

Superintendent's Summative Report
Anne S. Wilson, PhD

June 1, 2017

Introduction

It is a pleasure to serve the Sudbury community and have the opportunity to work with caring and talented professionals as well as supportive and actively engaged families to meet the diverse learning needs of our students. Students in Sudbury receive an excellent education preparing them for high school and beyond. We are committed to providing a rich academic and social/emotional learning environment and we recognize that all students have individual strengths and challenges. Our team of educators, support staff, and administrators work together to assess our progress, determine professional development needs, share internal expertise, and make necessary adjustments, as indicated, through the use of qualitative and quantitative data. We continue to focus on goals that address both academic and social/emotional learning needs. Our goals reflect our commitment to: meeting individual student needs, continuous learning for adults as well as students, and a strong moral purpose to facilitate growth for all learners.

Information included in this Summative Report was compiled from multiple sources including reports from district administrators with responsibility for particular initiatives. Included at the end of this report is a sample of additional work completed or in progress that supports our FY17. Aside from mandates, we work very hard to focus only on efforts and initiatives that support our district goals and help us to be proactive as well as responsive to unanticipated student needs. I firmly believe that focusing on fewer initiatives in a deeper manner allows us to build capacity, enhances consistency across the district, and avoids fragmentation.

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

SPS is engaged in a multi-year focus on inclusive educational opportunities. The expected outcome of our work on this goal is that we will have enhanced our capacity to include a wide range of learners in diverse learning opportunities that allow each child to grow from wherever their starting point is. We know that each student has a unique learning profile with strengths and challenges. This school year, each school State of the School presentation included information regarding their inclusive educational opportunities. The State of the School Presentations may be found here: [School Committee Plans and Presentations](#).

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

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 scenarios involved challenges that staff members may have in promoting an inclusive educational environment. Through the presentation teachers engaged in problem solving related to inclusion practices and began a dialogue. The training is designed to help educators generalize the information to the classroom setting. Thus far, trainings have been held as follows: Noyes (10/19/16); Haynes (11/17/16); Nixon (12/05/16); and Loring (12/07/16). The training at Curtis has yet to be arranged.

The Inclusion Team collected information and questions following each presentation. The Team reported that during Inclusion Training staff members were positive and engaged in productive conversations about the scenarios making varied suggestions for steps that could be taken to become a more inclusive environment. Our work around inclusive educational environments will continue and we will continue to seek input from educators to determine professional development and resource needs.

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.

As part of the district work on inclusive educational opportunities, we also have focused specifically on the needs of students who may require additional challenge. In order to assess the needs of our students and educators a working group of educators has convened. The Challenge for All Committee, under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent Swain, consists of SPS educators and administrators. Since the mid-cycle report, the Committee continued its work by soliciting feedback from SPS educators regarding strategies and

approaches currently being employed and what educators might need in order to more effectively challenge all students. The Committee has outlined next steps and plans to reconvene in the fall. The Committee feels that it is important to keep the focus on students when exploring the area of challenge but recognizes the pressures faced by educators as they strive to meet the needs of diverse learners. A summary of the educator survey results follows along with next steps and a sample of the Challenge for All Committee meeting agendas/minutes.

Educator Survey and Results

Seventy educators responded to the Challenge Working Group's survey, with 57.1 % identifying as middle school educators and 24.3% identifying as elementary school educators.

Questions about Students:

When asked how they knew a student needed additional challenge, educators cited assessment data (85.5%), classwork completed accurately and quickly (84.1%) and quality of engagement in the learning (82.6%) as the top three indicators. Self-initiated learning (73.9%) and student behaviors (60.9%) ranked fourth and fifth. Student comments ranked sixth with (40.6%) and parent comments seventh with (27.5%). This data along with suggested student queries led the Committee to identify creating and administering a student survey as its next action step. The Committee recommends presenting the survey at a beginning of the year staff meeting and framing it in the context of student goal setting. Questions the Committee is considering include: "How do you know that you need a challenge in the classroom?" "How do you feel when you need a challenge?" "What strategies will you use when the task is challenging and you feel frustrated?" "Do you feel challenged?" "How would school be different for you if you were challenged?" "How do you feel when you are challenged?" "What is a worthwhile example of a challenge for you?" "What are ways you challenge yourself?"

In response to a question regarding which areas educators have experienced students needing additional challenge, writing (34), questioning (30), and speaking and listening (35) ranked as having the fewest students. Reading material (49), problem solving (44), and content (40) ranked as having the most students.

Questions about educators:

Educators responded that they were most able to meet students' need for challenge in the areas of reading material (56), writing (54), and problem solving (56). Interestingly, two of the areas "reading material" and "problem solving" corresponded to areas of greatest student need for challenge. The Committee determined a need for more information regarding challenge in the content areas and plan to follow up by probing these same learning dimensions from a grade level and content area perspective.

Differentiated curriculum (62.1%) and resources (80.3%) were ranked as being the highest areas of need in terms of educators' ability to challenge students. Assessment tools (27.3%) and professional development (36.4%) were identified by significantly fewer educators suggesting that much of the work that is needed relates to core resources.

