

Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Report
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February 15, 2017

This mid-cycle report provides an update on district progress relative to FY17 Goals as well as an update on progress toward superintendent goals. Information in this Mid-Cycle Report with regard to District Goals #1 - #3 includes summary reports provided by SPS team members including (alphabetically): Holly Estes (Science Curriculum Specialist), Betsy Grams (Wellness Curriculum Specialist), Denise Rochlin (Consulting Special education Administrator), Jennifer Soalt (ELA Curriculum Coordinator), Kim Swain (Assistant Superintendent), John Verre (Student Services Director), and Karen Wolfson (Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator). This report is also reflective of the efforts of all educators and administrators across the school district as they work to meet the diverse needs of Sudbury students on a daily basis.

SUDBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SPS Vision:

We are committed to excellence in educating students to be knowledgeable, creative, independent thinkers who are caring, collaborative members of the school and wider communities.

SPS Theory of Action:

If SPS provides:

- Differentiated high quality instruction
- Safe school environment
- Instructional leadership and ongoing professional development
- The use of data to inform instruction

Then:

- Students will be challenged and their varied learning needs met
- Capacity of educators will grow
- Existing achievement gaps will narrow

FY17 District Goals

Approved by SPS School Committee July 20, 2016

SPS Goal #1 - Enhance Inclusive Educational Opportunities for Students

Goal #1 (a). Implement Phase I of Inclusion Training across the district. Training designed by Inclusion Team will be presented at each school.

Mid-Cycle Update:

As reported by Dr. Denise Rochlin during the [Student Services presentation](#) on January 25, 2017, Inclusion Training at each individual school is in process. The training, designed by the SPS Inclusion Team under Dr. Rochlin's leadership, includes information

regarding inclusive instructional practices as well as scenarios for participants to analyze. The training is designed to help educators generalize the information to the classroom setting. This initiative will be completed before the end of the school year.

Goal #1 (b). Convene Working Group of Educators to explore challenge opportunities for students in and out of the classroom. The Working Group will make recommendations by the end of the school year.

Mid-Cycle Update:

A working group named *Challenge for All Committee* convened in December 2016 under the leadership of Ms. Kim Swain, SPS Assistant Superintendent. The *Challenge for All Committee* consists of SPS educators and administrators. The Committee is engaged in two initial tasks: literature review and creation of challenge scenarios. Following completion of these tasks, the Committee will solicit feedback from SPS faculty regarding strategies and approaches currently being employed and what they might need (e.g. training, materials, support) in order to more effectively challenge all students. The Committee is also considering plans for a parent forum.

The goal of the *Challenge for All Committee* is to develop a common understanding of challenge and enhance educators' capacity to meet the needs of students who demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards or exceptional competencies in more specialized domains. Ultimately, the Committee strives to create a clearly articulated vision of what highly engaging, rigorous learning looks like in the core academic domains and what instructional practices support such a vision. Having such would help to focus professional development, bring clarity to the instructional indicators on the MA Teacher Evaluation Rubric, and help educators focus on learning strategies that are applicable across content areas.

See more information on the charge of the *Challenge for All Committee* as well as agendas for meetings held thus far:

- [Charge](#)
- [Agenda](#)

Goal #1 (c). Redesign LLD program through collaboration and professional development with Landmark.

Mid-Cycle Update:

The redesign of the SPS LLD program has been initiated under the leadership of Dr. Denise Rochlin, consulting special education administrator. As reported by Dr. Rochlin at the Student Services presentation on January 25, 2017 we have implemented robust professional development in partnership with [Landmark](#). General education and special education teachers participated in professional development during the summer 2016 followed by on-site consultation during the current school year.

The professional development and consultation with Landmark has enhanced our capacity to meet the needs of students with language-based learning disabilities. It also has provided educators with instructional strategies and resources that benefit **all**

students as strategies/resources may be incorporated into general education classroom instruction. When special educators and general educators learn together and collaborate regarding instruction, all students benefit.

SPS Goal #2 - Enhance Social/Emotional/Behavioral Supports for Students

- a. Implement Phase I/II of plan designed by Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Team.
- b. Implement Phase II of DESSA Screening expanding to Grades 1-4 and two anchor teams at each grade level at ECMS.
- c. Identify Pilot Units of Second Step Curriculum at ECMS.

