

SPS Superintendent Mid-Cycle Report

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SPS FY16 Goals

This mid-cycle report includes an update on progress regarding SPS FY16 district and superintendent's goals. Information included in this update was compiled from multiple sources including reports from district administrators with responsibility for particular initiatives.

Goal #1: Establish and publish district definition of “inclusive education” and complete an implementation plan for district direction for inclusive education.

- a. Continue the work of the Inclusion Team to finalize and communicate the SPS definition of “inclusive education”.
- b. Create and communicate a multi-year implementation plan to promote inclusive practices across the school system.

Mid-Cycle Update:

As a school district, we are continuously working to enhance learning opportunities for all students. The current work on inclusive education is a continuation of work begun during the 2014-2015 school year. Last year's team developed multiple draft versions of a statement on inclusion and explored beliefs regarding inclusion and implications for practice within Sudbury Public Schools. The FY16 work on inclusive education is under the direction of John Verre, Interim Director of Student Services, and the leadership of Dr. Denise Rochlin, Consulting Special Education Administrator. The Team has representation from across the school district including: teachers (elementary and middle school, general education and special education), team chairs, curriculum specialist, and administrators. A brief summary of the work of the Inclusion Team based on an update provided by Denise Rochlin follows:

This school year the Inclusion Team has met for four sessions (10/19; 11/09; 11/23; and 12/14) with six additional sessions scheduled. The team began by reviewing the accomplishments from the prior year and has developed a proposed draft statement on inclusion in Sudbury. The draft statement is as follows:

Inclusion in Sudbury - “All means all”

Sudbury Public Schools is committed to being an inclusive environment where all students are full members of our school community. We hold to the belief that each individual should be respected, valued, and included by peers, teachers, parents, and the community at large. We are creating an inclusive environment where all students feel safe and thrive socially, emotionally, physically and academically.

The Inclusion Team plans to solicit feedback from staff regarding the draft statement of *Inclusion in Sudbury*. In addition the Inclusion Team is working on the following:

- ✓ Development of potential training scenarios to be utilized when soliciting feedback so that the school community may identify potential issues related to adopting the proposed statement.
- ✓ Engagement with school staff members to identify current successes and best practice in our schools related to inclusive education.
- ✓ Identification of specific inclusive approaches and strategies for classroom use.
- ✓ Development/Identification of needed resources such as professional development and the establishment of structures to facilitate collegial sharing and review of inclusive practices.

Goal #1: Establish and publish district definition of “inclusive education” and complete an implementation plan for district direction for inclusive education.

- c. Increase mathematics enrichment strategies for K-5 students and develop enhanced communication with families regarding student progress.

Mid-Cycle Update:

As part of our work on inclusive education, we strive to provide learning opportunities for students who will thrive with enhanced challenges in their learning environment. We focus this year on enhancing opportunities in mathematics and language arts and furthering communication with families regarding these learning opportunities. The work in mathematics is conducted through the Teaching and Learning department under the direction of Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain and the leadership of Maggie McGinty, Math Curriculum Coordinator, along with the math coaches at each elementary school.

Two specific initiatives have been undertaken to support targeted student learning. At the elementary and middle school levels, various math routines such as 3 Act Tasks and Number Talks have been implemented with training and resources provided to classroom teachers by the math coordinator and math coaches. In addition, at the middle school a new 6th grade, above grade level, math group has been established. Students in the “above grade level” course were identified in fifth grade as mastering content, allowing them to be placed in a class that requires them to be more independent learners. As I observe learning in district classrooms, I see robust examples of these math routines. I have shared some of these observations in my monthly newsletters to families (see October and November). Parents in the SPS community are also updated through the Math Coordinator via the Teaching & Learning newsletter, Twitter, and our SPS Family Math Website.

A brief summary of the work around mathematics enrichment, based on an update provided by Maggie McGinty follows:

The SPS math leadership team works to ensure that all faculty, staff, and administration have the tools and knowledge to support all students in their targeted learning. The materials that help to determine and support a student's learning path include common assessments, common routines, and common strategies at all grades PK-8 across the district. For example, as indicated above, all students in grades K-8 have been introduced to Number Talks and 3 Act Tasks. These two routines, in particular, focus on student discourse of math where they are able to explain their thinking and show their understanding of the math that is presented.

The strategies that are taught are common across the district and can be found for teachers on an internal website and for parents on our [external website](#). The use of strategies are reported out to parents via the standards based report card which includes reported progress on required fluencies for that particular grade level, see for example, the fact fluency section of our grade 3 report card [here](#).

Maggie McGinty and the math coaches do exceptional work in organization of data for teachers and site administrators to review and help educators determine which students need extra challenge as well as which students need scaffolding/ additional support.

With the implementation of common assessments that focus on each grade's critical areas and fluencies, (elementary list can be found [here](#)) our team is able to discuss student mastery levels and determine targeted instruction to support that student. For example, in [this](#) grade 1 pre assessment data we can see that there are two students that are at or near mastery with this standard and will need differentiated instruction going forward in this unit. In [this](#) grade 3 data we notice the change from a pre to a post assessment. The last column indicates which students have mastered the critical area of addition and subtraction, which students are close to mastery, and which students still need more specific instruction, allowing the teacher to follow-up with those students.

Action Steps (by Maggie McGinty and Math Coaches) to Date:

All teachers in grades 3-7 have received professional development, support, and continued follow-up and modeling in implementing 3 Act Tasks and Number Talks, including:

- ✓ Grades 3-5, 3 Act Task & Number Talk Presentation (October 15, 2015).
- ✓ Grades 6-7 Flipped 3 Act Task and Number Talk Presentation.
- ✓ A 3 Act Task and Number Talk Playbook has been developed and distributed to each general education teacher, special education teacher, and teaching assistant in the district.
- ✓ Common strategies taught, included on our internal and external math websites, and viewable here: [Addition](#), [Subtraction](#), [Multiplication](#), [Division](#)

All faculty, staff, and administrators have had professional development focused on 3 Act Tasks, Number Talks, and strategies being used in our classrooms. During professional development educators and administrators played the role of student by being guided

through tasks and number talks. Examples of teacher feedback on the implementation include:

Grade 7 Math Teacher: *“I see more engagement and discussion from the kids”*.

Grade 3 Teacher: *“Number Talks - They are a great way for all students to participate, show ownership of their strategy, and spiral back to skills they have previous learned in other units. 3 Act Tasks - This is a great way to challenge students and extend their learning.”*

Goal #1: Establish and publish district definition of “inclusive education” and complete an implementation plan for district direction for inclusive education.

- d. Create and implement “challenge libraries” aligned to existing genre units and establish communication with families regarding student progress in reading.

Mid-Cycle Update:

As part of our work on inclusive education, we strive to provide learning opportunities for students who have mastered grade level content and require additional challenge in their learning environment. We focus this year on enhancing opportunities in mathematics and language arts. The work in language arts is conducted through the Teaching and Learning department under the direction of Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain and the leadership of Jennifer Soalt, ELA Curriculum Coordinator, along with the literacy specialists at each elementary school. A brief summary of the work around Challenge Libraries, based on an update provided by Jen Soalt follows:

Challenge Libraries are in development to allow for flexible, easy to use curriculum to further challenge advanced readers in grades 3-5. This initiative contributes to the overarching goal of inclusive education through developing ways for teachers to meet advanced students’ needs in the context of the classroom-based reader’s workshop, rather than in a pullout setting. During my classroom observations I am continually impressed with the infusion of Challenge Libraries and the utilization of the Partner Book Club strategy. As I visit classrooms, formally and informally, I consistently see a wide variety of text difficulty being utilized by students and teachers during independent reading as well as structured class activities. When students are excited to share what they are reading with me (including what they are learning, what they wonder, what surprised them, what they think will happen next, how they might end the book differently) and when they also are able to talk with me about strategies they use to read text that may be a stretch for them, I have an indication that appropriately differentiated materials and practices are being utilized.

Students who would benefit from Challenge Libraries were identified utilizing the national MAP norms for high and very high scores. Based on fall MAP scores: 67 third graders; 69 fourth graders; and 74 fifth graders were identified as candidates for Challenge Libraries for this school year. These data will also be cross-referenced with

students who scored “exceeded expectations” on the spring 2015 PARCC for further identification.

Jen Soalt and the literacy specialists do an exceptional job of reviewing and analyzing multiple data points and providing resources and professional development for educators and administrators.

Action Steps (by Jen Soalt and literacy specialists) to Date and Planned:

- ✓ Challenging, high-quality [fiction and nonfiction](#) texts purchased for Challenge Libraries
- ✓ Data on advanced 3-5 readers disaggregated after MAP (fall 2015)
- ✓ Teachers and literacy specialists were notified which students had high MAP scores and would be good candidates for working with the Challenge Libraries (fall 2015)
- ✓ Teachers and literacy specialists met to discuss how the challenge libraries could be used with identified students
- ✓ [Novel](#), [short story](#), and [nonfiction](#) lesson guides for Challenge Library reader response logs/journals and Partner Book Clubs developed.
- ✓ Presentation of Challenge Libraries and Partner Book Club lessons to grade 3-5 teachers at Loring 12/16/15 along with other district literacy specialists who were invited to attend to make presentations.
- ✓ At a fall SALT meeting the primary method for identifying above grade level 3-5 ELA students (Fall ‘15 MAP NWEA data) was shared with the principals. Principals were briefed on the Challenge Libraries initiative, and encouraged to pay attention to the ways in which teachers were or were not challenging above grade-level readers and writers in their work with teachers and evaluations. At a Spring 2016 meeting, this topic will be revisited with principals to see what progress has been made.
- ✓ Principals, literacy specialists, and teachers will continue to be updated on further curriculum development for the Challenge Libraries, particularly in the areas of writing about reading.
- ✓ Teachers will be encouraged to share advanced students’ reader response journals with parents/guardians at spring conferences.

Goal #2: Enhance social/emotional/behavioral supports for all students.

- a. Establish and communicate a district tiered system of support for social/emotional/behavioral (SEB) needs of students.
- b. Create and communicate a multi-year implementation plan for a district-wide tiered system of support.

Mid-Cycle Update:

Based on our commitment to inclusion and a variety of data points (students eligible for special education based on social/emotional/behavioral disabilities, students identified during the IST process, Metro West Adolescent Health Survey, teacher observation,

parent reports, etc.) we are focusing on building our district capacity to meet the diverse and ever-changing social/emotional/behavioral needs of our students. The current work of the Tiered System of Support Team (TSS) is a continuation of work begun during the 2014-2015 school year. Last year's Team identified a template for establishing tiers of support and compiled an inventory of strategies being utilized across the district.

The work of the FY16 TSS Team is under the direction of John Verre, Director of Student Services and leadership of Betsy Grams, Wellness Coordinator along with District school psychologists and counselors. The Team has representation from across the school district including: teachers, psychologists, counselors, administrators, School Committee member (Lucie St. George), and parents.

In addition to the work of the TSS Team, we have provided professional development for all educators regarding strategies to respond to and prevent behaviors that detract from a student's ability to access the learning environment. Beginning in August, all district staff participated in a workshop with Jessica Minahan (author of *Behavior Code*) with part two of the workshop scheduled for 1/13/16 (elementary educators) and 1/27/16 (middle school educators). This professional development provides insight into possible triggers for disruptive behavior and helps educators to understand that all types of behavior are communication. Additionally, many staff members are participating in book study groups with the *Behavior Code* text. This will continue to be an area for building capacity and ensuring that we provide appropriate resources for educators. A brief summary of the work around TSS, based on an update provided by John Verre follows:

The TSS Team has met, thus far, on the following dates: 9/17 and 9/22 (planning meetings) and full committee meetings on 9/30, 11/16, and 12/7, with additional dates scheduled for the remainder of the school year.