Educator responses to an invitation to share any other thoughts about the topic of challenge clustered around several salient themes:

- Identifying opportunities for challenge within the existing curriculum, especially in the area of mathematics
- Supporting students in being willing to undertake more challenging work without becoming frustrated or stressed
- Time restraints, especially with regard to planning time and uninterrupted instructional time
- Not conflating more or extra work with challenging work
- The need to understand challenge in a way that reflects grade level and content area differences
- The impact of class size (especially at the middle school) on educators' ability to differentiate for students

Next Steps:

- Create and administer a student survey
- Hold a community education and feedback forum
- Disseminate survey results to SPS educators
- Articulate a common understanding of meaningful challenge by content area and possibly grade span
- Gather more information from educators regarding the intersection of learning domains and content areas
- Reconvene in the fall of 2017

[Challenge Working Group Agenda & Minutes](#)

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

The redesign of the SPS LLD program has been initiated under the leadership of Dr. Denise Rochlin, Interim Director of Student Services. As reported by Dr. Rochlin at the Student Services presentation on January 25, 2017 we have implemented robust professional development in partnership with [Landmark](#). During the course of the 2016-2017 school year multiple staff members (general education and special education) have been involved in group and individual consultations with Landmark staff. The focus has been on identifying what comprises a Language Based classroom. Strategies and approaches to assist students in mastering content and developing written language, speaking and listening skills have been identified. Language Based classroom teachers have received

direct consultation and instruction on the stages of the writing process. In addition, all special education staff members participated in an ILAP professional development presentation on specific strategies to use to develop vocabulary and build written language skills. Finally, program descriptions have been developed and are in a draft form for the LLD programs at both the elementary and the middle schools. Draft program descriptions may be found here: [Elementary LLD Program Description](#); [Middle School LLD Program Description](#)

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. Kimberly 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 met regularly to identify practices and develop protocols that support consistent responses to students' social-emotional-behavioral needs.
- In addition, both the elementary and middle school mental health teams met regularly to plan staff training and presentations related to the DESSA tools and to assist with strategic planning for components of the SEL program. Following each

assessment window and the grade-level data meetings, the mental health teams met to debrief as we strive to continuously improve the assessment process.

- A professional learning calendar was created that aims to build educator capacity for supporting academic, social, and emotional learning. [SEL Professional Learning for FY17](#) 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](#) as identified by the Devereux Institute, analyzing SEL data reports, and ways to plan and implement supports for targeted instruction using evidence-based curricula. First grade teachers participated in a workshop titled [Using Data to Plan Group Supports](#). The Noyes staff participated in a workshop focused on providing descriptive feedback to learners during the [April 26th, 2017 ILAP](#). For each of the eight competencies, elementary staff are collaborating to complete resource documents that will be shared across the district. An example of the template that will be used for each competency: [goal-directed behavior](#).
- The district adopted evidence-based programs for social-emotional learning for students across all grades; preK teachers use the 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 resources. The middle school [Second Step Program review of research](#) describes the science behind the evidence-based curriculum. Professional learning for middle school teachers for the 2017/18 school year will include instructional support and guidance for implementing the [Second Step curriculum](#).
- 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. School-wide practices are shaped by our work with Stan Davis through monthly consultations with school-based teams and the Connectedness Survey data. [Stan Davis consultation schedule](#) for FY17. The [Community Resource Awareness Network](#) (CRANE) is a non-profit organization representing a community partnership with the towns of Lincoln and Sudbury.
- 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.

A summary of SEL activities and data from FY17 is included in the [SEL presentation to School Committee](#), May 17, 2017. The DRAFT MS SEL curriculum overview may be found here: [DRAFT MS SEL Implementation 17-18](#). In addition, each school leadership team presented their work regarding SEL during State of the School presentations during the school year. The presentations may be found here: [School Committee Plans and Presentations](#).

Report on Pilot Units of Second Step Curriculum at ECMS

Pilot Units of the Second Step program were implemented by Ms. Heather Yeomans and Ms. Betsy Grams through Health Education classes at ECMS. A brief summary of implementation, student learning, and educator observations follows.

ECMS Health Education

Grade 6 Pilot - Bullying Prevention Unit

Grade 7 Pilot - Substance Use Prevention Unit

Implementation

- Second Step teacher resources include preparation tips, lesson prep videos, and teaching strategies. The resources are clear and concise, providing ample information and guidance for teaching the lessons.
- The teacher resources include helps and guidance for reinforcing skills using the ARR (anticipate, reinforce, reflect) process. The materials include reflective writing prompts, additional practice activities, and academic integration activities.
- 6th Grade: The bullying prevention material was easily connected to the content taught earlier in the trimester in the Collegiality Lessons.
- 7th Grade: The Substance Use Prevention lessons were easily integrated with Project Alert lessons.

Student Learning

- 6th Grade: Formative assessment was conducted when students completed the *Tips for Dealing with Bullying* activity which required learners to answer questions in dyads and in whole class discussions. Additionally, students completed a reflective writing assignment related to bystander actions.
- Learners gained additional practice by completing an activity where they were required to identify problematic situations from written scenarios and propose solutions and actions to address the problem.
- 7th Grade: Formative assessment was conducted when learners were asked to write a personal commitment to not use substances and describe the benefits of being substance-free. In addition, students practiced refusal skills by working in small groups to respond to scenarios provided by the curriculum, participated in large group discussions, and completed a reflective writing assignment.

Observations of Educators

- Students were highly engaged and on task.
- The videos are short and use real-life experiences to prompt discussion and activate thinking for various learning activities.

- This curriculum is teacher-friendly. The materials are comprehensive; they include learning objectives, lesson at a glance information, supplies needed, lesson script, teaching notes, handouts, videos with scenarios, student worksheets, and skill-building activities.
- The curriculum is standards-based for health and social-emotional learning.
- The lessons are interactive and incorporate a variety of learning activities.
- The curriculum includes family engagement strategies and resources, such as family letters and homework assignments that require parent/guardian involvement.