Social Emotional Learning is a core component of the Massachusetts Department of Education's fifth strategic priority: to support students Social, Emotional, and Health needs. The goal of this strategy is to promote tiered systems of supports that foster safe, positive, healthy, and inclusive whole-school learning environments that:

- Enable students to develop social emotional competencies, achieve academic and non-academic success in school, and maintain physical and psychological health and well-being; and
- Integrate services and align initiatives that promote students' behavioral health, including social and emotional learning and other similar initiatives.

Sudbury Public Schools utilized the School Theory of Action framework to implement a comprehensive social-emotional learning program. A summary of the work of the SPS Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Team, under the leadership of Ms. Kim Swain, Assistant Superintendent and Ms. Betsy Grams, SPS Wellness Curriculum Specialist follows:

- The district Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) committee conducted a needs assessment in FY'16. The committee meets regularly to identify practices and develop protocols that support consistent responses to students' social-emotional-behavioral needs.
- A professional learning calendar was created that aims to build educator capacity for supporting academic, social, and emotional learning. Professional learning this year is focused on how to use the Devereux student assessment tools, best practices in social-emotional learning, building common understanding of the 8 social-emotional competencies identified by the Devereux Institute, analyzing SEL data reports, and ways to plan and implement supports for targeted instruction using evidence-based curricula. Professional learning for middle school teachers for the 2017-18 school year will include instructional support and guidance for implementing the Second Step curriculum.
- The district adopted evidence-based programs for social-emotional learning for students across all grades; PK - GOLD Program, K – 5 teachers use Open Circle, grade 6 – 8 teachers will implement the Second Step curriculum next

year during Connection block, and all grades will use the DESSA Strategies bank resources.

- District-wide, staff are integrating SEL at three levels of school functioning; curriculum and instruction, school-wide practices and policies, and family and community partnerships.
- Systems are in place to monitor progress of academic, social, and emotional learning through data collection and inquiry, and to evaluate the implementation of key program components.

Goal #2 (a). Implement Phase I/II of plan designed by Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Team.

Mid-Cycle Update:

The following professional development and curriculum planning activities, timelines, presentations, and artifacts provide a summary of the actions taken thus far to implement Phase I/II of the SPS SEL Plan:

- As SPS has been at the forefront of the state and national initiatives regarding social-emotional learning, Kim Swain, Assistant Superintendent and John Verre, Director of Student Services presented SPS work in the area of SEL at the Massachusetts Associations of School Superintendents' conference, July 2016. [MASS slideshow](#)
- 2016-17 elementary school [implementation timeline](#) for the SEL program components, including planning meetings, professional learning, student assessments using the DESSA tools, and data meetings for planning supports.
- 2016-17 middle school [implementation timeline](#) for the SEL program components.
- Professional learning 9/28/16 ILAP session for kindergarten teachers using the DESSA strategies and resource bank, [SEL: Guided Exploration of Online Resources](#)
- Professional learning ILAP session on 10/24/16 for grades K, 1, 3, and 4 teachers; [SEL: Using DESSA and Open Circle to Target Instruction](#). The primary goals of this session were to build common understanding of the 8 competencies and to build educator capacity in using DESSA data to plan interventions.
- Feedback after professional development with responses accessible to all staff participants: [Questions](#) submitted by teachers on "ticket to leave" during the 10/24/16 ILAP session.
- Administrative Professional Development: Middle school [SALT meeting for DESSA implementation](#) held on 11/29/16.
- Educator Professional Development: Presentation to Curtis staff on 1/9/17 on [SEL: DESSA Implementation](#) for 2016/17 school year.
- Integration of ELA with SEL: [Literature lists](#) of books containing social-emotional learning themes for use in elementary classrooms.
- Integration of ELA with SEL: Interactive [SEL read aloud](#) sample lesson plans aligned to the eight social-emotional competencies for use in elementary classrooms. Dr. Jennifer Soalt, SPS ELA Coordinator, created the lessons in collaboration with Ms. Betsy Grams, SPS Wellness Curriculum Specialist.
- Social norming posters were created using 2016 Connectedness Survey data and can be found hanging in multiple locations at Curtis. Social norming is an

intervention that aims to correct misperceptions by exposing actual norms to benefit a community or individuals by motivating people to reduce problem behaviors or increase participation in healthy behaviors.

- SEL – Student Perceptions:
 - [90% believe it is important to attend a school with diversity](#)
 - [Curtis is a place where...](#)
 - [99% of Curtis students believe every student should feel safe & included](#)

Goal #2 (b). Implement Phase II of DESSA Screening expanding to grades 1 & 4 and two anchor teams at each grade level at Curtis.

