

Teaching and Learning Update January 2015

Curriculum / Materials Implementation –

During January and February elementary teachers participated in one of two follow-up trainings to support continued implementation of newly adopted math materials. Whether using Bridges (K-2) or My Math (grades 3-5), teachers were able to learn from an expert trainer prepared to meet their specific needs. The use of web-based, on-line curriculum features was one area of need and therefore focused support.

Secondary math teachers also expressed the need for additional technology for students in order to maximize the on-line videos included with their newly adopted Explorations Math materials. This led to the purchase of 10 additional Chrome Books designated for use within each middle school and high school math classroom. The videos allow for on-demand concept review as needed by individuals of student groups with access both at school and at home.

Professional Development –

With the increased role of on-line learning, building teacher expertise in the area of instructional technology is an integral part of our district professional development. As part of her 0.1 FTE Technology coaching duties, Stephanie Holmes has facilitated seven separate one hour, after school Technology Café sessions. The time was driven by teacher needs and interests in tech tools and Apps. Stephanie plans to continue these sessions with an emphasis driven by teacher initiated classroom lessons utilizing Google Classroom or other technology applications. As a result we have entered into a contract with ESD112 for the services of their Google-certified trainer. Kristina Wambold will provide learning opportunities beginning with a kick-off event on the April In-service day. After school is dismissed in June Kristina will facilitate a five-day summer institute with four full day coaching sessions when school resumes in the fall. The purpose of these classroom-embedded sessions is to support implementation efforts of skills and ideas presented and/or generated during the April and June sessions.

Over several days in January elementary teachers took part in the development of a school-wide behavior support plan known as MTSS or Multi-tiered System of Support (formerly RTI – Response to Intervention). The full day events took place in grade-band teams facilitated by Effie Triol, K-2 Literacy Specialist from ESD112. Special thanks go to Jennifer Blechschmidt and Tammy Lichliter for all of planning and coordinating necessary to orchestrate this important event.

English as a Second Language (ELL) –

Students from all grade levels district-wide continue to be supported by Melissa Flatt, ELL paraprofessional. She attended an ESL training in December focused heavily on supporting reading development in non-native English speakers. In February these students will be performing annual WELPA assessments.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) –

As a new middle school and high school ASB club LEOS meets bi-weekly to plan service projects and fundraisers. One such project will include the development of a Care Closet to be housed in the high school in cooperation of the North Clark County Mobile Food Bank. Students in need will be able to access food supplies as needed for themselves as well as their household.

FBLA members will be competing in the Regional Competition held to be held in Kalama in a variety of areas related to business. Top competitors will earn spots in the state-level competition to be held in Seattle this May.

John Lambert is exploring the possibility of implementing IT Academy. Students will be able to demonstrate proficiency on programs such as Word and PowerPoint in order to earn certificates of mastery. These certificates have the potential to open doors with employers and some institutions of higher education are allowing students to waive required classes.

Both John Lambert and Jim Neiman will have submitted paperwork in January requesting articulation with Lower Columbia College. If granted La Center High School students will be eligible for college credit in Introduction to Business and Automotive.

Testing / Assessment –

We continue to closely follow announcements from OSPI regarding the transition from our current state testing practices to Smarter Balanced Assessments. Additionally teachers have begun to access Smarter Balanced on-line resources, including the Digital Library and TIDE (Teacher Information Data Engine). The Smarter Balanced Digital Library is a collection of vetted, lessons and strategies aligned with our new Washington State Learning Standards (formerly known as Common Core Learning Standards). This year both middle school (grades 6-8) and high school juniors will be testing using computer-based Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Beginning in January teachers will have the option to allow students to access on-line practice tests, Interim Comprehensive Assessments and Interim Block Assessments. In addition to providing students the opportunity to “try out” the online SBA tools and approaches to assessment, teachers will have the opportunity to collect formative data from either the ICA or IBA interim assessment options.

Make-ups for EOC Math and EOC Biology will occur the first week of February. Joyce Vierck, Biology teacher, has agreed to provide review sessions for students after school the week prior as these student are not currently enrolled in Biology.