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

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 included:

- 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

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

There has been significant progress related to implementation of the new Science, Technology, and Engineering standards. On March 22, 2017 during the [Science Curriculum Update](#) the School Committee and community learned about the work of the Steering Committee (Ms. Jennie Brannen, Ms. Jen Fullam, Ms. Heather Duckett, Mr. Dan Garrigan-Byerly, Mr. Ed Eich, Ms. Dorothy Kramer, and Mr. Tom Rawson), SPS educators, and Holly Estes, Science Curriculum Specialist.

Professional development is an essential component of any new Standards implementation. Professional learning at the middle school focused on redistribution of the new standards, improving content knowledge, and sharing resources. Elementary work focused on content of new curriculum and STEMscopes instruction. Details of specific professional development activities are included below:

February 8th (morning session)

- Content: 6th grade curriculum transition
- Participants: 6th Grade educators; Curtis

February 8th (ILAP session)

- Content: Middle school curriculum; Team planning for new curriculum
- Participants: 6th, 7th, 8th Grade educators; Curtis

March 13th Curriculum Meeting

- Content: Electrostatic forces
- Participants: 7th Grade educators; Curtis
- 1 hour afternoon session with community member, Matthew Proujansky

March 29th

- Content: Integration of new standards and STEMscopes digital curriculum
- Participants: Kindergarten educators; Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes
- ILAP, 1 ½ hour session

April 12th

- Content: Curriculum work to integrate 2016 science standards into life science units
- Participants: Kindergarten & 1st Grade educators; Haynes, Loring, Nixon, Noyes
- ILAP, 1 ½ hour session
- Agendas: Kindergarten ILAP, First Grade ILAP
- Work Samples: Nixon K, Haynes K, Haynes 1st, Loring K, Loring 1st

April 26th

- Content: Curriculum work, 8th grade educators supported 6th grade educators with content and materials transition, 7th grade educators reviewed Weather scope in STEMscopes digital curriculum
- Participants: 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade educators; Curtis
- ILAP, 1 ½ hour session

May 4th

- Content: Curriculum and content work on new light and sound standards, review of light, sound, and communication scopes in STEMscopes
- Participants: 1st Grade educators; Nixon
- Release time; 3 hours

May 18th

- Content: Curriculum and content work on new earth science standards, review of ESS scopes
- Participants: 2nd Grade educators; Nixon
- Release time; 3 hours

Monthly meetings

- Continued monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings with Haynes K and 1 teachers to discuss content and curriculum implementation

New Events and Initiatives, in addition to the existing **Science & Engineering Fairs & Festivals**:

Force & Motion Festival - May

- An event designed to integrate science and technology through activities related to forces. This program was made possible through generous funding from SERF.
- Kindergarten; Haynes
- [Pictures of Haynes Force Festival](#)

Spadefoot Toad Project - Spring

- A project in conjunction with MA Audubon/Drumlin Farm to bring state threatened [Eastern Spadefoot toad](#) tadpoles into the classroom as part of a head-start program. This program is generously funded by SERF.
- 6th Grade; Curtis

Implementation Plan/Next Steps for new MA Science, Technology, and Engineering Standards:

- The Science & Engineering Steering Committee developed an Implementation Plan to transition the District to the new MA Science, Technology & Engineering standards: [Science & Engineering Steering Committee](#)

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

We established a Strategic Planning Team with representation of staff and administrators across the district (Ms. Stephanie Cormier, Ms. Holly Estes, Ms. Sara Fischer, Mr. Stephen Gregg, Mr. Scott Johnson, Ms. Betsy Joseph, Ms. Samantha Karustis, Ms. Susan Rothermich, Ms. Kimberly Swain) as well as parent representatives (Ms. Rachel Heckler, Ms. Shirley Huettig), 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.

The goal of the Strategic Planning Team was to solicit input from the community regarding strengths and challenges of the school system, analyze results of focus group and survey data, and identify broad goal statements that would be submitted to the School Committee for feedback and approval. Once the broad goal statements are approved, with feedback from the school committee regarding specific initiatives, the SPS leadership team will develop a 3-5 year implementation plan to share with the community. The implementation plan will guide the work of the district and will be reviewed on an annual basis when necessary adjustments will be made. We anticipate adjustments based on any number of factors, including but not limited to: newly identified student learning needs, newly identified professional development needs, State or Federal mandates, budgetary constraints, etc. The Strategic Plan will include various initiatives that support the broad goal statements to be implemented during a 3-5 year period. The implementation plan will include specific initiatives along with responsible persons, timelines for completion, and necessary resources.

Since the mid-cycle report, the Strategic Planning Team has:

- Reviewed final results of Focus Group data (multiple opportunities for parents, including a session in Boston; Staff were provided time to participate during ILAP and Staff Meeting time)
- Designed and administered a survey distributed to staff and families (612 responses)
- Reviewed results of survey and identified common themes from focus group and survey data
- Developed and unanimously approved the following broad goal statements to submit to the School Committee for approval:
 - Sudbury Public Schools will provide highly engaging learning experiences that challenge each student at their individual level.
 - Sudbury Public Schools will promote the social, emotional, and physical wellness of all students.
 - Sudbury Public Schools will recruit, organize, and develop high quality personnel.
 - Sudbury Public Schools will foster opportunities for student and educator

innovation and collaboration.

Given that the School Committee has recently reorganized and will meet in July to discuss goals for the upcoming school year, the development of a multi-year strategic plan will be delayed into the FY18 school year. The district leadership team will recommend draft goals for the FY18 school year that align with the proposed broad goal statements, subject to approval by the School Committee.

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.

