

BOARD OF EDUCATION

MICHAEL J. TESTANI
Acting Superintendent of Schools

City Hall - 45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

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Bridgeport, Connecticut

May 4, 2020

Board Members:

A meeting of the Teaching & Learning Committee of the Board of Education will be held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. via Video Conference Call. A link to view the meeting will be made available to the public through <https://www.bridgeportedu.net/stream>.

Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes – April 16, 2020
2. Discussion and Possible Action on Grading for M.P. 4
3. Discussion and Possible Action on K-3 Literacy Assessment
4. Discussion and Possible Action on 6-8 Math Program
5. Update on COVID School Closures / Plans
6. Adjourn

Bobbi Brown
Secretary
Board of Education

BBOE Teaching & Learning Committee Members:

Joseph Sokolovic (Chair)

Sybil Allen

Joseph J. Lombard

Michael J. Testani (Staff)

Thursday, April 16, 2020

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE
BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held April 16,
2020, by video and audio conference call, Bridgeport,
Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. Present were Chair Joseph Sokolovic, and members Joseph Lombard and Sybil Allen. Board member Albert Benejan was present.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Ms. Allen moved to approve the committee's minutes of February 25, 2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lombard and unanimously approved.

Supt. Testani presented on the district learning plan for all cohorts, special education and English-language learners, and general education.

Mr. Testani said distance learning planning began immediately after school closure for Phase 1. Phase 2 included more administrator and teacher participation in creating the learning experiences. Phase 3 will begin after April break with teachers working with classrooms and students online.

Mr. Testani said he believed from discussions with colleagues that Bridgeport deserved credit for providing a solid distance learning plan. He said over 4,000 devices had been given out to students and families over the last two weeks. A donation of learning items has been secured from the Lego company for all first grade students.

Mr. Testani said the special education teachers and other support staff are doing the best they can to meet the needs of those students. He said the ESL/bilingual department is also working hard to reach those students.

Mr. Testani said initially many students did not understand the closure would not be this long and they viewed it as an early vacation, but participation in the distance learning has increased.

The superintendent said students can hand in work up until next Monday for the third marking period. There is discussion going on at the state level and with other superintendents about how the fourth marking period will be treated. He said the district would be holding student forums to receive input from students on fourth marking period grades.

Mr. Testani said he believed there were going to be gaps in students' learning so when school reopens there have to be opportunities for enhancement, enrichment, and intervention.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said students have been participating in online AP classes and early college classes as they normally would and he has received positive feedback from teachers and students. He said social-emotional resources available for parents and students are being launched tomorrow.

Mr. Testani said grading options have been discussed that include awarding an incomplete grade and extending the date for submission of work into the fall. There has been discussion of giving the students the option of a letter grade or pass/fail in the fourth marking period.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said specialists, clubs and athletic coaches are engaged in ways of connecting online with students. He said there is a social-emotional aspect to remaining in isolation when you're used to interacting with people. He said the social work department has reached out to students and held virtual groups.

He added he hoped there could be some time in the summer to get clubs or athletic teams together for some limited activities.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said the district follows the AP course guidelines, which will include testing at home.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said the higher education administrators are being very accommodating to students due to the impacts of the COVID virus. Some are anticipating that students will be attending colleges closer to their home, which could benefit students from the district.

Mr. Sokolovic complimented the district's Phase 2 work, which was much more thorough than Phase 1. He asked that some thought be given to a possible Phase 4 in the event of a flare-up of the COVID-19. Mr. Testani said much depended on whether we could get into the buildings during the summer and if school can start on time in the fall. He said the district would be in a much better position on devices later in the year.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said parents are signing for the devices assigned to the students to take home. He said insurance has been taken out on some of the newer devices that were handed out.