Mid-Cycle Update:

Phase II of DESSA Screening implementation has begun as planned. DESSA Screening implementation guidelines, sample reports, and protocols for analysis of data and planning for student supports are included below:

- [General administration guidelines](#) for educators using the Devereux assessment tools.
- [Site report](#) from Beginning of Year (BOY), October 2016, showing data by class. The report includes data representing each class for grades K, 1, 3, and 4, and a summary of all 4 grades.
- [Class profile](#) from the DESSA mini-1 form, October 2016.
- [Class report](#) showing full DESSA data, categorized by the eight social-emotional competencies, October 2016.
- Individual [student report](#) from full DESSA showing a 72-item analysis of each skill within the eight social-emotional competencies, October 2016.
- Sample social-emotional learning [site report from Curtis](#) Middle School using the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment mini-3.
- DESSA [data meeting protocol](#) used by elementary and middle school teams to guide discussion and data analysis surrounding social-emotional-behavioral domains.
- Social-emotional learning [planning guide](#) for educators to use when creating student supports and interventions based upon data.

Goal #2 (c). Identify Pilot Units of Second Step Curriculum at ECMS

Mid-Cycle Update:

Planning for implementation of select units of the Second Step Curriculum at Curtis Middle School for FY18 has begun. The Second Step Curriculum is compatible with what students in the elementary schools experience through Open Circle. In addition, the Second Step Curriculum also aligns with the social competencies identified by the Devereux Institute and hence the DESSA Screener currently being implemented.

- A screenshot of the [DESSA resource bank](#) showing the evidence-based curricula that teachers will access, including Second Step for the middle grades.
- The social skills curriculum, Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention,

- will be taught during the “connection” block next year (FY18). The Extended Time Committee and the Connection Subcommittee created an implementation plan for this curriculum and the social-emotional learning monthly themes. The [Extended Time slideshow](#) has been presented to school committee and Curtis staff.
- The Second Step curriculum and social-emotional learning themes are outlined in the [2017/18 implementation calendar](#). The teaching materials are stored in Google Drive and are organized by monthly themes and units of study.
 - The Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention middle school [curriculum crosswalk](#) highlights the curriculum concepts to the social-emotional competencies identified by the Devereux Institute.
 - Sample [6th and 8th grade lesson](#) from the Second Step Curriculum. The sixth grade sample lesson is from the Empathy and Communication unit, and the eighth grade lesson is focused on de-escalating a tense situation from the Emotion Management unit.
 - The Curtis Technology Integration Specialist in collaboration with the Wellness Curriculum Specialist will organize SEL teacher resources and instructional materials.
 - Screenshot of [community and team-building activities](#) found in a shared folder in Google Drive. Teachers can choose the lessons and activities they will facilitate with their students in Connection block during the month of September 2017.

Goal #2 (d). Establish School Start Time Exploration (SSTE) Committee. The SSTE Committee will make recommendations by the end of the school year.

Mid-Cycle Update:

The SPS School Committee established a sub-committee to explore middle school start time in light of current research regarding adolescent sleep needs and impact on student health. The sub-committee includes SC members Ms. Christine Hogan and Ms. Ellen Winer Joachim and was chaired by Ms. Christine Hogan. The sub-committee also includes members of the SPS middle school and elementary staff and administration as well as SPS parents.

Activities of the sub-committee thus far include:

- Review of current adolescent sleep research.
- Review of actions taken by other districts exploring secondary start times.
- Surveys developed and administered for students, staff, and parents to determine awareness of adolescent sleep research, to identify patterns of sleep of our students and impact on students, and to determine perceptions regarding the current school start time.
- Community education provided through a talk by Dr. Judith Owens on January 12, 2017, open to parents and the broader community.
- Recommendation to SPS School Committee to reorganize the School Start Time Sub-Committee to work with Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School and continue pursuing the possibility of a later school start time.

Goal #3 - Begin Implementation of new MA Science, Technology, and

Engineering Standards

- a. Implement K-2 professional development programming aligned with new MA Science and Technology/Engineering Standards.
- b. Implement Pilot Units of Study K-2.
- c. Steering Committee for Implementation of Standards.

Goal #3 (a). Implement K-2 professional development programming aligned with new MA Science and Technology/Engineering Standards.

Mid-Cycle Update:

A summary of ongoing K - 2 Science and Technology/Engineering Professional Development Activities is included below:

K-2 Introduction to the Science & Engineering Standards

- What: Introduction to the science & engineering practices and disciplinary core ideas in the new standards.
- When: August 29th, full day PD, two 2 ½ hour sessions
- Who: Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes; Grades K, 1, and 2
- [Intro to K-2 Science Standards Presentation](#), [Science Practices](#), [K-2 Life Science Standards](#), [12 Pumpkin Seeds](#), [Exit Ticket](#)

Standards & Curriculum Materials Review & Discussion - Part 1

- What: School & grade level teams discussed the new standards and explored new [FOSS](#) curriculum materials and Model Curriculum Units (MCU's).
- When: September 28th ILAP, 1 ½ hour session
- Who: Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes; Grades 1 and 2
- [Agenda 09/28/17](#), [Investigating Material Properties](#)

Standards & Curriculum Materials Review & Discussion - Part 2

- What: Curriculum materials review discussion, selection of materials to pilot
- When: October 26th ILAP, 1 ½ hour session
- Who: Participants: Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes; Grade 2
- [Agenda 10/26](#)

Standards & Curriculum Materials Review & Discussion

- What: School & grade level teams discussed the new standards and explored new [FOSS](#) curriculum materials and Model Curriculum Units (MCU's).
- When: September 28th ILAP, 1 ½ hour session
- Who: Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes; Grades 1
- [Waves: Sound & Light](#) and [FOSS](#) Solids & Liquids kit

STEMScopes Digital Curriculum Presentation

- What: STEMScopes representatives gave a presentation to demonstrate the use of this K-12 digital curriculum. Teachers had the opportunity to explore the curriculum.
- When: January 25th ILAP, 1 ½ hour session
- Who: Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes; Grades K and 1
- [STEMScopes Digital Curriculum](#)

Curriculum Development and Support

- Who/What: Work sessions with kindergarten and first grade teams at Haynes to work on Sound & Light unit and standards (grade 1) and physical science standards (kindergarten)
- When: Every 3rd Wednesday AM, year-long during PLC, 1 hour sessions
- [Waves: Sound & Light](#) and [FOSS Solids & Liquids kit](#)

Curriculum Development and Support

- Who/What: Work sessions with Nixon first grade team and Noyes K team to work on integrating technology into the new science & engineering standards
- When: Periodic meetings from January - June, 45 minute sessions
- [Nixon Tadpole Technology](#), [Noyes Chick Technology](#)

In addition to the work in K-2, Ms. Estes, Science Curriculum Specialist is also providing the following Professional Development Activities for Grade 5 and Middle School Science:

GRADE 5 ACTIVITIES

Standards Transition Support

- Who/What: Meetings with two Loring fifth grade science teachers to discuss standards transition
- When: Monthly, 30 minute sessions

Curriculum Development and Support

- Who/What: Work with Haynes Grade 5 teacher to develop an agriculture unit that incorporates the new fifth grade standards; included support in the classroom
- When: On-going throughout October, November, December
- [Agriculture Unit Planning](#), [Where is Earth's Water?](#), [Watersheds](#)

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

This marks the third year that the middle school teachers have focused on the new science standards. During 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, while awaiting the final approval of the standards by the Board of Education, the science and engineering teachers focused on learning about the science and engineering practices that are integral to the new standards. After the April 2016 approval of the standards, work sessions were held to make changes to the grade level placement of the standards with the goal of providing opportunities to build on, not repeat, difficult science concepts.

Middle School Standards Distribution

- What: Standards distribution among 6th, 7th, and 8th grades
- When: September 14th, November 14th, January 23rd; 1 ½ hour sessions
- Who: Grades 6, 7, 8 science teachers
- [MS Agenda 1/23/17](#), [Draft Science 6-8 Standards Distribution](#), [Draft Sixth Grade Units](#), [Seventh Grade Units](#), [Eighth Grade Units](#)

Modeling in Science

- Who/What: The L-S High School science department chair and SPS science & engineering curriculum specialist designed a professional development session at the high school for the high school and middle school teachers. The main focus of the session was to teach teachers a novel method of teaching students how to develop scientific models. The work was structured so that high school and middle school teachers had much needed time for collaboration.
- When: December 14th, 1 ½ hour session
- [Instructional Leadership in the Science Practices](#)

Standards Review and Curriculum Revisions for Engineering

- What: Review of engineering standards, distribute between 6 & 7 grades, curriculum writing, teachers were awarded a \$30,000 SERF grant to design and update the engineering classrooms.
- When: September 14th ILAP, November 14th, January 23rd; 1 ½ hour sessions
- Who: Engineering teachers
- [Engineering Curriculum Plan 2017-18](#)

Standards Transition Support

- Who/What: Planning with the 6th grade teachers to discuss their grade level standards implementation plan.
- When: January 26th curriculum time, 45-minute session, future dates to be planned.
- [Sixth Grade Implementation Plan](#)

Goal #3 (b). Implement Pilot Units of Study K-2

There are several well-established science curriculum programs (FOSS, STC) that have responded to the *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS) by tweaking and labeling their programs as NGSS-aligned. A close look at these programs reveals few significant changes that allow for full alignment to the new Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Framework. Several teachers are piloting FOSS kits to determine their level of alignment and determine how much additional work will be required to create units that are aligned.

STEMScopes is a digital K-12 science curriculum developed by Rice University and Accelerated Learning in recent years. It is subscription-based however we have been provided full access to test it with any number of teachers until June 2017.

The curriculum is organized using the 5 E's (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) of science that guide teachers to a constructivist approach to teaching science. The digital platform allows the developers to modify the program to reflect state standards, not just the national NGSS.

Current and Future Pilot Plans for K-2:

Kindergarten

Haynes: FOSS Solids & Liquids

Loring: possibly STEMScopes

Nixon: possibly STEMScopes

Noyes: STEMScopes

First Grade

Haynes: FOSS Sound & Light, Waves: Light & Sound
Loring: Waves: Light & Sound, possibly STEMScopes
Nixon: STEMScopes (spring)
Noyes: STEMScopes (spring)

Second Grade

Haynes: FOSS Insects & Plants
Loring: Solids & Liquids
Nixon: Solids & Liquids
Noyes: Solids & Liquids, Pebbles, Sand & Silt

Goal #3 (c). Steering Committee for Implementation of Standards

The Science & Engineering Steering Committee was initially convened during the 2015-16 school year. This committee includes elementary and middle school teachers, an administrator, and a community member and meets monthly for 1 ½ hour sessions. Last year the Committee began writing enduring understandings and essential questions based on the new standards for each grade level K - 5. It is anticipated that the Steering Committee will finish working on the physical science standards and fifth grade life science, physical science, and earth science this year.

Steering Committee meetings this school year have included discussions about current pilots and determining a shift in direction for next year's pilot with grades 3-5. One of the most important successes of the Steering Committee is its role in creating science leaders throughout the district. Members of the committee have become strong advocates for science and engineering in their buildings.

Utilizing the [Understanding by Design](#) (UbD) framework, draft essential questions have been developed as detailed below:

Kindergarten Essential Questions

[LS-K](#), [ESS-K](#)

First Grade Essential Questions

[LS-1](#), [ESS-1](#)

Second Grade Essential Questions

[LS-2](#), [ESS-2](#)

Third Grade Essential Questions

[LS-3](#), [ESS-3](#)

Fourth Grade Essential Questions

[LS-4](#), [ESS-4](#)

Goal #4 - Engage in a process of Strategic Planning and develop a 3-5 year plan for Sudbury Public Schools

- a. Identify Strategic Planning Facilitator
- b. Engage facilitator to work with SPS to create a multi-year Strategic Plan
- c. Communicate Strategic Plan

Mid-Cycle Update:

We have established a Strategic Planning Team with representation of staff and administrators across the district as well as parent representatives, Chief Nix as our community partner, and Mr. Richard Tinsley as the School Committee representative on the team. John Kennedy and Anna Cross from New England School Development Council (NESDEC) serve as the facilitators of the strategic planning process.

Activities thus far include:

- The Strategic Planning Team has met twice since November when the Team was established. At the first meeting the Team learned about the process and offered suggestions regarding groups to be included in the Focus Group process. The Team determined that it would be helpful to provide an opportunity for parents of students in the METCO program to meet in Boston and also to include an opportunity for feedback from L-S.
- Multiple Focus Group sessions were held with staff, administration, parents/community (Sudbury and Boston), and L-S leadership team to identify topic areas for future goal development. Focus groups were conducted using a consistent protocol for identifying strengths and challenges of the district. All SPS staff had the opportunity to participate during scheduled ILAP or staff meeting times to be certain that we had as much input as possible. Unfortunately, despite providing additional opportunities for parents and community members to participate, we had just over 30 parents participate in Focus Group Sessions.
- The Strategic Planning Team reviewed a summary from the first set of Focus Group data and will review the final report at an upcoming meeting on March 2nd. Next steps include development of a survey to receive feedback on broad topic areas for goal development in the 5-year strategic plan.
- Next Steps include administration of survey and analysis of results, development of major goal topic areas by the Strategic Planning Team, approval of the topic areas by SPS School Committee, development of specific initiatives, and implementation plan by administration, and final approval of the Strategic Plan by SPS School Committee.
- We anticipate that our work may extend through the summer in order to prepare the final copy of the SPS Strategic Plan.

Individual Superintendent Goals

Student Learning Goal: Establish and implement enhanced process for review of student achievement with district administrators.

- Provide and participate in professional development for administrators related to

- supervision of student learning.
- Joint classroom observations and de-brief with principals.
- Review of student progress (at SALT meetings and during monthly school visits) with focus on achievement gaps and need for additional challenge.

Mid-Cycle Update:

Administrator Professional Development:

The entire administrative team is engaged in professional development activities with EDCO consultant Mary Sterling. The focus of our professional development is “keeping the focus on student learning” through the supervision and evaluation process. We are refining our practices and developing consistent strategies for analyzing student learning through classroom observation and discussions with teachers as well as through an analysis of student work. Administrative teams at each school are focused on how **all** students are experiencing learning opportunities and particular attention is focused on students who may not be meeting grade level standards as well as those who meet and exceed grade level standards.

The goals for our work with Mary Sterling for FY17 are:

- Consistent and Timely Common Practices
- Collaboration among Evaluators
- Refine Skills of Observation, Feedback, Teacher Coaching, Using Data

Our focus areas for communication with educators are:

- Keep the focus on Student Learning
- Support two-way collaboration, partnership
- Consistency in communication across the district

We have participated in professional development as an administrative team on the following dates thus far this school year: 8/16 (as part of our beginning of year (BOY) administrative retreat); 10/18; 11/8; and 01/10. Our final whole group session will be held on March 28, 2017. During our group sessions with Mary we have the opportunity to learn new practices, develop common protocols, and share and critique our own work. In the time between whole group sessions each administrator engages in individual or school team consultation (determined by administrator choice) with Mary to build on individual strengths and to challenge us to move to the next level of our practice.

In order for us to have a record of our work and easy access to protocols, samples of exemplary supervision and evaluation materials, and our SPS created documents, we have set-up a Resource Bank accessible to all SPS administrators within the SALT Drive.

Joint Classroom Observation and De-Brief with Principals:

I visit classrooms with principals on a monthly basis to observe student learning. We typically visit 3-4 classrooms and then follow-up with a de-brief session. During the observation we are focused on student learning and how, specifically, students are engaged in the learning activities we observe. If appropriate, we ask students about their work while we are in the classroom. We observe what students are expected to do and how they think about their work. We listen as students ask and answer questions. And, we notice the range of student work samples as we circulate a classroom during a

learning activity (again, as appropriate depending on the activity).

The de-brief session involves making claims about student learning and identifying specific evidence from our observations to support our claims. The site principal and other administrators who may be present share their thinking prior to me sharing my thoughts. During the de-brief session, we focus on impressions of whole-group engagement as well as individual learners. We identify what went well for students and what might be helpful if particular learners did not appear engaged during the observation. We do not make broad generalizations based on one observation, however, we are able to notice how students respond and engage within the period of time we are in the classroom. Site administrators have the benefit of multiple observations in a given classroom allowing them to make generalizations and provide specific feedback to teachers. We utilize what we have learned and are learning through the administrative professional development during our observations and de-brief sessions.

When observing special education classrooms, John Verre, Director of Student Services and Stephanie Juriansz, Early Childhood Administrator joins us. Stephanie also participates in observations in the PK and K classrooms. For observations focused on mathematics, Karen Wolfson, Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator joins as does Jennifer Soalt, ELA Curriculum Coordinator when we focus on ELA. Each of these professionals, assistant principals, and the Assistant Superintendent also observe student learning on their own in their capacity as educator evaluators. As part of the evaluation process for administrators that I supervise, we review together a sample of the administrator's observation reports during individual monthly meetings and at the Mid-Cycle evaluation meeting.

Our classroom observation schedule for the year includes (note that Principal's Choice includes a list of topic areas all to be covered before the end of the school year, scheduled at the principal's discretion):

October: Special Education, Inclusion

November: Mathematics (including focus on differentiation)

December: ELA (including focus on differentiation)

January: Principal's Choice (Science, Special Education Programs, World Language, PE, Music, Art, UA, Special Education Assistants)

February: Principal's Choice

March: Principal's Choice

April: Principal's Choice

May: Principal's Choice

Student Progress Review

We have undertaken a robust analysis of student progress based on a review of available data. These data include, but are not limited to, information available through: PARCC/MCAS results, F&P, iReady, MAP, IST, 504s, and IEPs. John Verre, Director of Student Services has provided detailed analysis of progress for all students on IEPs. Jennifer Soalt, ELA Curriculum Coordinator and Karen Wolfson, Mathematics Coordinator analyze subject specific district-wide and school-based data to inform decisions related to professional development, resources, and coaching needs. Teachers, on an individual basis and in groups, review student progress based on a variety of assessments (teacher

created and standardized) to meet the needs of diverse learners.

As indicated above in the section on joint classroom observations, observing student learning is an essential part of the work of SPS administrators. In addition to results of assessments, it is important to review student work to identify how individual students are progressing as well as to identify themes or patterns in the work samples of groups of students. Identifying these themes or patterns informs instruction and may reveal potential areas of need for additional resources. This school year, we have initiated a process of Looking At Student Work (LASW) using a [variety of protocols](#). By the end of the school year each principal will have selected a protocol and brought samples of student work to a SALT meeting for the entire group to review. Many of the protocols may also be used at school sites during PLCs or Data Team meetings, as appropriate. During LASW, each principal leads the session utilizing their selected protocol and asks the group for specific feedback regarding the student work samples. Thus far Sharon MacDonald, Haynes principal, has shared ELA student work and Annette Doyle, Noyes principal, has shared Social Studies projects. Each principal has brought a wide variety of student work so we review the work of students who have particular challenges, those who are currently deemed to be “at standard”, and those who have a high level of skills entering the assignment. This allows us to see how individual students perform and to analyze the activity for accessibility and extension.

Professional Practice Goal: Implement an electronic Central Office query system allowing for two-way communication with parents, staff, and students.

- Implement an additional mode for communication with Central Office that will provide an opportunity for parents, staff, and students to ask a question and/or share a concern, idea, or compliment.
- Provide report to the community regarding themes and frequency of queries.
- Develop FAQ linked to website, as needed, based on themes of inquiries.

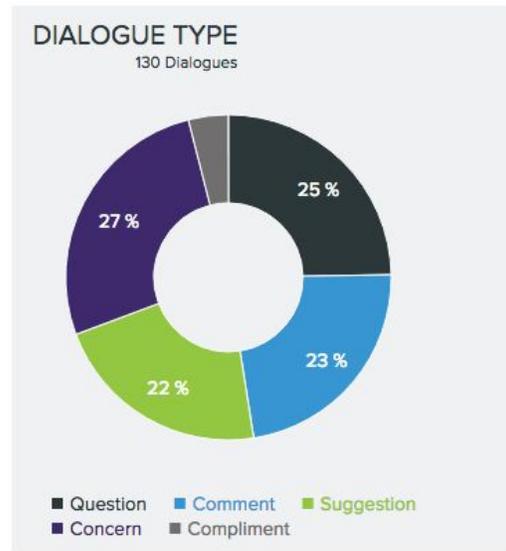
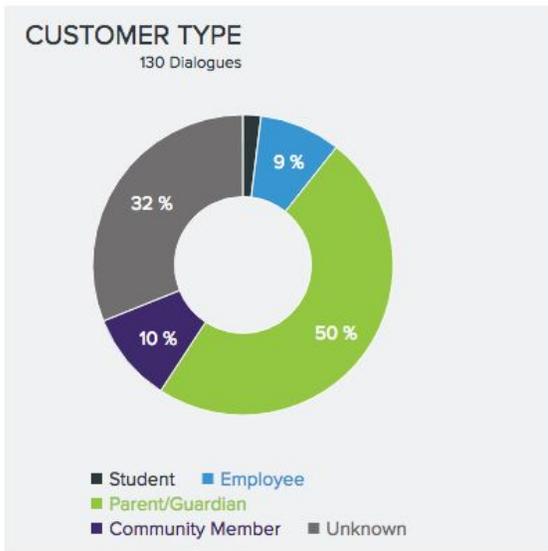
Mid-Cycle Update:

In November, we implemented and “went live” with the Let’s Talk system to solicit feedback and provide another opportunity for communication with the Central office team. To date we have received 130 communications. Let’s Talk provides us with the ability to analyze trending topics and to determine any area where we might provide additional information. The majority of communications received to date are in the area of budget. Feedback from staff, parents, and the community has allowed us to understand topics that are of importance to stakeholders and to include this feedback in our decision-making process. As a result of the communications regarding budget, we have begun to post all

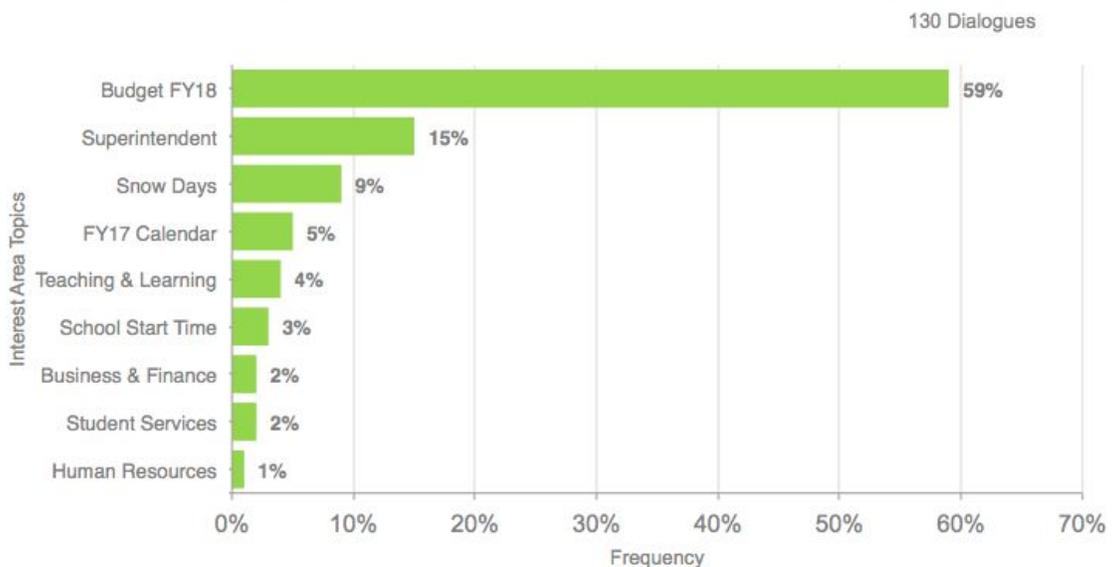
Statistics from November through Friday, February 10, 2017 may be viewed below:



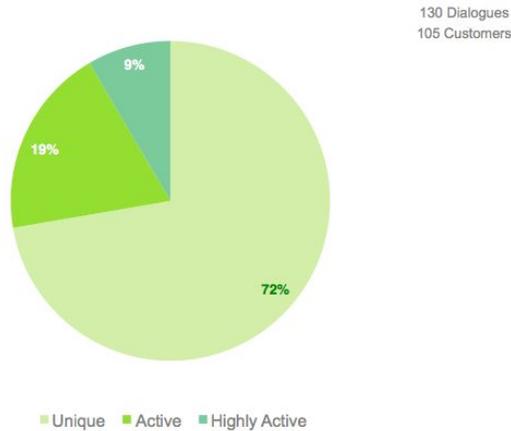
The person submitting a communication, if they so choose may select “Interest areas”. The administrator who reviews and responds to the communication selects “Tag categories”. For example, the majority of the communications in the interest area of “superintendent” related to budget /budget cuts, snow days, and/or the start date for FY18 (calendar tag) and therefore, I tagged them as such. All communications are catalogued under both designations.



Trending: Interest Area Topics



Source: Customer Frequency



Last Word: The first half of the school year has been very busy and it is important to note, again, that what is included in this report is reflective of the work of educators, support staff, and administrators across the district. Each SPS team member has an important role in providing a safe (physically and emotionally) and enriching learning environment for our students. There are many other purposeful activities in place in addition to what is included in this mid-cycle report, including but not limited to: content area planning (other than the three areas included in this report), student activity planning and supervision, school and student safety planning, grant writing, and development of enhanced partnerships outside of SPS. And, as a matter of necessity, many staff members are involved in a variety of compliance reporting activities that require time and expertise in order for SPS to continue to receive state and federal funding. Finally, many members of the SPS team have been involved in the FY18 budgeting process in order to advocate for the needs of our students.

It is an honor to work with such a talented team of professionals who care deeply about the students we serve and who are continuously in pursuit of innovative ways to enhance the learning environment for all Sudbury students.