Administrator Professional Development:

As detailed in the mid-cycle report, the entire administrative team has been 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 continue to refine our practices and develop 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 were:

- 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 this school year: 08/16/16 (as part of our beginning of year (BOY) administrative retreat); 10/18/16; 11/08/16; 01/10/17; and 03/28/17. During our group sessions with Mary we had 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 engaged 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.

Administrator feedback regarding this professional development was extremely favorable. The following are sample comments from SPS administrators as exit feedback following the professional development sessions:

“This was the best PD I have done in a long time”

“In all my professional development at SPS, this was by far the most useful and informative”

“This course has allowed me to transition my focus more towards the students when I observe lessons. This has been particularly helpful in conversations I have had with teachers about lessons and practice”

“This course helped me refine my written observations and how I use follow-ups to promote student learning and growth”

“My focus on what all the students are doing has grown”

Joint Classroom Observation and De-Brief with Principals:

As described in the mid-cycle report, 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.

Our classroom observation schedule for the year included (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, former Director of Student Services 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. Administrators of specific content areas joined the principals and me when we observed classrooms focusing on a particular content area. When observing math learning, Ms. Karen Wolfson joined, for ELA Dr. Jennifer Soalt joined, for PK and K Ms. Stephanie Juriansz joined, and for special education, Mr. John Verre joined prior to his departure. The addition of expertise in the area of focus allows us to have more nuanced de-brief sessions related to specific learning objectives.

In addition to results of assessments and classroom observations, 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 Ms. Sharon MacDonald (10/25/16), Haynes principal, shared ELA student work; Ms. Annette Doyle (02/07/17), Noyes principal, shared Social Studies projects; Mr. Leo Flanagan (02/28/17), Nixon principal, shared math student work; and Mr. Scott Johnson (03/21/17) shared student writing samples. Mr. Jeff Mela, Curtis principal will share student work at our June 6th SALT meeting.

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.

Implications/Actions based on learning from professional development, observations, and review of student work

Engaging in professional development as an administrative team has been beneficial to build our instructional leadership capacity as individuals and as a team. Our conversations during individual meetings as well as in large groups have become increasingly focused on specific student learning evidence versus technical “teacher moves”. Sharing not only oral observations but written documentation of student learning has allowed us to challenge ourselves and each other to have more robust conversations about the quality of learning experiences afforded our students and their responses to those learning opportunities. By sharing this experience, we are able to identify themes across the school district that might be addressed as well as individual needs at a particular school building.

The addition of LASW as a group this school year has opened another avenue for discussing student learning. We discussed different types of assignments, the learning involved in the assignments, opportunities for differentiation in a given assignment, and the range of student learning expressed in the completed assignments. These discussions lead to common understanding and agreement regarding the types of learning opportunities we expect for all students. The discussions have also led to identification of areas for growth at a particular grade level/school/content area.

Future Work based on our Learning:

- Continue LASW process and increase the number of times during the school year that we engage in this process. Consider having all elementary principals bring student work from a common assignment or assessment.
- I will work with individual principals when goal setting for FY18 to address areas for potential growth around student learning needs.
- We will extend the impact of our work with Mary Sterling by establishing internal processes during SALT meetings to continue the benefits expressed by administrators. Specifically, we will plan time for sharing of observation reports for feedback and consistency.
- I will continue joint classroom observations and work with administrators to establish areas of focus, above and beyond identification of content area, during the year. Areas of focus will be unique to the needs at an individual school.
- Given the implementation of new Science, Technology, and Engineering standards and a new math program at the elementary level, we have an opportunity to integrate the implementation process with our newly honed skills for focusing on student learning during classroom observations and feedback. By integrating the work, we will have great opportunities to develop consistent feedback and ultimately consistent learning opportunities for all students. We will commit to working closely with Ms. Karen Wolfson (math) and Ms. Holly Estes (science,

technology, engineering) by purposefully planning for time during SALT meetings to discuss implementation and learning expectations as well as to share our observations of student learning.

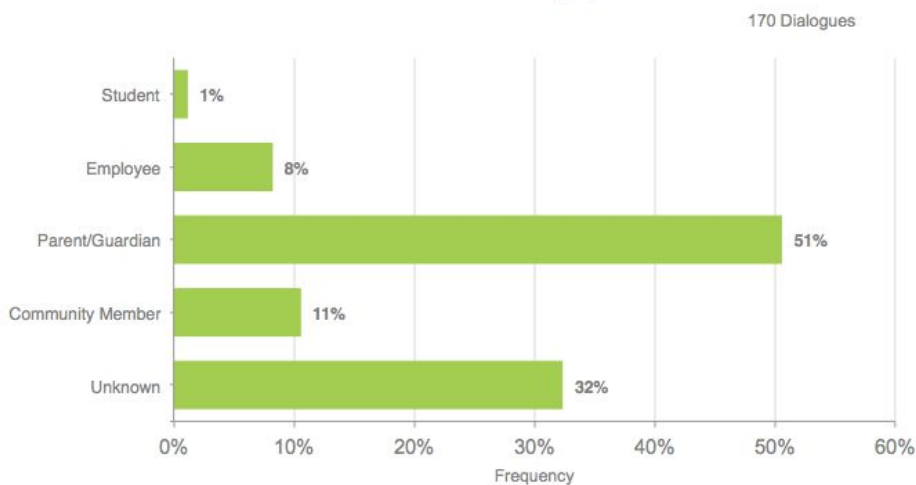
Professional Practice Goal: Implement an electronic Central Office query system allowing for two-way communication with parents, staff, and students.

- 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.

