



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Teaching & Learning

Committee

February 16, 2022

Online

In attendance: Dr. Joyner (Chair of Committee), Ivelise Velazquez, Dr. Paul Whyte, Dr. Viviana Conner, Dr. Michael Finley, Pedro Mendia, Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz, Dr. Richard Therrien, Lynn Brantley, Ken Mathews, Sandra Cates-Clark, Ellen Maust, Pamela Augustine-Jefferson, Heather Toothaker, Maria Parente, Claudia Merson, Jessica Haxhi

1. Welcome Statement

Dr. Joyner called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

2. How are we preparing high school students to master mathematical content throughout the grades? Ms. Mathews, Math Supervisor will share the results of a pilot of two new text books with input from classroom teachers.

Mr. Mathews presented the slides that are available [here](#). There was a need for a new math program because the last adoption, Springboard, was 9 years old and not popular. There were three quotes collected; Teachers voted on which texts they would pilot for this year and they chose two: Carnegie Math and Envisions. Please see the slides for details about each text. Each one has a printed text, software online and an etext.

Mr. Mathews shared final survey data from the teachers about each text package; both had strengths and areas of weakness. The final recommendation was Envisions. Please see the slides for more details.

Dr. Joyner requested copies of the text for every Board member. He also asked whether it is possible for the payment to be interest-free over a certain number of years. Ms. Velazquez noted that the Finance and Operations Committee would like a quote for a single year at this point. Mr. Mathews replied that any structure for payment is possible. Ms. Velazquez said that they were told that any multi-year contract must be approved by the Alders. She explained that, because we are developing relationships with publishers, we are getting perhaps better deals/service. Dr. Joyner asked if we could look further into multi-year purchases in order to mitigate the budget and get everything we can to get the most for our money.

Dr. Joyner asked what we are doing to supplement the text and curriculum and further customize it to what New Haven students need. Mr. Mathews noted that the digital component of Envisions is vast; teachers have choices in the tools and visuals they use. There is also a subscription to "Gizmos," which includes both math and science simulations, models, and labs. Desmos also has an array of student and teacher activities.

Ms. Velazquez shared the Academics team website [here](#). She highlighted the grade level “what students learn” documents and described how the team would return to those documents and add more data for parents to read. Dr. Joyner asked that Academics details be featured at future board meetings.

Ms. Velazquez thanked Mr. Mathews and all of the teachers who participated in the pilot. They are all working together to create standards-based, high-quality, and engaging.

2. What were the results of the science pilot and what materials are recommended for students to use for rich science learning in grades PreK-5? Mr. Therrien, Science Supervisor, will provide an update on the results of the pilot and share the recommendation for a substantial investment to the Board of Education.

Dr. Therrien presented on the elementary science program adoption process using the slides attached [here](#) (p.7). There was a need for equitable opportunities for all students to have access to the science background that they need to prepare them for the future. It has been 21 years since a new elementary science program was adopted. With a focus on the new “Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)” and other criteria (see slide 3), they began a search for a new program. They identified the top three programs and selected two programs to pilot: Amplify (Lawrence Hall of Science) and Smithsonian. These programs are mostly kit-based. They set criteria based on students on science kits, the inquiry model, and adoptions in other states.

The pilot was run from Mid-November to the end of January at 6 schools, including classrooms with Spanish-speakers. There was also an Elementary Science Committee with school administrators, Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz, Lynn Brantley and Literacy Coaches, a parent, magnet coaches, Yale partners, and others.

Dr. Therrien shared the teacher feedback chart, in which Smithsonian scored higher by teachers in 4 out of 5 categories, but only slightly. Teachers liked the fact that the Smithsonian program had good rubrics, excellent service, links to Smithsonian exhibits, and other benefits. The curriculum also uses “claims, evidence and reasoning” and a focus on literacy.

Smithsonian has an overall lower cost and an unlimited license for online content (access lasts forever) as well as 147 equivalent days of professional development (update on information in slides).

Ms. Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz expressed that the process was comprehensive and that her department appreciated being involved and the focus on Multilingual Learners.

Claudia Merson from Yale Outreach noted that including so many people/teachers in the process will ease the transition to using it effectively in classrooms. Ms. Merson asked how large the shipments will be, as the kits take up space. Mr. Therrien noted that there is still some uncertainty regarding the current science warehouse and that schools will probably be keeping and storing the kits, especially because schools will no longer have to rotate the kits. In addition, this will mean that science instruction can be integrated more easily with mathematics and literacy.

Dr. Joyner explained that the teachers and supervisors who were involved in the process should be recognized. He also asked that we consider arts integration across the content areas at the next

meeting. He noted that “every content area counts, every student counts.” He also asked about professional development for Principals and Assistant Principals.

Dr. Therrien noted that they plan to do professional development in May using a “train the trainer” model before the items arrive at the school. The Smithsonian company has also encouraged us to implement some of their specific administrator training programs. They are also developing parent training programs.

3. What is the next step for policy #6000 Statement of Policies Related to Teaching and Learning? Ms. Velazquez and Dr. Joyner will facilitate a review of the proposed language in preparation for a submission to the Governance Committee.

Dr. Joyner reviewed the new draft of the “Statement of Philosophy on Teaching and Learning” [posted in this document](#). He discussed the terms and sentences in bold. Dr. Joyner submitted the document and a “still to do” list to the Board of Education members.

Dr. Joyner reiterated the need for parent/family support for the schools and the students. He discussed the fact that it is possible for anyone to start in a “caste” and achieve greatness.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 6:00.**

The next meeting is schedule for March 16, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Haxhi