Mr. Testani said he learned Monday from the city that he should go ahead and make the order for the devices the city committed to purchase for the board. It will take some time of receive the approximately 2,100 laptops, which would be in addition to the 5,000 to be donated by the Connecticut Partnership. He said the district itself was looking to purchase age-appropriate tablets for K-2 students.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said the amount of packets picked up and dropped off during Phases 1 and 2 have been amazing. He said the students who are disengaged are a lot of the same students who were disengaged prior to the closing of schools. Phone calls and letters home are used to try to re-engage. He said the district is slowly finding some elementary students went to states in the South that had less impact from the virus.

Mr.. Testani said psychologists, special education, speech staff, and language staff are reaching out to students they work with on the Teams platform. He said these services are more effective in a face-to-face manner. He said in Phase 2 principals did mailings of packets to the homes of special education students. Van and nutrition drivers delivered packets as well.

Mr. Testani said holding graduations with only students and staff physically present was a possibility. He said he was willing to explore all options.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said it is planned to have summer school, even if it has to be held remotely.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said beginning next week Fridays will be flex days with teachers available from

9:00 to 2:00 for professional development and planning their online lessons.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said he understood that many elementary school parents prefer written materials to online instruction. He said he was learning packets will be coming from the Connecticut Partnership next week as well. He said the Teams platform is a good way to communicate with parents. He said he understood this is a very stressful time for parents.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said if summer school is held this is not a time to ask families to pay for it and it will be provided at no charge.

In response to a question about numerical grading for students who are very close to the passing grade, Mr. Testani said there has been discussion that if the students put in effort they will be given the benefit of the doubt in determining whether they pass the course.

Mr. Testani said he appreciated all the support he was receiving. He said every day the district is trying to do a little more and it is good to know we are not alone in this.

Ms. Allen moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

What are DIBELS?

DIBELS are measures that help teachers and schools determine how students are performing on important reading skills. DIBELS stands for *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills*. These measures are designed for students in grades K-8.

What skills are measured by DIBELS and why are they important?

The critical skills necessary for successful beginning reading include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The DIBELS measures assess students on four of these five critical skills, which are often referred to as the “Big Ideas” of reading. The table on page 2 describes each big idea of reading and lists the corresponding DIBELS measure.

Which tests will be given to our students?

Each student will complete the tests depending on his or her grade and the time of year. The table on page 2 shows the timeline for assessing a student on the big ideas of reading across grade levels.

How often are students assessed?

All students in a school building are given the DIBELS test three times each year; usually this occurs in the fall, winter, and spring. This school-wide testing is called benchmark assessment. School personnel may also regularly check on the progress of students who receive extra reading help to make sure their reading skills are improving. These regular checks are called progress monitoring. Students who are progress monitored may complete one or two of the individual DIBELS tests as often as once a week or as little as once every 6 weeks depending on school resources and the needs of the student.

How much time does it take?

Each of the DIBELS tests only takes about one minute to complete. DIBELS tests are “indicators” of the student’s overall reading status, and are not intended to be in-depth or comprehensive measures of reading. Just like using a thermometer to take a child’s temperature, which provides a quick indicator of a child’s general health, these quick DIBELS tests provide teachers with information about a child’s reading health and how well he or she is progressing on a particular early reading skill. Benchmark assessments generally take 2 to 6 minutes to give, depending on the grade of the student and time of year. Teachers only need about 1 to 2 minutes to progress monitor students at each testing time. DIBELS measures allow teachers to get valuable information about students’ reading skills without using large amounts of instructional time.

How will the results be used?

A student’s scores on the DIBELS measures give the school information about whether or not a student is on track for grade-level reading success. A school can quickly identify students who do not meet the goals on each DIBELS measure and provide extra help. For example, if a child is reading words accurately, but slowly, the teacher can provide extra practice re-reading stories and passages to improve his or her reading rate or fluency. The teacher can use the progress monitoring scores to make sure a student receives extra help to improve other reading skills during the school year.

Teachers can review scores on DIBELS measures for all the students in a class to make decisions about how to prepare their day-to-day reading lessons. School and district staff can also study the test scores across classrooms and grade levels to make decisions about how to best use resources to make sure that every child in the school is on track to become an accurate and fluent reader.