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 170 communications, 40 more since the mid-cycle report in March. 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 posted all budget presentations as well as supporting documents to our website. We also created a document to clarify the two budget scenarios and the cuts that would be made in each scenario. This document was sent to families via e-mail and also posted on our website.

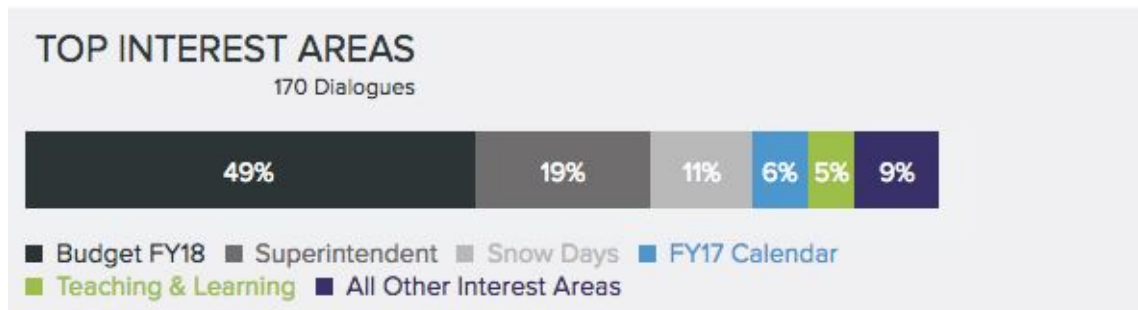
Statistics from November through Friday, May 26, 2017 may be viewed below:

Source: Customer Type

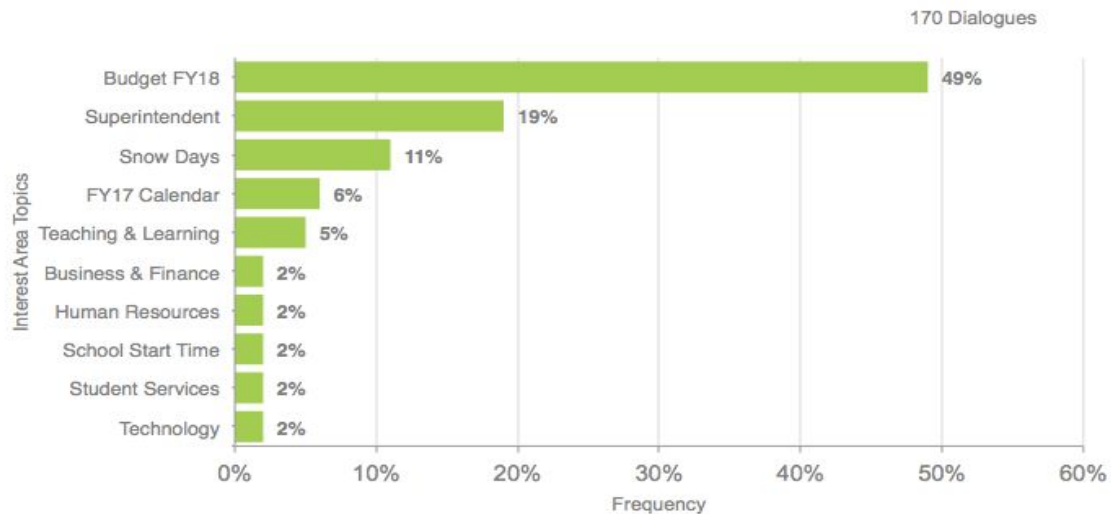


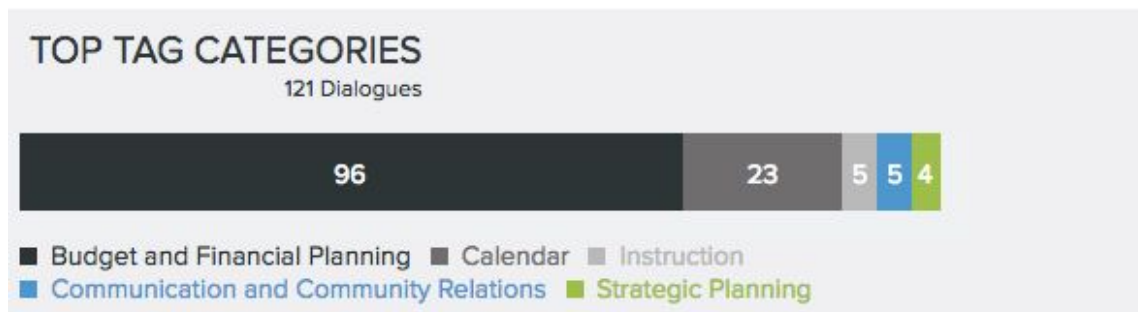
As illustrated above, the majority of Let's Talk dialogues come from parent/guardians. Some people send an inquiry or comment via Let's Talk and via e-mail. It is interesting to note that 32% of dialogues are sent anonymously. The system allows us to hear from people who may not want to divulge their identity for a variety of reasons. It is beneficial for us to hear from as many people as possible. Unfortunately, when someone sends a communication anonymously they do not receive a response.

**Unknown refers to anonymous communications where the person submitting the message did not indicate their affiliation or their name.

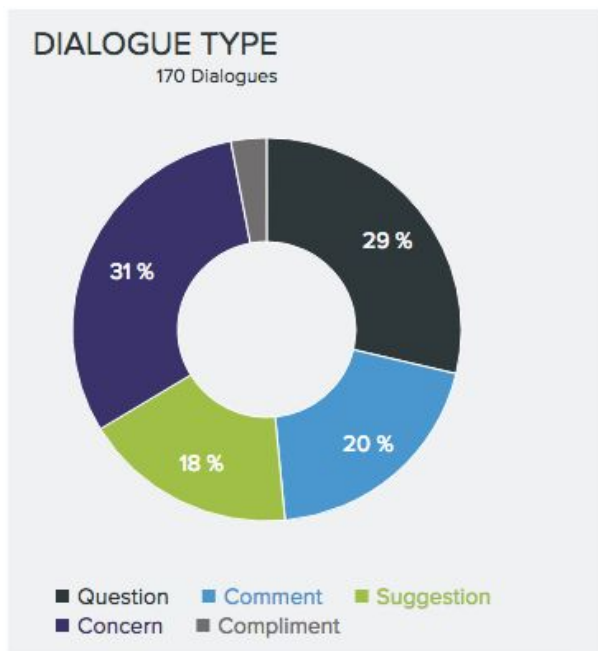


Trending: Interest Area Topics





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. Recent communications regarding the music program were tagged as “instruction” and submitted under multiple interest areas such as “superintendent”, “teaching and learning”, and “other”.



Dialogues with concerns were most prevalent and related mostly to the FY18 budget and the music program.

Summary: We purposely engaged in a “soft” rollout of the Let’s talk platform due to the other significant transitions we were engaged in as an administrative team. The transition to ASPEN and more robust utilization of MUNIS have required considerable time and focus from our central office administrative team. We engaged in training to utilize the Let’s Talk

platform and we are aware of components of the system that might enhance usefulness of the system. For example, the system has the capacity to launch media campaigns, to integrate with Twitter, and, if all e-mail communication is entered into the system, we would have more information regarding the range of communication topics. However, given the decrease in staffing at Central office, we will not have the capacity to accomplish this time-consuming task. In addition, due to the budget cuts to instructional and operational technology for FY18, I do not anticipate continuing with the Let's Talk system. In fact, Let's Talk has been identified as a cut for FY18 along with other operational and instructional technology tools.

We do see the value in providing an opportunity for people to send communication anonymously and therefore we will work to identify a cost-effective way to provide this opportunity. It also is valuable to address issues that arise when we identify common themes of need for information or lack of clarity. We also will work to identify new cost-effective internal processes to share important information, solicit feedback, and provide information as soon as possible when themes become apparent due to community inquiries.

Sample of Additional District Work

While this summative report specifically addresses district work directly related to approved goals, educators and administrators are also involved in many more important efforts. Below please see a sample of the important work in progress to meet the needs of all students, to enhance our internal capacity, to address concerns of staff and families, and to meet operational requirements.

Although we have a specific goal around the implementation of the new MA Science, Technology, and Engineering standards, robust work has also been in progress in ELA and mathematics. You learned about some of this work during the [ELA Curriculum Update](#) and the [Mathematics Curriculum Update](#). In the next section we provide an overview of professional learning in each content area as well as planned "next steps" for FY18. Note how professional learning in ELA and mathematics incorporates District Goals including: inclusive educational opportunities, providing for challenge, integration of SEL, and cross content activities (science, technology, ELA). Also notice the purposeful plans to share expertise across schools and the school district as well as the collaboration of administrators, classroom teachers, and content experts.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Professional Learning

Elementary Teachers

Professional development for teachers centered around updating their research curriculum to accommodate changes in the research standards, which have been moved from the ELA standards to the Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) standards, where short

digital-based research integrated into the daily curriculum is now called for instead of longer, non-digital research projects. ILAPS, co-designed and co-presented by Dr. Jennifer Soalt, Ms. Shannon Famigletti and the Library Media Specialists focused on reviewing what teachers are currently doing to address the research standards, on learning new tools for digital research, and on planning up-coming short digital research tasks that are well integrated into the science and social studies curriculum and address the new standards.

At the last ILAP, which was successfully conducted through a google classroom session, teams were asked to use what they had learned over the series of ILAPS to plan short research tasks that culminated in a digital artifact for next year. Among the plans written by teams were tasks related to the national parks unit, the US regions unit and the 4th grade plant unit, and tasks related to 5th grade science food webs unit.

A survey of what teachers found useful about the PD, and what else they would like to learn more about included the responses that follow.

What was useful:

- * Listening to other schools' research methods and learning new tools from librarians
- * Learning about what other teachers were doing in their classrooms
- Collaborating with colleagues and sharing lessons and techniques

Further learning:

- Folder of resources with shared projects to draw from
- Learning to feel more comfortable with technology
- More time to collaborate at schools to develop research tasks which could be carried out in the library

In addition to the research work described above many 3rd-5th grade teachers who attended EDCO professional development on close reading implemented what they learned in the summer in their classrooms over the course of the year.

[Powerpoint For Final Google Classroom Presentation On Digital Research.](#)

Middle School Teachers

Middle school professional development focused on differentiating curriculum to add more challenge, as well as more support. The year began with a review of articles and research literature on differentiating ELA curriculum, and whole department discussion around how to further differentiate our ELA instruction, of which much focused on greater differentiation in writing instruction. Taking what they learned from this discussion many individual teachers and some teams focused their student learning and/or professional goals around developing a wider choice of writing assignments at different levels for their ELA units. In order to ensure the ongoing usage and further development of these

differentiated writing assignments, the outcomes from the work and student writing related to the new tasks should be revisited next year in opening ILAP discussions.

[Screen shot](#) of articles on differentiation on ELA Shelf reviewed and discussed with the Curtis ELA department at ILAP.

