Break with the third graders.

Title I / LAP –

The Title I team (Scott Lincoln, Amy Neiman, Megan Bright, Colleen Wing) met to prioritize the use of remaining Title I funds, including roll over from last year's budget and the remainder of the 20% SES Set Aside funds. Our goal is to have these funds spent or earmarked for specific expenditures by Spring Break in order to utilize these important federal funds for student learning during the 2015-2016 school year. (REPEAT)

Two additional and final students were added to SES Tutoring this month. Both will be tutored by after school with one of our own teachers contracting through ESD112. These students are expected to make great strides in reading in order to close the gap with their grade-level peers.

K-12 Library–

The following are activities that have taken place the last few months through the K-12 Library as orchestrated by Lynn Cooke:

Elementary School

- Introduced magazines to 2-4th grade that have not previously been checked out.

- Feb. 29th book talks and Mark Fearing presentation for 5th grade Karen Alanko's class.
- March 1st and 2nd hosted author/illustrator Mark Fearing from West Linn, Oregon who has authored and illustrated many books. All grades K-5 saw Mark Fearing.
- March 2nd *Read Across America Day* - Aligned 8 classes with 3 Middle School Language Arts classes to partner read and read aloud with students.
- Currently working with the Elementary Building Council to select and secure an author or illustrator for next year.

Middle School

- Feb. 10th visited Jemetegaard Middle School library to look at library design ideas.
- Feb. 14th Crazy about Cooking class offered after school from 3-4 to introduce our cooking resources (books and magazines) and made cookies in a jar with 28 students.
- Feb. 17th opened 2 boxes of STEM books from the Washington State Library as part of the STEM grant awarded to the middle school. Mrs. Schneider's class participated in the box opening, pictures submitted to the WA State library.
- Feb. 27th NCCE (Northwest Council for Computer Education) conference with Stephanie Holmes and Dan Benson.
- March 1st and 2nd hosted author/illustrator Mark Fearing from West Linn, Oregon . He presented to a 6th grade Language Arts class and the 7/8 Art class.
- March 2nd Read Across America Day Aligned 3 Language Arts classes with 8 elementary classes to partner read and read aloud with students.

High School

- Feb. 10th visited Washougal High School to shadow Hillary Marshall teach data bases and research skills to English classes.
- Feb. 17th opened 2 boxes of STEM books from the Washington State Library as part of the STEM grant awarded to the high school. Mrs. Vierck's class participated in the box opening, pictures submitted to the WA State Library.
- March 9th Technology meeting with Dan Benson
- March 9th Reviewed Follett/Destiny library catalog system with Karen Gozart's 11th/12th grade Best Selling Literature Class and discussed posting book reviews.

Family and Community Resource Center (FCRC) –

The following are activities that have taken place this months through FCRC Aften P-W:

FCRC continues supporting attendance teams at the Elementary and Middle School levels and is currently developing a morning check-in for students exhibiting severe chronic absenteeism (on track miss 20% of the school year or more) as well as high levels of tardiness to promote “on-time” attendance. To take advantage of the unique K-8 campus, FCRC connects students with attendance issues at the middle school with elementary students and classrooms for morning support and

check-ins. This provides opportunities to develop both leadership and responsibility, as well as give them a chance to be a role model to others.

Youth Mentoring continues at the elementary school! Our volunteer mentor is on campus every Monday and Friday to connect with his four mentees individually. Through collaboration with teachers and the counselor, a set of targeted behaviors were identified for our mentor on with our students. This allows our mentor to work toward positive outcomes in our youths' self-esteem, engagement in class, homework completion rate, respect for peers, and positive outlook for their futures!

After School Enrichment activities are a focus at middle school is interested in providing more after school opportunities for its students. FCRC developed an interest survey for middle school students to better understand what enrichment activities are most interesting to our students. In addition, FCRC has begun connecting with La Center United and parent/community volunteers about skills and knowledge they might like to share with our students.

Thanks to partnership with La Center Evangelical Free Church and other amazing community members and staff, FCRC continues to support Elementary and Middle School students through Fuel Up! When youth miss breakfast in the morning or do not have anything for snack time, they can stop by FCRC and fuel up their brain with food. For the month of February, LCES accessed Fuel Up 117 times (just under five times a day) and LCMS accessed Fuel Up 128 times (just over five times a day).

Weekend Packs are provided to 13 families between LCES and LCMS are provided every Friday with food for the weekend. This helps ensure that our families that rely and free/reduced lunch during the week can continue to feed their children over the weekend when school meals are not provided. With four Fridays in the month of February, 52 bags of food went out to support La Center families.

The nature of resources/referrals vary quite a bit based on the needs of a family. Within the month of February FCRC provided resources or referrals for school supplies, food, mental health services, medical insurance, medical advocacy, teen pregnancy prenatal and insurance support, dental services, job search and applications, computer/internet access, parent support groups, disability and housing resources. Housing continues to be a significant challenge for our community's low-income families.

*Respectfully submitted,
Amy Neiman
Director of Teaching & Learning*