



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Daniel Rourke
Mayor and Chairperson

Dominik Lay
Vice-Chairperson

Fred Bahou
David Conway
Eileen Delrossi
Jackie Doherty
Connie A. Martin

Tel: (978) 674-4324
Fax: (978) 937-7609

Curriculum & Instruction
Subcommittee Meeting

Tuesday, February 4, 2024
TV Studio - 5th Floor
6:00 p.m.

Subcommittee Members Present:

Chairperson Martin, Mr. Bahou and Ms. Doherty

School Department Personnel Present:

Dr. Fox Roye, Assistant Superintendent

Chairperson Martin called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

- 1. Request the establishment of a monthly Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee to provide consistent updates on classroom implementation of curriculum initiatives and teaching practices across the district.**

Dr. Fox Roye provided the subcommittee with an overview of the curriculum audit that took place from April 2024 through January 17, 2025. She stated that Attuned partnered with Lowell Public Schools to support the 2024-2025 literacy efforts to evaluate and refine literacy instruction in service of equitable outcomes. In the fall of 2024, Attuned team members interviewed stakeholders and analyzed instructional artifacts. Additionally, Attuned Education Partners visited 55 classrooms across the following ten schools: Bartlett, Pyne Arts, Lincoln, Greenhalge, STEM Academy at Rogers, Morey, Shaughnessy, Bailey, Wang, and Stoklosa.

Dr. Fox Roye stated that during the observations, six indicators from two categories were rated to understand the following components of instructional rigor and classroom culture for learning.

- Indicator 1: Are students receiving grade-level instruction? Are texts and tasks aligned to grade-level standards?
- Indicator 2: Does the teacher's facilitation maintain rigor to promote grade-level learning opportunities?

- Indicator 3: Are students producing academic language related to the content? 1 Lowell Public Schools January 2025 Culture
- Indicator 4: Are students meaningfully engaged in learning in a classroom environment conducive to learning?
- Indicator 5: Are there strong relationships and a sense of belonging in the classroom?
- Indicator 6: Is there evidence of SEL practices in the classroom?

Attuned hosted several focus groups of school leaders, campus-based coaches, and classroom teachers better to understand Lowell's educators' perceptions and lived experiences. Participants engaged in an open forum, providing input on key areas of Lowell's current literacy approach. These findings consider all inputs: observations, artifact review, stakeholder perspective, and student achievement data. The report shared the following strengths across the network that can be capitalized upon:

- Lowell Public Schools has established a district team and campus-based coaches that support literacy instruction through coaching and regular on-the-ground touchpoints.
- Lowell Public Schools has established a baseline for regular collaborative planning for teachers to engage in routine professional learning with opportunities to refine these meetings to prepare teachers for strong tier 1 instruction.
- Through actions and words, the school community has demonstrated a commitment to creating more substantial literacy outcomes and a sense of urgency to take bold action.
- Stakeholders articulate and demonstrate expectations for high achievement for all students and believe students are capable of engaging in grade-level work.

The also shared these four key gaps that are likely negatively impacting progress toward student achievement goals:

- The curricular materials for language comprehension do not provide students access to grade-level, complex texts and tasks to build knowledge. These materials create many opportunities for choice, creating an uneven and inequitable experience for students across the district.
 - ❖ Many classroom observations revealed the inconsistent use of the Units of Study, resulting in a misalignment of instructional materials and grade level standards. Additionally, the Units of Study doesn't adequately address the depth and complexity of the standards.
 - ❖ Observations and stakeholder focus groups also indicate there is not a deep investment in the current adopted curriculum which has resulted in teachers selecting other materials, which often misalign to grade-level standards.
- Overall, the combination of curricular materials used across the reading and writing block is incoherent, resulting in teachers planning across many resources with few opportunities for integration.
 - ❖ Self-contained teachers are currently required to plan across two curricula for reading foundational skills and several instructional materials for language comprehension, including Units of Study, Writing About Reading, and Interactive Read-Alouds. Stakeholders express the frustration of trying to make connections between many programs and the disjointed approach to the literacy block.
- The current suite of materials and guidance does not provide the breadth and depth of support teachers need to meaningfully engage students in integrated content and language development.

- ❖ Lowell Public Schools has a growing number of multilingual learners, at varying levels of English proficiency, and thus there is a strong need to utilize materials that promote the integration of content and language development. The current materials and guidance are not sufficient to ensure students build English language in their literacy block.
- Instructional systems that support the effective delivery of grade-level literacy instruction, including collaborative planning, job-embedded coaching, and differentiated professional development, lack consistency across the district.
 - ❖ Stakeholders indicate the vast difference in the amount of time provided for designated collaborative planning at the elementary and middle school levels. There is a deep desire by teachers to have more opportunities for within school and across district collaboration with other teachers to plan and share best practices.

Dr. Fox stated that the district is planning to revise the K-8 curriculum.

Ms. Doherty expressed concern about the involvement of stakeholders, mentioning that she is hearing from teachers and wants their input to be included.

Dr. Fox assured her that teachers will be involved and that their feedback is valued.

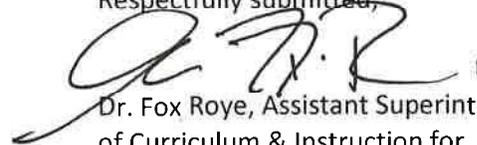
Mr. Bahou echoed Ms. Doherty's concern about teacher involvement and inquired how their input will be aligned with the changes.

Dr. Fox explained that coaching will be provided, and the task force will review the endorsed curriculum while collaborating with similar communities and smaller districts. She emphasized that teachers' voices are important but noted that their participation will not detract from their teaching responsibilities. They will be engaged in evaluating the chosen curriculum.

Ms. Martin suggested that the plan be presented alongside a professional development plan, including costs. She proposed offering the training this summer and expressed her willingness to invest in the implementation.

Mr. Bahou made a motion to adjourn at 6:44 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Doherty. The motion passed with 3 yeas.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Fox Roye, Assistant Superintendent
of Curriculum & Instruction for
Superintendent Skinner, Secretary to
Lowell School Committee

OFR/mes