Please explore the University of Oregon’s DIBELS Data System website at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu> to learn more about the importance of early literacy instruction and assessment.

The DIBELS measures include six individual tests that focus on the big ideas and critical skills of beginning reading.

Big Ideas	What is it? Why is it important?	DIBELS Measures	Grades Assessed					
			K	1	2	3	4-6	7-8
Phonemic Awareness	Phonemic awareness refers to a child's ability to hear and manipulate sounds in spoken words only. This skill is a powerful predictor of future reading success. It is a skill that is typically assessed early in a child's schooling (i.e., kindergarten), but it is also used with older children who are experiencing difficulty reading.	First Sound Fluency (FSF) or Initial Sound Fluency (ISF)	√					
		Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	√	√				
Phonics	Phonics refers to the ability to learn the individual sounds in spoken language and map those sounds to specific written letters in the English language. Students who have strong phonics skills are able to connect individual sounds with letters and use those sounds to read words.	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	√	√	√	√		
		Word Reading Fluency (WRF)	√	√	√	√		
Reading Fluency	Reading fluency refers to a child's ability to read text accurately and automatically so that students can understand what they are reading.	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)		√	√	√	√	√
		Word Reading Fluency (WRF)	√	√	√	√		
Vocabulary	Vocabulary refers to a child's knowledge of the meanings of individual words being read. Vocabulary knowledge is important to a student's ability to read and comprehend what is read.							
Reading Comprehension	Reading comprehension refers to a child's ability to understand what he or she reads. It is the ultimate goal of reading instruction.	Maze Daze			√	√ √	√ √	√

Test of Related Early Literacy Skills

	Letter Naming Fluency assesses a student's ability to say the "names" of upper and lowercase letters in the English alphabet. This skill is a strong predictor of future reading success in young children.	Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	√	√				
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GRADE 6-8 TEXTBOOK COMMITTEE


Herminio Planas

Executive Director of Elementary Education/Mathematics



Rationale

- Textbook licenses for grades 6-8 (Math In Focus) expired on June 2019. These textbooks are hardbound and teacher manuals are available throughout all classrooms.



Stage I: District Mathematics Textbook Committee









- Meetings were held from October 2019 through February 2020
- Composed of teachers and administrators grades K-8 (including bilingual and special education)
- Developed a rubric using textbook review criteria collected from various sources.
- Narrowed the list of vendors to 4 from the 30-40 available according to materials currently used throughout Connecticut districts, EdReports and new materials previewed in conferences and vendor visitations.
- Rated each textbook according to the rubric categories established (Mathematical Content, Organization and Structure, Assessment.)
- During this span of time, teachers took pieces of the programs back to their class to pilot these with their students and report on findings.

Committee Findings (EdReports)

MATH IN FOCUS (©2013) – Grades 3-8

Math in Focus (2013)

Published By: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | Date Published: 2/15/2015 | [View These Reports](#)


	GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS & COHERENCE	RIGOR & MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES	ALIGNMENT RATING	USABILITY RATING
	Kindergarten			Does Not Meet Expectations	
	First Grade			Does Not Meet Expectations	
	Second Grade			Does Not Meet Expectations	
	Third Grade			Does Not Meet Expectations	
	Fourth Grade			Does Not Meet Expectations	
	Fifth Grade			Does Not Meet Expectations	

Committee Findings (EdReports)

HMH Into Math (©2020)

HMH Into Math (2020)

Published By: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | Date Published: 1/28/2020 | [View These Reports](#)

	GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS & COHERENCE	RIGOR & MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES	ALIGNMENT RATING	USABILITY RATING
	Sixth Grade	14/14	17/18	Meets Expectations	35/38
	Seventh Grade	14/14	17/18	Meets Expectations	35/38
	Eighth Grade	14/14	17/18	Meets Expectations	35/38

Committee Findings (EdReports)

McGraw-Hill Illustrative Mathematics (©2020)

McGraw-Hill Illustrative Mathematics 6-8 Math (2020) [!]

