



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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To: Linus J. Guillory, Jr., Ph.D., Chief Schools Officer
From: Paul Schlichtman
RE: Doctoral Research Proposal, Stephanie Selvaggio
Date: September 27, 2019

Stephanie Selvaggio, academic chair for science at Lowell High School, is enrolled in a doctoral program at UMass Lowell. A requirement of the program is to complete an organizational problem improvement study. Ms. Selvaggio is focusing on student responses to open (constructive) response MCAS science questions, and to determine if implementing a Claim Evidence Reasoning (CER) format of argument writing will equip students with writing skills leading to improved student performance.

Ms. Selvaggio proposes to invite four middle school science teachers to participate in professional development focused on CER. Ms. Selvaggio will examine student outcomes, as well as qualitative interviews with students and teachers who agree to participate. Faculty participation is voluntary and Ms. Selvaggio does not have a supervisory relationship with the teachers.

This research is consistent with district efforts to improve student performance on open response questions, and on the science MCAS, and will provide benefits to the district if the instructional practices in the study result in improved MCAS performance.

The work conforms with Policy LC. I recommend approval by the school committee.