



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

Academics & Instruction
Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday, September 16, 2025
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 6:10 p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

- 1. For the Planets Health Sustainability and Climate K-12**
- 2. Update on Professional Learning and ELA Curriculum Implementation**

Dr. Roye provided an overview of the district's approach to climate education, as outlined in the report shared with the Committee on planetary health, sustainability, and climate change in K–12 education. She emphasized the district's commitment to interdisciplinary learning that equips students to understand and tackle real-world challenges—climate change being a top priority. Environmental themes are integrated across all grade levels and subjects, fostering scientific literacy, critical thinking, and civic engagement. From early lessons on weather and climate to advanced studies on human impact, students explore climate-related content through science, social studies, math, and English language arts. The curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Frameworks and the National Science Education Standards to ensure high academic quality and rigor.

At the elementary level (grades K–4), Mystery Science builds foundational knowledge and scientific skills around planetary health, sustainability, and climate change. For middle and high

school, the district uses OpenSciEd, a curriculum grounded in inquiry-based learning that helps students examine the impacts of climate change and explore possible solutions through real-world applications.

High school students may also choose from three electives focused on environmental topics:

- Environmental Studies – Focuses on developing awareness of environmental changes and their effects.
- Environmental Science – A comprehensive course in ecological and environmental systems.
- Environmental Sustainability – A semester-long course on fossil fuels, renewable resources, pollution, and sustainability efforts.

In middle grades, Illustrative Math (IM) incorporates climate-related data and environmental contexts, particularly in statistical analysis and modeling. The health curriculum highlights the links between climate change and public health, addressing issues like pollution, air and water quality, and their disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities. Students learn how informed decisions and advocacy can foster healthier communities.

The Climate Resilient Schools Coalition, a student-led initiative founded by junior Lilly Ross, is taking active steps to address climate challenges. Supported by teachers, administrators, community partners, and the City's Sustainability Director, the Coalition is developing a Climate Resolution to enhance environmental education, expand curriculum, and promote student leadership in climate resilience efforts across the district.

Dr. Roye then provided an update on the professional learning initiatives undertaken to support the district's implementation of the new K-8 ELA curriculum. The new curriculum consists of American Reading Company (ARC) for Grades K-4 and EL Education for Grades 5-8. Professional learning sessions have been conducted across four summer dates (June 17, June 18, August 18, August 19) and a full-day session on September 9th. The four professional learning sessions supported the foundational implementation of both ARC and EL Education curricula. Professional learning for the K-4 ARC curriculum focused on research and evidence-based practices for reading instruction, promoting transfer for bilingual students, and pre-planning with the 5 conditions of the lesson.

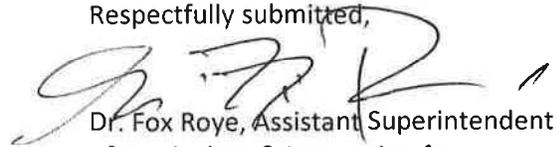
Ms. Martin asked about plans for follow-up.

Dr. Roye responded that the approach is school based, with a strong focus on instruction to maximize impact. The American Reading Company will be on-site at schools to support this work. Additionally, ongoing development will continue during the district's professional development days in October and December. Professional learning for the grades 5-8 EL Education curriculum focused on research-based practices for close reading, the structure of the curriculum, how it supports diverse learners, and the Deeper Instruction Framework (Topic, Task, Targets, Texts – the "4 T's"). A full-day session was held on September 9 for all K-8 core ELA teachers. The training introduced the principles behind the EL Education curriculum, the 4 T's framework, and the use of backward design with assessments to guide instructional planning. Teachers also examined curriculum components to support implementation and began planning specific practices such as close reading and teaching complex texts in small

groups. Additional sessions are planned for paraeducators and multilingual educators to ensure consistent support across all instructional roles.

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Fox Roye', is written over the typed name.

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

OFR/mes