

## Teaching and Learning Update March 2015

### Curriculum / Materials Implementation –

Teachers of mathematics continue to implement instructional materials purchased during the 2013-2014 school year. Special Education teachers using the new math curriculum were surveyed concerning whether they had received their new math materials and whether or not further training and support were needed. Responses were few, but favorable.

After comparing existing district Curriculum Adoption Cycles and updating the list of adopted materials, a historical picture of adoptions (2005-2015) has been created. The next step in the process will be to create informed recommendations regarding how to proceed with future adoptions based upon age of materials, needs of specific content areas, standards alignment, teacher expressed need, etc. It is anticipated that significant adjustments to our current Adoption Cycles may be in order to best meet the needs of our learners.

### Professional Development –

Professional development around instructional technology continues to be an area of focus. Teachers recommended by their principals have been surveyed regarding their interest and availability to participate in the development of our ten technology professional learning days with a certified Google Trainer. This teacher group will meet to inform the design of these important training events and tailor them to the unique needs of La Center staff. The goal continues to be to leverage these PD days to best meet the technology learning needs of students via targeted training for their teachers. A district-wide electronic teacher survey was used to collect tech-related interests and needs areas thus informing both the design and content for *Integration Workshop: The Chromebook or iPad Classroom* (April 24<sup>th</sup>) and the *Summer Tech Institute* (June 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 26<sup>th</sup>). Via on-line registration teachers are beginning to sign up for these events to be facilitated by Kristina Wambold, certified Google Trainer.

A second round of after school Tech Café sessions were completed this month. With the support of Stephanie Holmes participating teachers worked collaboratively to design lessons and/or units of study that integrate the use of technology into their classroom instruction. Stay tuned for more on the results of implementation of these newly designed technology learning experiences.

During March a group of six teachers of mathematics and one administrator attended a full day workshop funded by the Focus Schools iGrant. *Rethink Math* presented an approach for strategic implementation of newly adopted Common Core standards. Themes included the need to build a strong conceptual understanding of mathematics prior to presenting algorithms, the use of

manipulatives in early ages, and the vital importance of ongoing formative assessment to respond to individual student learning needs.

#### English as a Second Language (ELL) –

During March all WELPA test administration was completed and test booklets sent off to OSPI for scoring. Once scores are reported they will be used to inform whether students remain in the program of “test out”.

#### Highly Capable Program (HiCap) –

The following high school students, many of them designated as High Capable, successfully participated in the Knowledge Bowl district meet in March: Sean Nolan, Dusten Dennis, Drake Petersen, Colton Tetzlaff, Lexi Darienzo, Michael Skaling, Hunter Jackson, Cameren Kuhnhausen, Ben Eavenson, Scott Brightbill, Robert Balduc, Cal Johnson.

Scored CoGAT assessments for elementary students have arrived and are now under review per district policy to determine if these students qualify for services. Current HiCap elementary age students have designed their own local field trips. Middle school and elementary HiCap students have participated in *Math Is Cool*.

#### Career and Technical Education (CTE) –

We are excited to report that La Center High School now has two separate articulation agreements with Lower Columbia College. Students that successfully complete Introduction to Business and/or Automotive Technology have the option to earn 5 free college credits. Clark College has also contact us in relation to the potential for articulation. One additional agreement that we are further exploring would be for Human Anatomy & Physiology (a non-CTE course).

John Lambert has been working with a fellow business teacher from Kalama with experience utilizing Microsoft IT Academy. He is planning to phase in this program and potentially offer certification as well as college credit. “With the Microsoft IT Academy (ITA) program, academic institutions and their educators, students and staff get digital curriculum and certifications for fundamental technology skills -- as well as courses critical for students to be successful in today’s technologically evolving world.” (<http://www.microsoft.com>)

The CTE advisory have recommended updated instructional materials be purchased for many of the “shop” classes. Undated instructional materials were purchased for business classes in 2014. Based on student and teacher recommendation they support the proposed use of Perkins funds to improve facilitates for students of

Automotive Technology. Jim Neiman is setting up a meeting with district stakeholders to discuss these proposed shop facilities improvements will be organized this month. CTE Advisory minutes are available upon request.

### Testing / Assessment -

Special education teachers have received training on how to enter accommodations directly into the Test Information Distribution Engine or TIDE in the WCAP. In addition to allowing test administrators to proctor Smarter Balanced online assessments, this portal will allow teachers of special education students to enter student designated supports and accommodations directly. This will streamline the process of accommodating student assessment needs by putting the control directly in the hands of IEP managers. I will continue to support these teachers as they learn these important new skills.

A contingent of elementary certified and classified personal were trained as Test Administrators (TA) during two separate events in March. TA support will be ongoing until all proctors and responsible personnel are comfortable with the use of TIDE for administering Smarter Balanced Assessments, entering student accommodations, etc.

High school students that have not yet met proficiency on HSPE tests in Reading and Writing made an additional attempt this month. Thanks for the efforts of Aften Pankiewicz-Waldram and Beth Marshal, test administration went smoothly and we are eager to hear how many more of our students have met these important graduation requirements.

March brings about the launch of the new Smarter Balanced summative testing season. Third graders were first to SBA test in English Language Arts using a paper and pencil version. The state roll out of SBA has been challenging. However, our staff and students have shown perseverance through late and sometimes inaccurate administration information. Special thanks go to third grade teacher/proctors: Liz Crandall, Peter Poppert, Bonnie Lock, Kris Sawyer.