

Teaching and Learning Update May 2015

Curriculum / Materials Implementation –

The goal continues to be to revise the Curriculum Review Cycle that is needs based and more responsive to identified instructional needs. As part of updating the district Curriculum Adoption/Review Cycle and in light of the newly adopted Washington State English/Language Arts Standards, it is my recommendation that we begin adoption of updated Literacy and Language Arts materials K-12. This adoption process, including inclusion of community members, will continue through the 2015-2016 school year.

Professional Development –

Staff have been utilizing the new process of proposing their own clock hour based on their own professional development goals. For example, a teacher agreed to facilitate a follow up conversation after the La Center United sponsored presentation on tobacco. Staff that attended the two hour presentation on May 14th as well as the one hour follow-up received three clock hours connected with their learning.

Highly Capable Program (HiCap) –

A portion of this year's Highly Capable iGrant funds will be used to send grade-level representative elementary teachers to High Cap training. Participants have been registered for the *Gifted Education Institute: Personalizing Learning through Cluster Grouping & Differentiation Strategies*. The Institute will be on Whitworth's campus June 22-24, 2015. These teachers will play an integral role in updating and refining the district Highly Capable Program during the 2015-2016 school year.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) –

In addition to the articulation agreements already in place this year with Lower Columbia College (Personal Finance and Automotive), three additional articulation agreements have been created. Through the efforts of John Lambert LCHS Computer Applications students are able to access industry standard *IT Academy* certification in *Microsoft Word Core* (5 credits), *Excel Core* (5 credits) and *PowerPoint Fundamentals* (1 credit).

During the month of May a portion of district Perkins funds were used to purchase a pressure washer and steam cleaner. This equipment, along with the auto lift, are part of efforts to update facilities to support the newly articulated automotive course. Students have led the way on researching, presenting and gathering bids for this new equipment. The car lift will allow student groups simultaneous, safe and clear access to view auto components as compared to jack stands and other methods. Not only will this purchase

support instruction and our new articulation agreement with LCC, but the lift will allow more authentic, real-world application for more meaningful student learning. Community partners have offered to assist with installation of the car lift. The cost of the lift will very likely exceed the remaining Perkins funds, therefore Carol Patton has generously agreed to provide the remaining funds needed out of the building budget.

Due to a significant increase in high school FTE, Jim Neiman's classroom will be vacated in order to make room for a health teacher. The shops will now act as both classroom and lab space.

English as a Second Language (ELL) -

During May the Smarter Balanced Testing is in full swing. All ELL designated supports and accommodations were entered into the new TIDE system in advance to meet the needs of ELL students during SBA testing. ELL paraprofessional, Melissa Flatt, has worked closely with teachers to identify whether or not students would test within their regular classroom or be pulled to test separately.

Testing / Assessment -

Designated teachers and classified staff have been administering Summative Tests in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics. Most elementary students (grade 3-5) have completed the paper-pencil version of the Smarter Balanced tests. Using the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) on the Washington Comprehensive Access Portal (WCAP) secondary students in grades 6-8 and 11 have completed their Smarter Balanced testing in ELA and Math. Sophomores completed their English Language Arts Exit Exam using pencil-paper. This exam, modeled closely after the 11th grade ELA SBA, will be used as part of their state graduation requirements.

Both 5th grade and 8th grade students have taken the paper-pencil version of the MSP Science test. EOC Math tests will be administered to high school students the last week in May and 10th graders will take the Biology EOC on June 4th.

While everyone involved within the district have worked diligently to prepare for these exams, the months leading up to these new tests have been challenging for both test administrators and students alike. Each building will be reporting back after debriefing the SBA testing process. Stay tuned in June to hear what we learn from our first year of SBA as well as recommendations for improving processes during 2015-2016.