Published By: McGraw-Hill Education | Date Published: 4/2/2020 | [View These Reports](#)



GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS & COHERENCE	RIGOR & MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES	ALIGNMENT RATING	USABILITY RATING
Sixth Grade	14/14	18/18	Meets Expectations	38/38
Seventh Grade	14/14	18/18	Meets Expectations	38/38
Eighth Grade	14/14	18/18	Meets Expectations	38/38

Committee Findings (EdReports)

Ready Common Core/Classroom(©2019)

Ready (2017)

Published By: Curriculum Associates | Date Published: 4/12/2018 | [View These Reports](#)



GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS & COHERENCE	RIGOR & MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES	ALIGNMENT RATING	USABILITY RATING
Sixth Grade	13/14	17/18	Meets Expectations	36/38
Seventh Grade	14/14	16/18	Meets Expectations	36/38
Eighth Grade	14/14	17/18	Meets Expectations	36/38

Committee Findings (EdReports)

Reveal Math (©2019)

Reveal Math, Common Core Edition

Published By: McGraw-Hill Education | Date Published: 9/3/2019 | [View These Reports](#)



GRADE LEVEL

FOCUS & COHERENCE

RIGOR & MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES

ALIGNMENT RATING

USABILITY RATING

Sixth Grade

14/14

17/18

Meets
Expectations

31/38

Seventh Grade

14/14

17/18

Meets
Expectations

31/38

Eighth Grade

14/14

17/18

Meets
Expectations

31/38

Committee Findings

TEXTBOOK	Mathematical Content Total	Organization and Structure	Assessment	Total	Ranking
Illustrative Mathematics	26 _{/27}	30 _{/33}	14 _{/15}	70 _{/75}	1
Into Math	25 _{/27}	30 _{/33}	15 _{/15}	70 _{/75}	2
Ready CC	17 _{/27}	28 _{/33}	15 _{/15}	60 _{/75}	3
Reveal Math	17 _{/27}	28 _{/33}	14 _{/15}	59 _{/75}	4



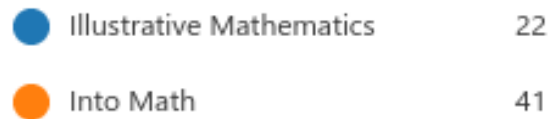
TEACHER FIELD TEST - GRADES 6-8

- The Textbook Committee provided opportunities for all grade 6-8 teachers in the district to preview 2 final products during the COVID-19 closure
- Collection of data was done by way of Microsoft Forms

TEACHER FIELD TEST - GRADES 6-8

3. Which of the following programs scaffolds instruction the best?

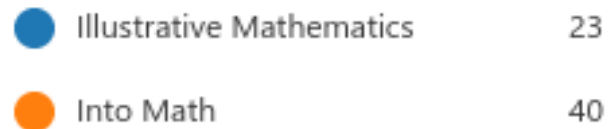
[More Details](#)



TEACHER FIELD TEST - GRADES 6-8

4. Which of the following programs contains the best amount of practice for your students?

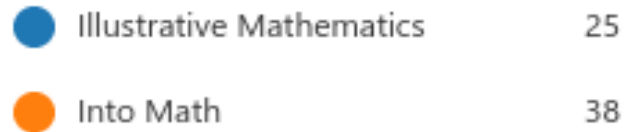
[More Details](#)



TEACHER FIELD TEST - GRADES 6-8

7. Which of the following programs you like the best


[More Details](#)





Stage II: Cost Negotiations

- Each of the top 2 vendors presented their best offer
- Met with each vendor to ensure that only necessary resources were included in the final offer
- Ensured that professional development was provided by the company (because of lack of coaches)



COST ANALYSIS – Into Math Program

Grades 6-7-8 (6 Year)

Includes:

- \$568,424 = Main Program, with 6-year replenishment of student book and 6-year teacher/student digital subscriptions
- \$40,320 = PD (cost to the district, net of free materials)
- \$186,102 = Waggle licenses-- teacher/student

Total: \$794,846