



AMESBURY

CITY HALL
62 Friend Street
Amesbury, MA 01913

AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE TEACHING AND LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 20, 2023 at 3:30pm

Present were Maryann Welch (Chair), Abigail Jurist Levy, Greg Noyes, Superintendent Elizabeth McAndrews and Lyn Jacques, the Director of Teaching and Learning.

Ms. Welch called the meeting to order at 3:33pm.

Public Comment

Stephanie Gottwald shared that she is a reading disabilities consultant but was attending the meeting as a citizen of the city of Amesbury. She said she was interested in hearing the teaching and learning updates in her community.

Approve Minutes from January 17, 2023 Meeting

Move for approval by Mr. Noyes, seconded by Dr. Jurist Levy. Approved unanimously.

Teaching and Learning Updates

- DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills): The subcommittee reviewed the overall Fall and Winter percentages of students in grades Kindergarten-2nd receiving an “above”, “core”, “strategic”, or “intensive” classification. All grades in AES and CES improved their percentage in the “above + core” section except for CES’s 2nd grade class that went down the smallest percentage of .1%; however, that grade did decrease their percentage of “intensive” needs students by 9%. Ms. Jacques stated that most students in “intensive” or “strategic” receive Title I and can also be supported during their WIN block. Dr. Jurist Levy stated that this data shows that student literacy is improving in our district so the School Committee should make efforts not to cut the literacy staff on ESSER when we reach ESSER’s fund deadline. Mr. Noyes said he has concerns about summer slide and asked to see cohort tracking to also see if the percentage of “intensive” decreases in the Fall as we get further away from CoVid.
- Kindergarten pedagogy and curriculum: Ms. Welch shared that Mr. Noyes requested hearing about the kindergarten pedagogy and curriculum and that there was buzz on Facebook about how Kindergarten has changed over the last few years. Ms. Jacques said that the literacy rigor has increased in the last few years. The Kindergarteners are receiving 2.5 hours of literacy instruction a day which includes Haggerty, Wit and Wisdom, and Foundations. She added that the students also receive 2.5 hours of “non-instructional” time which include two recesses, lunch, specials, etc. Mr. Noyes stated he was concerned about the reduction of playtime and Ms. Jacques said she would look into the DESE Kindergarten “best practices” recommendations.
- Budget considerations: Elementary grades are currently piloting three new math curriculums (Eureka 2, Illustrative Math (Amplify) and Go Math) and the middle school is ready to adopt Amplify for this Fall; however, Ms. Jacques does not know what grant will cover the cost or if DESE will provide financial support.
- Other:
 - Amesbury Public Schools is partnering with Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. Amy Mitchell is leading the effort where a classroom will be observed twice in each

- grade K-5 using a SEL checklist. The data is then given to Yale to review with 50 other districts. This will likely turn into professional development.
- SEL MTSS Committee update: They will be reviewing their baseline survey data on March 28th. With DESE to guide them, they will identify the greatest challenges in our district and use that to build support and drive improvement.
 - Tomorrow, 3/21/23, the Math MTSS Committee will be providing an update to Ms. Jacques. There was discussion about the Math MTSS Committee sharing the process for finding a math curriculum to the School Committee.
 - AHS is working with DESE to provide two Innovative Pathways to our community. Out of 6 pathways, the two that currently fit our community best are Health and Human Services and Business. These two pathways would align with many local community partners. Dr. Jurist Levy asked if the 8th graders will be surveyed for pathway interest.
 - Project Lead the Way (PLTW) has doubled its grant funding this coming year from \$10k to \$20k.
 - The district is on track to have a standards-based report card next year in grades K-4. The report card committee is meeting one more time and then they will share the report cards with several parents to get their feedback. Grade 5 will likely move to a standards-based report card in the future however their current focus is on moving to CES and learning Wit and Wisdom.
 - There is a small committee meeting and working on teacher evaluations.
 - The wellness committee is reviewing the district wellness policy, as it is required every three years. The rubric is very involved, and the district may apply for a DESE coach to support them.
 - Ms. Jacques has formed a Professional Development Committee, including five teachers, to plan PD for the entire 2023-2024 school year. If any other teachers are interested in being a part of their committee, please reach out to Lyn Jacques.

Spotlight: The subcommittee discussed the approved nomination of the Early Literacy Grant and Committee for a June spotlight. Ms. Jacques hopes the committee will also present their early literacy capstone presentation. No other spotlights were presented.

Other: None

Dr. Jurist Levy moved to adjourn at 4:29pm, seconded by Mr. Noyes. Approved by unanimous consent.

Next meeting will be May 16th when the subcommittee will see DIBELS cohort tracking. Following meetings: Jun 20