Literacy Specialists

The literacy specialists professional development focused on writing about reading. Literacy Specialists met throughout the year to discuss the book *Notebook Connections* (NC) and to plan PD work based on their reading. They created a condensed version of the strategies in the book in a shared google document and worked with 1-5 teachers during PLC meetings and individual coaching sessions to discuss how to use the NC strategies and other methods to improve writing about reading.

[Final powerpoint developed by literacy specialists to summarize their year-long PD work](#)

Additional Curriculum Initiative Opportunity

Dr. Soalt worked with interested second grade teachers to set up stations/centers to help differentiate the genre units and create opportunities for worthwhile independent work during workshop time. Some second grade teachers took advantage of the opportunity to develop centers for their nonfiction rainforest unit. Dr. Soalt developed the units and then introduced to the classes, which used the stations/centers to research and compare a variety of insects.

[Overview of second grade rainforest stations/centers](#)

Priorities For 2017-2018

Elementary School Teachers

We will continue the focus on providing opportunities for challenge and differentiation in the ELA curriculum by incorporating demonstration and discussion into professional learning, classroom observation, and grade level and departmental work. We will also need to ensure that the gains we have made in the coherence, the alignment, and the quality of the elementary ELA curriculum are retained as the District's focus shifts more strongly to math, science, and SEL in 2017/2018. Dr. Soalt is exploring strategies for maintaining gains, including potentially launching an Elementary ELA curriculum blog that would be updated weekly with links, comments, and resources related to our K-2 and 3-5 ELA Curriculum.

Another priority for 2017-2018 will be to produce new ways of administering and storing student learning assessments as the District transitions away from MAP and TestWiz. This will entail locating and/or developing cost-effective ways of assessing and storing reading progress 3-5, and storing the data on reading progress we already collect at grades K-2.

Middle School Teachers

The gains we have made in differentiating writing instruction this year will be solidified by continuing to utilize the curriculum developed this year and making any necessary adjustments next year. Dr. Soalt would also like to see the ELA department develop a more nuanced and robust understanding of both diversity in texts and opportunities to explore SEL related issues in texts. One example would be working with the eighth-grade team to consider teaching more texts by African American writers, as a large part of their curriculum---*To Kill A Mockingbird* and the Civil War Unit---- involves race issues, yet none or very little of the text in the eighth-grade ELA curriculum appear to be written by African American writers. Continuing to think about how we can address issues of diversity and SEL in language arts will be a priority when planning next year's ILAPs.

Literacy Specialists

The new science curriculum, StemScopes, comes with recommended extensions for writing and reading in the language arts. Consequently, a focus for professional learning for the Literacy Specialists will be gaining familiarity with these materials and coordinating with the Science Curriculum Specialist to support the incorporation of science reading and writing into the ELA curriculum. Doing so would amplify and support the implementation of StemScopes as well as strengthen the nonfiction strand of the ELA curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Professional Learning

Topic: Math Pilot Product Evaluation

Grade Level(s) 2 and 3

Date: 1/25/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- Teachers worked at each school site to evaluate the pilot products that they've been working with since September.
- Each teacher completed an evaluation form, which was Based on the CCSS Curriculum Analysis Tool. The tool was disseminated by Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (NCSM)
 - The tool covers 3 main areas: Math content alignment, math practice alignment, additional overarching considerations - equity, assessment, technology
- 37 people responded to the survey
- Brief Summary of findings:
 - Investigations:
 - Strengths: *exploratory activities, depth of questioning, and interactive*

online tools

- Weaknesses: ***assessments and resources for intervention or extension***
- Eureka
 - Strengths: ***complexity of mathematics and depth of the material***
 - Weaknesses: ***product usability and accessibility, developmental appropriateness (and underlying philosophy), and format, lack of technology. Teacher evaluation of this product varied widely.***

Topic: MCAS Overview and Proposed Changes to Curriculum Frameworks

Grade Level(s) 6-8

Date: 2/8/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- MCAS:
 - Review of format, items types, reference sheets, etc.
- Proposed MA Curriculum Frameworks Update
 - Review of standards moving between grade levels, newly added Guiding Principles (SEL component)

Topic: Mathematical Experiences

Grade Level(s) 2,3

Date: 3/29/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- This ILAP Agenda consisted of:
 - Problem Solving Introduction: Build It! (in teams) from Get It Together: Math Problems for Groups
 - Mathematical Experience: What do we want? What do we believe?
 - Create a Y-chart (Looks like, sounds like, feels like) if you were to walk into your ideal math classroom
 - Gallery walk
 - Debrief in small groups
 - Mathematical Photo Scavenger Hunt: Math is all around us! (or is it?)

Topic: Math MCAS Overview

Grade Level(s) 4,5

Date: 3/29/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- Teachers in grade-level groups explored sample questions in the paper and online format
- Exploration of online tools, followed by discussion of how to support students in experiencing these tools

Topic: Providing Feedback on the Math Implementation Draft Plan

Grade Level(s) 2,3

Date: 4/12/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- Teachers met at each school site to review and provide feedback on the draft plan for implementation of Bridges in Mathematics. This document outlined the background of mathematics in SPS, a vision for mathematics learning in SPS, what we learned from the 2016-17 pilots, the rationale for Bridges to Mathematics as a primary resource in K-5 Grades, Next Steps, and Frequently Asked Questions.
- Conversations were facilitated by Building Administrators and Math Coaches
- This document was later updated and edited, based on teacher feedback.

Topic: Middle School Math Placement

Grade Level(s) 6-7

Date: 4/26/17 ILAP (1.5 hours)

Important Notes:

- Teachers in grades 6 and 7 engaged in the placement process for students in mathematics. Cross-grade level and cross-team discussions took place to ensure the best placement for students.

