

Minutes
Watertown Board of Education
Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting
Monday, October 26, 2020
Remote Meeting

Members Present: Cathie Rinaldi, Chairman, Curriculum & Instruction Committee Chair
Leslie Crotty, Committee Member
Josephine Rosa, Committee Member
Janelle Wilk, Committee Member
Cindy Eastman, Committee Member

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. John Ramos, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Lisa Fekete, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Rob Makowski, Board of Education
Diane Bristol, Board of Education
Jason Malagutti, Board of Education

1. Convene Meeting

Ms. Rinaldi, Chairman of the Committee, convened the meeting and immediately turned the meeting over to Ms. Fekete.

2. Discussion Regarding the following:

- a. Review Fall 2020 iReady Scores in ELA & Mathematics Grades 2-8
- b. Compare Fall 2020 iReady Scores to Fall 2019 & Winter 2020
- c. Share status of C&I Initiatives from 2019-2020
- d. Outline next steps to continue the work from 2019-2020

Ms. Fekete – Tonight we will be providing a curriculum and instruction update. It is important to note that is a strange year and we don't have all of the data points we would typically have in a normal year. The purpose of the presentation is to review the fall 2020 IReady scores from LA and Math from grades 2- 8. Then we will compare fall 2020 to fall of last year. This will give us an idea of what the gaps look like. I will also share the initiatives and actions steps from 2019/2020 and tell you where we left off with that and what the next steps are.

We will look at fall and winter of last year and then fall of this year. We did not have a spring assessment last year. There was also no SBAC or SAT's last year. What do we expect to gain from this information? We know there will be gaps and that, unfortunately, is the nature of the state

right now. We need to know the extent of the gaps, what to focus on, what our new baseline will be and then using a growth mindset and model, where do we need to go for this year, given the amount of interruptions we are trying to mitigate. The data we will look at is cohort data.

Sometimes we will look across grade level, but for the most part, it is the same group of kids and how they performed over time. The graphs you will see will be student placement in a tier based upon their assessment. Tier I students are performing solidly on or above grade level on the assessment. Tier II students are either scoring close to grade level or slightly below, but no more than one year below. Tier III students scored more than one year below on the assessment. You can see on the left hand side of the graph is the percent of students in each tier and the total number depends on if we are looking at grade level data or school data. There will be different benchmark periods across the bottoms and green is tier I, yellow is tier II and red is tier III.

The test is trying to determine where kids are at. It is important to note that: The iReady Diagnostic Assessments are adaptive and taken on the computer. It will give them really hard questions and then scale down to easy problems. At John Trumbull, this is often their very first experience in taking an assessment of this nature. This is one data point, albeit a very solid one. Winter scores have historically been the most representative of student performance and a relatively close predictor of SBAC.

We are going to start with math. We are going to look at 2019 fall, last winter and this fall. You want to see growth. You want green to go up and red to down. When you look at winter to fall, you want to look at the degree of regression. You may see decrease in green and increase in red. We may have more kids that need intervention. Then we will compare fall of last year to now, we are looking at what a typical year looks like year over year to a year like we had last year. (Graphs are now shown and explained)

If you look at individual grades, you can see increases over the grades. Increase in the green and decrease in the red, but a large percent in the yellow. Many are at the top of the yellow, almost in the green. That will connect with some action steps. What we want to see is low red, high green and not so much yellow. It tells us they are close. The next slide shows where we left off in the winter to where we are now. This is the same cohort of kids. You can see the regression that has taken place. You see higher red, lower green and interestingly, the yellow stayed the same. The last graph for math shows fall 2019 to now, in fall of 2020. Same group of kids again. One thing that is interesting to me is that if you lay one graph on top of the other, they are pretty similar. I felt this was not entirely horrible news and we could have been in a much worse place. There was definite regression and it will be difficult and I will go over it more in the action steps later on. Looking at the balcony view, despite the pandemic, while there are certainly gaps and regression illustrated by the data, when comparing fall scores from 2019 to 2020, they are not completely dissimilar in pattern given the increase in grade level/expectations. While scores are not where we would like them to be, there is evidence of growth from fall to winter across all tiers. There is significant movement out of Tier III across schools and more movement from Tier II to Tier I is needed. This next graph shows the amount of students in tier I from last fall to last winter. The next graph shows the yellow and there is not such a drastic difference. It is important to point some things out...for example if you look at the scores in John Trumbull, there is some work to be done there. In the middle grades, we don't have an intervention model that is strong. The red swoops up here. Given we are still reckoning with changing conditions, how can we mitigate the gaps from the pandemic and move forward in general? How can we start out of the gate with more students in Tier I? How can we provide intervention for our neediest learners

while moving kids into Tier I at an expedited rate? How can we provide intervention beyond post elementary years given the inherent barriers in secondary scheduling structures?

