



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Teaching & Learning

Committee

January 19, 2022

Online

In attendance: Dr. Joyner (Chair of Committee), Matthew Wilcox, Dr. Iline Tracey, Ivelise Velazquez, Dr. Paul Whyte, Dr. Michael Finley, Pedro Mendia, Rosalyn Diaz-Ortiz, Dr. Richard Therrien, Lynn Brantley, Ken Mathews, Sandra Cates-Clark, Ellen Maust, Pam Augustine-Jefferson, Marquelle Middleton, Michelle Bonanno, Jessica Haxhi

1. Welcome Statement

Dr. Joyner called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM. Ms. Haxhi is taking minutes. Dr. Joyner is the facilitator and Ms. Velazquez is the timekeeper.

2. What teaching and learning policies ensure that practice is aligned to the latest research and reflective of how students learn best? Ms. Velazquez and Dr. Joyner will review the CABE model policies (6000 series) and review the district policy on Instructional Practice (Into to 6000 series.).

Dr. Joyner would like to see our policies revolve around the New Haven Public Schools school district. Dr. Joyner shared [this document](#) (p. 151), a draft “Statement on Policies Related to Teaching and Learning” originally written by Mr. Wilcox and updated by Dr. Joyner. Dr. Joyner summarized the key points in the text and the importance of each.

He went on to reference the principles listed on page 153; these are the principles that appear at the beginning of the NHPS Instructional Frameworks document.

Dr. Joyner and Ms. Velazquez agreed that [the document](#) (pp. 151-153) could potentially be the “Statement of Philosophy” that would be included in an NHPS Policies document.

Dr. Therrien suggested that all content areas have their own “language” and asked that “Every content area has its own language that students need to master” be added on page 151, in the final paragraph, after the second sentence.

Mr. Mendia made the point that “listening” is one of the 4 skills of communication and asked that it be added in the text. Ms. Haxhi suggested it be added in the first sentence of the document, along with “reading, speaking, writing, and thinking.” Ms. Brantley noted that we should include listening in each instance of mentioning the skills.

Mr. Mendia also noted that, in the first paragraph, we should talk about language not as a deficit, but more as an asset. He will work on some appropriate wording for it.

Dr. Joyner said that he looks forward to executing what is being described in the document.

Ms. Maust suggested that we include language about the “whole child” in the document as well; Dr. Joyner asked her to assist in that wording.

Ms. Velazquez noted that the next meeting is February 16th. Supervisors and Administrators should send document suggestions to Ms. Velazquez by then.

2. How can families participate in the Magnet School Lottery to enroll their students for 2022-2023?
Marquelle Middleton, Director, Office of Choice and Enrollment; Michele Bonanno, MSAP Coordinator

Mr. Middleton described the work that the Choice and Enrollment Office is doing to educate students and families about all NHPS schools, choice options, and the school choice assignment process. They are working to ensure that assignment processes are equitable and transparent. They have been hosting open zooms called “Chat with Choice” in which they can talk to Mr Middleton.

Please see page 154 of [this document](#) for the presentation by Mr. Middleton which he showed at this time, including a variety of details about the schools and the choice process.

Ms. Bonanno noted that on the newhavenmagnetschools.com, there is a tool that parents can use to try to figure out transportation times and other factors. There is also an “application simulator” in which parents can rank their choices and show parents the probability of getting their choices, based on last year’s data.

Ms. Maust complimented the transparency and organization of the new website and process. Dr. Joyner concurred that Ms. Bonanno and Mr. Middleton, both products of New Haven Public Schools, are “as good as we can get” and commended them for their work.

3. How is the district building an opportunity for students to learn about careers in manufacturing?
Ms. Velazquez, Dina Natalino, and Dominique Argo will describe the district’s efforts to date toward creating a manufacturing pathway.

Ms. Velazquez highlighted the new “Manufacture New Haven” Pathway. The logo was designed by Gabriel Armstrong, a student at Wilbur Cross High School. Information sessions about the program begin this week. The Pathway will be for 45 incoming 9th graders: 15 from Hillhouse, 15 from Wilbur Cross, and 15 from Hill Regional Career. Those students will attend their neighborhood high schools. Ten adult education students will also have access to the program. In their first year, they will study Engineering Design.

Students could potentially graduate with up to 65 credits and an Associates’ Degree in Manufacturing Engineering from Gateway Community College; others could graduate with an industry-recognized certificate that they could use to do entry level work at one of our manufacturing partners.

Dr. Therrien shared that he was in an 8th grade classroom at LW Beecher this week where a teacher was discussing manufacturing careers. He was able to tell them about this upcoming program and students were very excited to hear about the possibility of attending.

Ms. Velazquez described three steps in the Manufacture New Haven program development: developing the curriculum, recruitment and training with the teachers through partnership with manufacturing companies, and the building of labs for students at Wilbur Cross and James Hillhouse. When labs are built, the students from Hill Regional Career will travel to the other schools to use them.

Dr. Joyner recalled that programs similar to this were available at high schools in the 1970s. He encouraged Dr. Tracey to include these programs in her Board Meeting report, as it is an example of creativity and hard work on behalf of the students during difficult COVID19 times.

4. What support has the district put in place to help teachers plan and provide quality resources to students? The Curriculum Supervisors will discuss the professional learning and collaboration sessions they have been facilitating for teachers.

Ms. Clark, Supervisor of Social Studies, described how they are implementing the professional learning framework. Focused learning time for teachers has consisted of small groups and feedback. Emphasis is being placed on the integration of technology into practices. In their planning session today, the staff was encouraged to follow a district template for social studies that guides “mini-units” in social studies. Learning is implemented in more digestible chunks for students, with teachers using an evidence-based writing structure. They have also provided elementary and middle school teachers with online resources such as Newsela, IMPACT Social Studies, etc.

Ms. Velazquez noted that we are the only school district in the state implementing the Black and Latino Studies course in all of our high schools and described how Ms. Clark has been delivering curriculum documents, observing the courses, and giving feedback.

Ms. Clark explained that one of the teachers who was trained by the State this past summer is teaching an Academy for teachers currently. Social Studies is also making sure that culturally relevant content is being taught at all levels.

Ms. Diaz-Ortiz talked about how the Multilingual Learners’ Department has been working with teachers on culturally-responsive teaching strategies. They had a session on “Courageous Conversations” for TESOL teachers as well. They gave progress monitoring guidance and maintained a Google Classroom for teachers in English and Spanish. They offer professional learning on Panorama for teachers, as well as other online resources such as Lectura, iReady, etc. Their goal is for students to be truly bilingual and earn the Seal of Biliteracy when they get to high school.

Dr. Joyner said that in the future he would like to have a meeting about “execution” of instruction by sharing student work, rubrics, etc.

Ms. Brantley talked about the work of the ELA Department on progress monitoring at the high school level. She has worked with the high school teachers to discuss using assessments to inform next steps in instruction. They have developed a standard assessment for every 9th and 12th grader that will be given to students three times a year. It is a reading across texts and writing a response assessment, scored with rubrics.

The ELA Department is also working on building classroom libraries at all levels. High schools are receiving 345 titles and 10,550 books, including some common titles and others that are more modern and requested by teachers and students. Many principals and teachers have expressed excitement about this initiative. Middle schools are receiving 261 titles and 20,580 books for their classroom libraries. Ms. Brantley recalled how important it is that we give students books “where we can show kids the world, where we can show kids ourselves.” They are also working on many online resources for independent reading that also support multilingual learners.

Ms. Haxhi talked about how she has been supporting teachers through one-on-one meetings, a new Level I curriculum, and a completely revised World Languages internal Google Site. At professional meetings today, teachers were given resources to spend time learning more about how to find and share resources via the site, in order to implement curriculum, progress monitoring, and access their own learning on teaching topics.

Ms. Maust mentioned how well the teacher-driven, teacher-led learning Academies are going in all content areas. In Visual and Performing Arts, she has continued to collaborate with partners, such as the Schubert, to bring exciting programs to students.

One new program this year is “Teach Rock” at Conte-West Hills. Only 10 schools in the state were chosen for this program. It is a way to include more culturally relevant content in music instruction. One of the Conte-West Hills teacher’s lesson plans was recently chosen as one of the best in the country. Ms. Maust has been able to connect new teachers with veteran teachers; the veteran teachers have been very willing about assisting them. Theater presentations are back and growing across the district.

Ms. Velazquez explained that the Academics Department is currently offering learning “Academies” in most content areas. These are a paid opportunity for teachers to attend self-selected and mostly teacher-taught professional learning courses after school. 265 teachers are currently participating and a larger program is expected in March when a new round of Academies will be held.

Mr. Mathews talked about implementation of the new math program in the elementary classrooms. He thanked the math coaches for going through a “train the trainer” program and supporting teachers across schools. The Math Department is also piloting two programs in the high schools; that data will be presented shortly.

Mr. Mathews explained that the “iReady” program offers differentiation, as does iXL which is being used in grades 6-12. The iReady program sent them a “monster costume” that aligns with the mascot from the company. Math coach, Courtney Sutherland, wore the costume and visited schools who had done the most work in iReady. They saw a spike in usage after that program. There is also an upcoming program to get students excited about the NCAA March Madness (using math). Mr. Mathews also noted that there are currently no math vacancies in the middle school grades.

Ms. Augustine-Jefferson, the Early Childhood Supervisor, talked about the play-based initiative, emphasizing experiences that are culturally relevant, socially interactive, and joyful. She noted that the Early Childhood Coaches are providing training, materials, and support for teachers; they are showing teachers how to turn regular lessons into play-based lessons. They are buying all-new play-based materials for kindergarten classrooms and play-based literacy materials for kindergarten and pre-kindergarten, as well as working on horizontal and vertical alignment of the program. They have

adjusted to COVID and have talked with teachers about how to continue play-based learning even in these challenging times.

Dr. Therrien talked about the elementary science pilot and how he is encouraging teachers to observe at the pilot schools. He noted that all Supervisors had given teachers support and time to work in their Google Classrooms today, planning for Q3 and preparing substitute plans if necessary. Our regular science partners, such as Yale, continue to support. The Science department is also piloting some new programs at James Hillhouse and middle school grades.

Ms. Velazquez shared a picture of Ms. Maust teaching dance to first graders at Edgewood Magnet School. She thanked all of the Supervisors for helping out with substituting for teachers and administrators in the past few weeks.

Dr. Tracey thanked the Academics Team, as well as the Special Education Department, Multilingual Learners' Department, and the Executive Team for assisting with the difficult first weeks in January. She reiterated her belief that "together, we can make a difference."

5. Closing Remarks

Dr. Joyner reminded us that we are all very fortunate to have each other. He also noted that we need more corporate partners, vendors, etc. to assist us in recognizing great teachers and administrators.

Dr. Tracey thanked Ms. Velazquez for her continued support in organizing these meetings. Dr. Tracey reminded us that she has an "open door" policy in her office and that we are welcome to visit and talk with her. COVID disrupted things, but it cannot be used as an excuse for everything. Dr. Tracey is working hard to change the image of Central Office personnel, as she realizes how hard everyone is working.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 6:02.**

The next meeting will be scheduled during February 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Haxhi