Objectives for TSS Team work this year:

- ✓ Review and confirm objectives for the current year.
- ✓ Review of data, processes, programs, and practices.
- ✓ Determine ways to support collaboration among general education, special education, guidance, health and wellness, school psychology, counseling and social work.
- ✓ Foster consistency across the district, integrating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), SEB support, discipline, anti-bullying, de-escalation and communication with and engagement of families.
- ✓ Develop structures and processes for organizational support at three levels: direct service, management, and leadership.
- ✓ Identify and work collaboratively to fill gaps in interventions and services currently in place in each tier.

Action Steps to Date and Planned:

- ✓ Reviewed and confirmed objectives for the current year.

- ✓ Engaged in Stage 1 of the implementation of the Devereux Student Strength Assessment (DESSA) Screener.
- ✓ Developed a three-year plan for full implementation. (October 2105)
- ✓ Provided orientation and training for elementary administrators, psychologists and counselors. (November 2015)
- ✓ Provided orientation and training for elementary teachers in Kindergarten and Grade 3. (December 2015)
- ✓ Administered the DESSA screener in the elementary schools. (December 2015)
- ✓ Initial benchmarking in the elementary schools. (January 2016)
- ✓ Provided orientation and training for middle school administrators, psychologists, and counselors. (December 2015)
- ✓ Administer the DESSA screener in the middle school. (February 2016)
- ✓ Initial benchmarking in the middle school. (February 2016)
- ✓ Begin the implementation of Second Step, the SEL curriculum for Curtis Middle School (TBD)
- ✓ Implement the SEL segment of the elementary report card (TBD)
- ✓ Develop and begin implementation of a comprehensive plan for professional development and support in the various aspects of the Tiered System of Support (TBD)

Goal #3: Engage in review of student services programs and administrative structure.

- a. Engage in a review process with Walker Partnership.
- b. Review Walker Partnership report and devise an action plan based on recommendations from the report.

Mid-Cycle Update:

The school district engaged in a special education program evaluation process with Walker Partnership during the fall of 2015. The comprehensive process involved an independent review of relevant SPS documents, classroom observations, and interviews with staff, administrators, and parents. We await the final report and when received we will present at a School Committee meeting. In order to make informed recommendations regarding the FY17 budget, we requested, in advance of the final report, a summary of recommendations with potential budget implications (based on their findings) from Walker Partnership. In italics below are the budget considerations submitted by Walker Partnership:

FY 17 Budget Considerations as a Result of District-Wide Special Education Program Evaluation:

Walker Partnerships recently completed a district-wide evaluation of the special education programs offered by the Sudbury Public Schools. In an attempt to assist the Superintendent and the Interim Director of Special Education with the FY 17 budget development, the evaluators for this evaluation are submitting a list of recommendations

for consideration for the FY 17 budget. These recommendations will be addressed in full detail in the report.

- 1) The Team Chairs positions should be restructured to ensure that the only responsibility they have is the role of Team Chairperson. When they have dual role responsibility, one of instructional support and Chairperson it places the individual into a potentially conflicting role. The position should be full time. The Team Chairs should be responsible for initial evaluations, 3rd year re-evaluations and annual reviews.*
- 2) The middle school special education programs and staff require a dedicated Coordinator/supervisor. This role could be part of the Team Chairperson's role. The position would provide staff and program supervision. Would need to be structured to allow for evaluation of special education personnel.*
- 3) Dedicated funds will be required for professional development to provide training to special education personnel in the area of IEP development/writing (page 1), accommodations, benchmarks, and progress report writing.*
- 4) Interviewees express a need for professional development on topics related to student anxiety, mental health issues, trauma and its impact on learning, managing challenging behaviors, instructional strategies for more complex learners, best practice for instruction of complex learners.*
- 5) Dedicated funds will be required for professional development to advance the Co-Teaching Model of Instruction. There remains confusion in the interpretation and application of the co-teaching and in-classroom support models.*
- 6) Expansion of the co-teaching model at all schools should become a budget priority over the next three to five years. Ideally one co-teaching class at each elementary grade and one co-teaching class at each grade level for each content subject for the middle school. Existing special education positions should be reviewed for reallocation to the co-teaching model. When possible, Teaching Assistant positions and Tutor position should be allocated to special education teaching positions to advance the co-teaching model.*
- 7) Common planning time for collaborating teaching of the co-teaching model will need to be structured into the daily schedule of the participating teachers.*
- 8) Existing special education programs that offer a sub-separate setting should be internally reviewed and staff brought together to determine mission /values/goals/entrance-exit criteria, instructional-behavioral-therapeutic methodologies.*
- 9) A more comprehensive evaluation of the Early Childhood program should be conducted in FY 17. The program will need to develop a continuum of programming for students with more significant needs.*

Goal # 4: Implement additional safety measures at all district buildings.

- a. Coordinate with appropriate parties to develop installation and implementation plans for security and access controls.
- b. Develop plan, in partnership with Sudbury PD, for developmentally appropriate ALICE training for students.

Mid-Cycle Update:

As communicated at School Committee meetings during the fall of 2015, we are in the process of installing *exterior* cameras at each school site. School administrators have been or will be consulted regarding placement of internal monitors and an overview of use of cameras will be provided for staff prior to “going live”.

In order to continue to enhance our ability to respond to any number of unexpected events, the ALICE Safety Committee was formed with the goal of identifying/creating developmentally appropriate curriculum for students that integrates with the ALICE training staff have received. Since educators and staff members have been empowered through ALICE training to make decisions based upon the situation, students need to understand that, depending on the circumstances, they may be asked to respond differently. The initiation of the ALICE Safety Committee has provided another opportunity to work collaboratively with staff across the district as well as our partners at the Sudbury PD and FD. Principal Annette Doyle and Wellness Coordinator Betsy Grams are co-chairs of this committee that includes representation from across the school district including: SPS Lead Nurse Carol Bradford, teachers, psychologists, counselors, administrators, School Committee member (Christine Hogan), Police Chief Scott Nix, School Resource Officer Al Hutchinson, and Kevin Cutler, Sudbury Fire Department.

The ALICE Safety Committee has met, thus far, on the following dates: 9/11, 9/25, 9/29, 10/2, and 12/4 (co-chair planning meetings); 9/8, 9/28, and 12/18 (co-chair planning with Chief Nix and Officer Hutchinson) and full committee meetings on 10/8, 10/14, 10/22, and 11/5 with additional meetings scheduled for 3/10/16 and 4/28/16. A brief summary of the work of the Committee and actions planned, based on an update provided by Annette Doyle follows:

Action Steps to Date and Planned:

The ALICE Safety Committee has reviewed several samples of teacher and student support material related to Active Shooter preparation. We finalized the teacher training slideshow and it was presented to Noyes staff (November 4, 2015). All other schools will have conducted staff training by February vacation. The dates are as follows:

Nixon: December 21, 2015
Curtis: February 1, 2016
Haynes: February 3, 2016
Loring: February 3, 2016

The ALICE committee has also discussed the best course of action to train our students in the elements of ALICE in a developmentally appropriate manner. The Committee tailored student training into 3 modules: Grades PreK-2, Grades 3-5, and Grades 6-8. Working groups (ALICE Safety Committee sub-groups) met to create slideshows for each grade span. These student module drafts were presented to the Noyes staff on November 4, 2015, and their feedback was collected and shared with the full ALICE Committee. Based on this feedback, the working groups met again to revamp their student slideshows. All student slideshows were completed by December 23, 2015. Finally, plans also are in process for a Parent Informational evening (2/25/16) hosted by Annette Doyle, Betsy Grams, Chief Nix, and Officer Hutchinson.

Next Steps:

- ✓ January 27, 2016: Noyes staff drill and updated student training reviewed
- ✓ February 12, 2016: All SPS Schools have completed staff training
- ✓ February 25, 2016: Parent Informational Night at Curtis, 7 p.m.
- ✓ March 4, 2016: Noyes conducts student training (tentative date)
- ✓ March 10, 2016: ALICE Safety Committee meets to review questions on student note cards raised after Noyes student training
- ✓ March 28-31: Noyes will conduct an unannounced school drill (tentative dates)
- ✓ April 1-27: All other SPS schools will train students and conduct school drill.
- ✓ April 28, 2016: ALICE Safety Committee will meet to debrief over the year

Superintendent's Individual Goals

Professional Practice Goal:

Enhance my engagement in classroom learning and communication of student learning in Sudbury Public Schools.

- Monthly individual and shared classroom visits
- Sharing of learning observed included in monthly superintendent news to all families

Evidence of accomplishment will include calendar of individual and shared classroom observations and monthly newsletters.

Mid-Cycle Update:

Each month I join site administrators for student-learning focused classroom observations. Some months have pre-determined content areas of focus and other district administrators join us for the observations and de-brief session. In months that are not pre-designated, principals determine the content area of focus planning to cover the range of content areas by the end of May. Our de-brief sessions allow for each administrator to make a

claim regarding student learning we observed during the classroom visit and discuss the evidence we noted to support that claim. In addition, administrators discuss next steps in the supervision process and any questions they may have for the educators in the classrooms observed. Finally, the observations and follow-up discussions allow for identification of excellent practices that can be shared across the district.

In addition to the joint, announced classroom observations, this school year I have begun to conduct unannounced classroom observations on a monthly basis at each school. This allows me to see student learning in a variety of settings at a variety of times during the school day. As with the joint observations, I send a personal e-mail to each teacher whose classroom I observed highlighting student learning. I cc site administrators on all communications with teachers following the individual, unannounced observations. These unannounced observations provide an additional opportunity for me to personally observe learning in Sudbury and also enhance my conversations about student learning with site administrators.

To further my work with site administrators around student learning and to provide support when needed, I have scheduled monthly individual meetings with each principal. At these meetings we discuss current issues unique to the school and we review progress toward individual goals. Although I have an open door for principals and they do not hesitate to contact me when there is an emergency, this monthly opportunity allows for dedicated time to check-in and focus when there is not an emergency. The meetings also foster cohesion across the district and identification of best practices to be shared.

Please see the calendars below for individual and joint observations as well as individual principal meetings:

Individual Classroom Observations (September through May, except for December)

School	Date (s)
ECMS	09/08; 10/14; 10/27; 11/17
Haynes	09/25; 10/22; 11/23
Loring	09/22; 10/27; 11/16
Nixon	09/28; 10/15; 11/30
Noyes	09/18; 10/05; 11/20

Shared Classroom Observations (October through May)

School	Date (s) October (Special Ed.); November (Math); December (ELA)
ECMS	10/22; 11/02; 12/01
Haynes	10/15; 11/30; 12/21
Loring	10/21; 11/23; 12/14
Nixon	10/30; 11/13; <i>12/07(used time to work with principal and leadership team on school incident – will re-schedule to January)</i>
Noyes	10/19; 11/17; 12/10

On-Site Meetings with Principals

Principal	Meeting Dates (September through June)
Doyle	09/30; 10/30; 11/24; 12/18
Flanagan	09/21; 10/08; 11/21; 12/23
Lambert	10/02; 10/21; 11/13; 12/10
MacDonald	09/15; 10/26; <i>11/25 cancelled due to site needs</i> ; 12/16
McGillicuddy	09/17; 10/19; 11/16; 12/23

The second part of this goal involves communicating with families regarding student learning that I observe during my classroom visits. I have received unsolicited positive feedback from parents and staff regarding the highlights I have provided in my newsletters. This has been an enjoyable exercise on my part as I witness many examples of excellent teaching and learning during my regular visits to our schools. E-mails with my newsletters are opened by approximately 40%-50% of the recipients. The newsletters also are posted on our website.

Newsletters for October, November, and an abbreviated version for December may be viewed at: [Superintendent News](#).

Student Learning Goal:

Implement a comprehensive professional development plan for administrators to enhance utilization of the supervision and evaluation process in support of learning for all students.

Evidence of accomplishment will include calendar of professional development activities, selected agendas, selected minutes from professional activities, calendar of shared classroom observations, and calendar of superintendent/site administrator meetings.

Mid-Cycle Update:

Collaborating with the Sudbury Educator Association (SEA), the administrative staff of the Sudbury Public Schools has worked to implement the evaluation system with fidelity, including the incorporation of student growth measures, student and staff feedback, aligned artifacts and evidence of practice, opportunities for sharing exemplary practice, professional development, and a robust induction and mentoring programming. Approximately 254 teachers and 16 administrators participate annually in the evaluation process with a minimum of 1834 evaluation documents created. We are committed to a meaningful supervision and evaluation process and are now taking our work as supervisors and evaluators to the next level. This goal is purposely integrated with my professional practice goal.

Two major initiatives support the achievement of this goal. The initiatives include a comprehensive professional development program provided by EDCO staff development

consultant Mary Sterling. This professional development is organized through the Office of Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain and engages all administrators in supervision and evaluation practices that place student learning at the center of observational and evaluative feedback. This professional development also includes efforts to enhance calibration of feedback across all evaluators. Administrator workshop sessions with Mary Sterling were held on 9/9/15; 10/15/15; 11/12/15; and will continue on 1/14/16; and 3/3/16. In addition, each administrator engages in 2 hours of individual on-site coaching and joint observations with Mary Sterling. Some site-based administrative teams have opted to work together with Mary while others engaged on an individual basis, depending on needs of the teams. Mid-course evaluation feedback of this professional development is overwhelmingly positive, indicating strong learning outcomes and significant shifts in practice. Most administrators cite an improvement of practice and a clarity of focus on student learning outcomes, indicating alignment with the MA Educator Evaluation criteria of “plac[ing] student learning at the center.”

In conjunction with our professional development, I conduct student-learning focused on-site visits with school and district administrators on a monthly basis (see tables in Professional Practice Goal update above). Assistant Superintendent, Kim Swain also visits schools on a rotating schedule with a focus on curriculum implementation.

The second initiative involves increased utilization of the in-house expertise of our ELA (Jen Soalt) and Math (Maggie McGinty) Curriculum Coordinators who I have scheduled to provide professional development on a monthly basis during SALT meetings. As described in the ELA and mathematics initiatives in Goal #1, Jen and Maggie have provided professional development during SALT meetings. Feedback from administrators regarding Jen and Maggie’s presentations has been extremely positive with most administrators finding the experience and information helpful when observing lessons and talking with teachers regarding practice and student learning. This training along with that from Mary Sterling helps to coordinate and calibrate our efforts to engage in robust conversations about student learning with each other and those we supervise and also to provide high quality feedback to educators.

During the fall, Jen and Maggie joined me at each school for content area focused classroom observations and de-brief sessions with all principals (see schedule in the professional practice goal update above). Our de-brief sessions allow for each administrator to make a claim regarding student learning during the observation and discuss the evidence they noted to support that claim. In addition, administrators discuss next steps in the supervision process and any questions they may have for the educators observed. Finally, the observations and follow-up discussions allow for identification of excellent practices that can be shared across the district.

Last Word: It has been a busy first half of the school year with much valuable learning time for the administrative team. It is an honor to work with such dedicated professionals who are committed to life-long learning!