Shifting gears to LA, the scores overall are usually better for us as a district. The graphs are set up the same way as the math was, fall 2019, winter 2019 and fall 2020. The first graph shows that yellow is lower and green is higher. The next graph shows winter to now. Finally, last fall to this fall. Again, there is regression, but they are not completely dissimilar in profile. Given we are still reckoning with changing conditions, how can we mitigate the gaps from the pandemic and move forward in general? There is notable growth from fall to winter. How can we start out of the gate with more students in Tier I? How can we provide intervention for our neediest learners while moving kids into Tier I at an expedited rate? How can we provide intervention beyond post elementary years given the inherent barriers in secondary scheduling structures?

You do see some nice packets of green, especially in the middle school scores. This is something to celebrate for sure. There is an increase in tier I, decrease in tier II (sometimes the yellow increases because kids come out of red). Given we are still reckoning with changing conditions, how can we mitigate the gaps from the pandemic and move forward in general? How can we provide intervention beyond post elementary years given the inherent barriers in secondary scheduling structures? This brings us to our action steps. I did color code them according to the instructional core. The instructional core is students, teacher, content and task. For each action step, I will tell you what we did last year, and then what we are doing this year. The first was to build consistency and capacity in the IReady platform by providing training at all schools where all teachers used it to set goals for Professional Growth & Evaluation. They utilized winter benchmark for planning instruction. For this year, SRBI Coordinators developed and used a similar protocol at each school to unpack fall data SRBI Coordinators will collaborate with the Director of C&I and Building Administrators to build capacity & facilitate use of: Data chats, Standards Based Assessments, growth monitoring Mid-Point assessment, the toolkit, winter benchmark protocol and DIBELS for language arts and math. The professional development in the beginning of the year really helped us to launch this. This year, the district wide SRBI committee purchased ITR direct which customized right to your district and they are working with principals and myself to have a say in how our assessments are constructed. It is a way to house the data and then put it back out to look at. We will use Flowchart to establish common steps for EIT meetings. The SRBI coordinator at Judson and Polk work well together and they will mirror practices at both schools. We will introduce math intervention at John Trumbull, investigate ways to provide intervention at Swift and the addition of a math section for 9th & 10th graders in the second semester and we will use the IReady assessment for instructions and fill gaps. They will have a double math the second semester. For the SRBI coordinators, the idea from last year was to hire five and we were able to onboard two, but we did all five. They participated in the SRBI committee and all were trained in the PPT processes. This year, they are fully onboarded and working, leading charge for intervention across buildings, collaborated to create and facilitate a protocol for fall data review, planned common WIN (What I need) process across Polk/Judson for fall, collaborate to develop data chat protocol, collaborate on implementation of RTI Direct, collaborate to create an SRBI Process "Binder" containing all protocols, forms, etc. and in grades 3-5, they are functioning as a quasi math specialist/small group instruction.

For curriculum last year, we utilized TreGoEd Process with administrators to determine curriculum priorities, we established curriculum priorities in HS Math; Grades 3-8 ELA; Grades 3-8 Science, we developed a common protocol for evaluating and adopting curriculum documents or primary resources (Using some of the TreGoEd tools), completed approximately half of the process for selecting a primary resource at WHS for Math, we met several times as a K-8 ELA Department to identify curricular needs, we utilized TreGo Ed protocols with middle school Math