The Mindset Revolution: Teaching Mathematics for a Growth Mindset

Teachers in grades K-5, special education, administration (18 attended)

EDCO hosted Jo Boaler

Full day training (12/2/16 rescheduled to 3/29/17)

Important Notes:

- Teachers explored low ceiling, high floor mathematics problems to stretch their mathematical thinking
- Messages about mathematical mindset and there is no such thing as a “math person”
- Jo Boaler’s work can be found at: www.youcubed.org
- In multiple schools, the staff who attended followed up at staff meetings and PLCs to share the message from Jo Boaler.

Bridges in Mathematics Site Visits

Date(s) and Location(s):

2/1/17 in Acton, MA in grade 2

3/13/17 in Guilford, CT in grades K, 2, 3, 4, 5

Important Notes:

- Attended by Administrators, Math Coaches, and Classroom teachers
- Classroom observations of Bridges in Mathematics
- Site visits provided opportunities to learn from the districts about their successful use of the product.

Communication Updates:

- Our newly updated SPS Family Math website can be found [here](#).

- The Math Department can be found on twitter at @Wolfson_Math

Next Steps:

As outlined in the recent School Committee Update and the Mathematics Curriculum Overview and Implementation Plan, next steps in grade K-5 will be the full implementation of the Bridges in Mathematics program. In grades 6-8, the focus will continue on the alignment of courses and the creation of additional opportunities for students to access mathematical learning. Course content will shift slightly in response to the updated MA Curriculum Frameworks, which were approved in March 2017. Additionally, we will continue to identify ways to integrate information about mathematical mindset into all courses, so that all students believe they can be mathematicians.

Homework

Due to recent research and concerns expressed by educators and families, we have begun to investigate our current practices related to assigning homework. We intend to review current research, review current SPS practices, and determine whether current guidelines for assigning homework are still relevant to student learning. As a first step in this process, Ms. Annette Doyle, Noyes principal, Mr. Leo Flanagan, Nixon principal, and I reviewed current literature and developed a [survey](#) for educators. The survey is meant to gain an initial understanding of SPS educators' perceptions and practices related to homework. Survey results have been reviewed by the administrative team and will be shared with staff at each individual school. For FY18, we intend to convene a district team including representation from all five schools and various disciplines to determine if adjustments to our current homework guidelines are necessary and to work toward consistency across grade levels and schools with respect to our practices related to homework. As part of the process, we also anticipate reaching out to students and families to include their perspectives and input.

FY18 Budget/Budget Cuts, Redefining work of Staff in light of staffing cuts

As anticipated and discussed over the last two years, the budget for FY18 presented many challenges. The administrative team and Central Office staff were involved in many hours of analysis, planning, and modeling to respond to the ultimate budget guidance from the School Committee and the Sudbury Finance Committee. As always, we presented the district Needs Budget that would have allowed us to preserve the effective practices and staffing already in place and also allow us to keep the district moving forward as we are involved in significant efforts to enhance the educational experience for all students. Many staff members dedicated significant time in responding to requests for information and providing scenarios where cuts were made to reach a particular bottom line budget.

We are moving into the third and final year of contracts with employee associations. In FY18 we will implement a middle school day more closely aligned with secondary school

hours by adding 20 minutes to the middle school day and we will provide 50 additional minutes per week of educator time at the elementary level. Given the contractual obligation for a 3.5% increase in salaries, the 11% increase in benefits, and the 10% increase in expenses it was impossible to create a budget with a 2.5% increase without significant cuts to staffing and programming.

Due to the efforts of many staff members and community members, we will benefit from an override in an amount that will cover the increase in benefits. The override allowed us to reduce the number of staffing cuts, however, cuts made will significantly impact the way we operate as a school system. As always, we will continue to do our best to provide an excellent educational experience for all students.

Next Steps:

- We will maintain a focus on meeting the needs of all students (academic as well as social/emotional).
- We will continue our work to reduce gaps in student learning among particular cohorts.
- We will continue our focus on student learning as the central part of our instructional supervision and evaluation process.
- We will maintain a focus on school safety and sustain our partnership with Sudbury Police and Fire.
- As we move forward, the administrative team is in the process of creating new workflows for all Central Office departments as well as administrative operations at each school due to significant cuts to district/site administration. Our goal is to provide support for the important work of instructional supervision and operations so that students and staff have what they need to effectively do their work.
- We must make some difficult decisions regarding the things that will not be done or that will be done differently in order to accomplish the highest priority tasks, with fidelity.
- We also must address morale of staff across the district as the impact of staffing cuts has been felt by not only staff who have lost their jobs but also the colleagues who work with them. Our school system operates as a team with each team member bringing expertise and a significant contribution to the overall success of SPS.
- There are several important initiatives that are in process and also being considered. It will be important for the administration and School Committee to agree on areas of emphasis over the next 3-5 years. We must be fiscally responsible and we also must be responsible in the way that we plan and implement educational improvements. As a school system we are dependent upon the strength of our staffing. This correlates directly with fiscal responsibility as 82% of our budget is dedicated to staffing.
- We will continue to work on “out of the box” thinking as we redefine our operations.

Last Word: I am proud to serve the Sudbury community and I look forward to continuing our work to provide an exceptional educational environment for our students and a professional, supportive work environment for the dedicated SPS team. We have much to

be proud of and we also have opportunities to continue to grow and be proactive regarding changes that benefit all students. We will keep students at the center of decision-making and always consider the impact on ALL students when making recommendations, changes, and important budget decisions.