



## NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Learning & Teaching Committee

September 23, 2020

Online

**In attendance:** Dr. Joyner (Chair of Committee), Mr. Conaway (Board Member), Dr. Iline Tracey, Ivelize Velazquez, Dr. Paul Whyte, Keisha Hannans, Rosalyn Diaz Ortiz, Lynn Brantley, Carolyn Ross-Lee, Pedro Mendia Landa, Sandra Clark, Richard Therrien, Tessa Gumbs-Johnson, Ellen Maust, Dr. Michele Sherban, Pamela Augustine-Jefferson, Martha Combs, Kristina Crivellone, Odalis Mercado, Tania Lawrence, Emily Hays, Jessica Haxhi

Dr. Joyner called the meeting to order at 4:35.

#### **1. Introduction – Dr. Joyner**

Dr. Joyner welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **1. What experiences are teachers preparing for students online? and how do we continue to strive for engagement and excellence in learning? Google Classroom and Google Meet Stories from Teachers**

##### **Kristina Crivellone - First Grade – Troup School**

Ms. Crivellone is pleased that Google Classroom works seamlessly with Google Drive and Google Meets. Please with other applications such as Pear Deck, Padlet, and Flipgrid. Idiosyncrasies with Google Classroom (especially assignment posting) that make it difficult for teachers sometimes. Students are showing up for her class. In terms of technology, teachers are waiting on some functionality features with Google Meets, but the recent addition of “close chat” was helpful. They are waiting now for “grid view” and the return of a “hand-raising” function. Unfortunately, when you add extra tools to Google Meet, it can make your Meet freeze or slow down. Teachers working on Chromebooks had trouble with the data load. Challenge is how to do “turn and talk” type of activities.

##### **Martha Combs – French Teacher – Betsy Ross**

Using Google Classroom and Meets has helped Ms. Combs embrace families. Families come into the Meets on occasion. Families are a big part of the support system in making remote learning successful. She has learned that we can't replicate live classroom exactly, but the platform does provide opportunities for different types of instruction. Google Classroom allows people to learn the basics and then add on. Ms. Combs is doing a lot of music, songs and dance, but also making sure she has structure in her lessons every day. Students are thriving in the breakout room she has created. Students need to hear and listen to each other and more students turn their cameras on in those situations. Ms. Comb noted that progress reports need to go out next Thursday and she is wondering about how to grade students and would like guidance. She is currently accepting a variety of indicators of progress and participation.

### **Odalis Mercado – Cooperative Arts & Humanities – Spanish Teacher**

Ms. Mercado uses Stream in Google Classroom as morning announcements. Posts the agenda for the day, etc. She likes using Google Slides to create activities and attaches them in Google Classroom. For students with IEPs and 504s, she can copy the original slide and modify it for students who need modifications. She also makes her own breakout rooms. From the first day, students have been asking to work in groups. Breakout rooms allows her to enter rooms to check in with students as well. One challenge is knowing whether students are engaged. She asks students to either turn their cameras on or put answers in the chat.

Ms. Crivellone added that having a “daily slide show” has worked very well with her 1<sup>st</sup> grade students. She noted that many of the things that are engaging the upper grade student also work well for her students, although she is interested in doing more breakout rooms.

### **Tania Lawrence, Fair Haven, ESL, Middle School Grades**

Tania shared her Google Classroom. Fair Haven has labeled their classes with the times. She showed a FlipGrid in which students record videos about where they are from and about themselves. She also had students collaborate on Jamboard answering questions about the school’s PBIS focus. Many students had participated in both the FlipGrid and Jamboard. This week she is working on Pear Deck and teaching them how to manage it.

#### **Discussion:**

- Mr. Conaway asked about the Google Add-ons and whether they were available to all teachers. Ms. Haxhi explained that the district purchased Pear Deck, Screencastify, and Padlet for all teachers, as well as other licenses, such as Quizlet for people who requested it. Jamboard and FlipGrid are free.
- Dr. Joyner asked what teachers are doing to address writing skills. Teachers contributed ways in which they are working on writing in the remote environment such as
- There was discussion about the question of progress reporting. Ms. Combs noted that she wants to be sure to be mindful and fair in looking at how her grading will be done. Dr. Tracey discussed the need to look at the work that students have done thus far and grade appropriately.
- Dr. Joyner asked if teachers had syllabus with assignments, etc. He mentioned that courses should have work expectations as well as rubrics for all assignments. Ms. Brantley talked about how the new Literacy units have performance tasks in reading and writing as end pieces. Teachers use learning progressions to talk to students about where they are in the process. Teachers make decisions themselves about what assignments lead up to the final task.
- Ms. Brantley explained that we give students rubrics before they do assignments. Ms. Velazquez noted that all subject areas do have rubrics. Dr. Joyner encouraged the team to be posting things online so that people are aware of the high quality of work being done in New Haven.
- Dr. Joyner asked about grading policy implications. Dr. Tracey explained that there needs to be a level of consistency in grading across the district; this has been discussed for many years.
- Dr. Joyner asked that we create consisted grading policies across the district.
- Dr. Therrien explained that mastery rubrics were created a few years ago that delineated mastery each subject area, as part of work with Great Schools Partnership and the Nellie Mae Grant. He sees that there is still a need for everyone to agree on the mastery rubrics across the district at the high schools.

- Dr. Joyner explained how rubrics would still allow teacher creativity, but would ensure that their writing, for example, meet a certain standard. He expressed the importance of students in urban districts working on writing and the mechanics of writing.
- Dr. Joyner would like to bring a level of standardization to writing across the district to ensure that all students exit with a standard quality of writing ability. He would like to see policy and professional development in place.

## **2. How are our community of learners and families managing in this new paradigm? Remote Learning Update - Dr. Sherban, Ms. Velazquez & Curriculum Supervisors**

Dr. Sherban presented the data on weekly remote learning engagement. During the first week of school, 25% of students had not connected during the first week. As of last week, 90% of students had connected at least once. As of today, 92% have connected at least once. She then showed remote learning engagement data for special populations. Students with disabilities fully participating at about 73%, with about 85% total. The number of English Language Learners who did not log in at all last week increased over the week before. Overall, there are currently 1556 students who have not been marked present in any classes, down from 5446 the first week of school.

There was discussion about how hard teachers are working to create lessons. Dr. Tracey is planning to have a Parent webinar to get their impressions of remote learning.

## **3. What are we doing to ensure that we continue to engage in productive conversations about equity? Productive Conversations about Race Protocol, District Equity Leadership Team (DELT) Update on Upcoming Activities**

Ms. Carolyn Ross-Lee summarized the upcoming activities for the DELT Team:

On September 29<sup>th</sup> at Hill Regional Career they will do a presentation “Introducing the Courageous Conversations Protocol.” On October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, they will meet with ELA teachers to discuss “How to Talk about Race and Anti-Racist Literacy.” On October 5<sup>th</sup>, they will go to the Governance Committee with their proposed “NHPS Racial Equity Policy.” Their Advisory Committee Meeting will be on October 22, 2020.

## **4 What are we doing to revise and improve the curriculum to ensure all students are empowered? Curriculum: Black and Latino Studies and Social Justice – Sandra Clark, Curriculum Supervisor of History and Social Studies**

Ms. Sandra Clark outlined current focus of the K-12 Social Studies department, including its teachers and focus. She described the purpose and goals of the state regulation, Public Law 19-12, requiring African American and Latino studies in the K-12 curriculum as well as the elective course in high school. She briefly described some of the current courses that meet this goal.

Because time was short, the Board of Education agreed to continue the discussion at the next Teaching and Learning Meeting, including viewing the detailed presentation, as well as to follow up with issues from the Board of Ed student representative, Lihame Arouna.

## **5. Closing Remarks, Dr. Joyner**

- **Dr. Joyner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 PM.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2020.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Haxhi