teachers to identify needs and concerns. After onset of COVID-19, we opted to use a combination of instructional resources versus the exclusive use of Illustrative Math and planned for NGSS Science Training in grades 3-5 with CREC (currently on hold) and then John Trumbull implemented phonics units and we implemented standards based report cards in grades 3-5. This year we will complete the Watertown High School process for the selection and adoption of a primary resource, send a selection of the grade 3-5 ELA curriculum and grade 6-8 Math resource binders for evaluation at EdAdvance to determine whether we will revise existing curriculum, write or buy new curriculum or select a primary resource and investigate the adoption of a grades 6-8 ELA curriculum or primary resource. For instruction last year, we worked on the high impact instructional strategies, there was significant professional learning, it was the focal point of Professional Growth & Evaluation for all teachers and they completed one cycle of Instructional Rounds at each school. For next steps, I am trying a new teacher evaluation process. I want teachers to see the connection of the work we have done in the past to what we are doing now. We will create a common walkthrough protocol for principals as they cannot conduct Instructional Rounds due to COVID-19, create an administrator committee to create a common document for administrator walkthroughs and then work with the administrator committee to create a temporary flowchart to determine practices for addressing truancy across the three teaching models. With differentiation, rigor and relevance has an ongoing focus on PLCs and the next step is really about student engagement and how we can use these pieces of making learning reverent to maintain student engagement.

We have some additional action steps to share. The state allowed adopted flexibilities afforded by the CSDE on student engagement where teachers select on area of focus & two indicators of accomplishment. They could choose from: Social and emotional learning for students, Student engagement, and/or Family engagement. We created high leverage samples of goals that align with Connecticut Common Core of Teaching Rubric and the four HHS and then customize professional learning modules based upon teachers' goals. (A sample was shown on the screen and explained) We are providing and continuing to provide ongoing robust professional learning opportunities related to the three potential models for instruction for 2020-2021: In-Person, hybrid, remote. Provide ongoing robust professional learning opportunities on various curated technology platforms & tools and provide ongoing training and support with common district digital platforms: Google Classroom/SeeSaw; Newsela; iReady Personalized Learning in Math Grades 3-5; IXL Grades 6-8; Savvas Math Grades 9-12; PBS Learning Media; Kami; Screencastify. These are the platforms we want everyone to consistently use so that we can build good capacity around the specific pieces. The most radical action step that I wanted to share with the Board tonight is looking at the way we are utilizing our resources in math. This slide shows our supports in reading versus support in math. John Trumbull has 2 FT reading specialists and one FT reading coach, Judson and Polk each have a FT reading specialist. For math, there is one math specialist that works with teachers only across all three schools. You can see the difference in resources in language arts and math. If you look at the secondary level, Swift has 2 FT reading specialists and one math specialist whose job is to work with teachers. There is a clear difference in what we have. In this next slide, you can see in grades 2 & 3...when you start here with students with less than 10% proficient, we are always trying to catch up. I am not blaming anyone, but we aren't moving kids out of the yellow in 3, 4, & 5, but we are also moving the kids that we inherited. You can also see we are missing intervention at Swift where the red bars go up. I am also not blaming it on our two math people, they are very smart and capable, but I wonder if we should use them in a different capacity. My proposal for this year would be to have a math specialist at John Trumbull and shift the specialist role to be like their reading. They would work with both kids and adults, push in and pull out, there would be a full time person there that can be the champion for

math. We need that early intervention. There is also an SRBI coordinator at John Trumbull who does some things with math, but it is a larger school, so that person doesn't have the same amount of time as say the person at Polk or Judson may have to have their SRBI coordinator function as the quasi math specialist. I would then advocate taking the secondary math specialist and putting them at Swift. They have Eagle time and structure to be something. We also need someone to take kids at Swift. The SRBI coordinator could work with them together. I would then recommend that we have a math interventionist at the high school with the January start. Then we will have one section of academic math this year and add additional sections in 2021/2022. There would be no increase in cost because the interventionist was already in the budget and slated for Swift. Again, the SRBI Coordinators have less time to work with students due to larger building, Grades 3-5 SRBI Coordinators have a bit more time so they can work with students and it mirrors the model we have for ELA. We would have early intervention at John Trumbull and more opportunities for intervention at Swift and the High School.

3. Adjournment

Ms. Rinaldi adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Agenda Item:	3.1
Subject:	To adjourn the meeting
Motion Presented By:	Ms. Bristol
Motion Seconded By:	Mr. Malagutti
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that we adjourn.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

Respectfully submitted by,

**Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary**