

Moving Forward

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Winter 2009



MARYSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Curriculum/Instruction News

The end of 2009 is approaching quickly. As we all plan for the winter ahead, research provides us a focus for continual and improved student learning:

- Review the district shared vision and culture, based on 21st century learners.
 - Update; implement and monitor school improvement plans (SIP).
 - Work from a vertically and horizontally coherent curriculum.
 - Maintain a laser-like focus on rigorous and relevant instruction.
 - Use data to plan and make decisions.
 - Connect sustained professional development with building and district improvement plans.
- Developing 21st century learners involves our cultivation of creative skills at every grade level. Many of the fastest-growing jobs and emerging industries rely on workers' creative capacity, the ability to think unconventionally, question the herd, imagine new scenarios, and hence, produce astonishing work.

Sue Jacobs, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

What's new in MPS instruction this fall and winter?

Below, are content areas under current focus. Additional changes continue to domino and evolve through the school year.

Elementary

- Implementation of a new, revised K-5 ELA curriculum and common benchmark assessments
- Revised K-5 report cards, including updated standards, parent progress information, and literacy profile
- Refining K-5 intervention blocks; training for new para intervention kits
- Revised K-5 health curriculum to align with new state standards
- Revised K-5 physical education curriculum to align with new state standards (still in process)
- Revised K-5 technology curriculum to align with the new state standards (still in process)
- Tweaking pacing guide resources of grade 4 social studies curriculum aligned to new state standards
- New science curriculum and training in grades 4-5, which is aligned to new state science standards
- New standards-based assessments for grade 3 social studies and science (still in process)
- Cognitive Impaired Curriculum (still in process)

Middle School

- Continued collaboration of last year's revised ELA curriculum and further improved revisions this winter
- Revised health curriculum; "how to" unit support this winter
- Cognitive Impaired Curriculum (still in process)
- Theater revised curriculum (in process)

High School

- New Forensics curriculum
- Revised World history curriculum aligned to new state standards
- Revised US history curriculum aligned to new state standards (in process)
- Revised civics curriculum aligned to new state standards
- Revised economics curriculum to align to new state standards (still in process)
- Graphics Arts and Communication Arts Curriculum (still in process)
- Cognitive Impaired Curriculum (still in process)

Other District Instructional Initiatives:

- SEDPAC (Sex Education Development Parent Advisory Committee) is rewriting their by-laws this school year.
- Updating building and district Performance Indicators and School Improvement Plans (SIP), with electronic submission into MDE's AdvancED
- Significant efforts with Achieve Data Director to better inform classroom instruction and school improvement planning; Smart Board training

2009/2010 Professional Study Council

The Marysville Public Schools Professional Study Council (PSC) held their first meeting on November 18, 2009. At this meeting PSC agreed to monitor and support progress toward the accomplishment of 2009-10 Board of Education goals.

The Board of Education 2009/2010 Goals are as follows:

- Reach all learners through the Professional Learning Communities process.
- Increase student achievement in K-12 writing literacy.
- Fulfill our shared responsibility to maximize scarce financial resources in the best interests of our students.
- Fully integrate available technology into the learning process.

For further detail, approved PSC minutes will be posted on the District web page.

Instructional Research

In his book, *Turning Average Instruction Into Great Instruction*, John O'Connor's premise is that the only thing that will improve student performance is improved instruction. He defines GREAT instruction as: instruction **G**uided by the Curriculum, **R**igorous with **R**esearched-based strategies, **E**ngaging and **E**xciting, **A**ssessed continuously to direct instruction, and **T**ailored through flexible groups.

The book raises questions like: What researched-based strategies does the leadership team agree should be seen in every classroom? What is real engagement? How are the results of assessment being used to adjust instruction? How is data used to provide coaching, support, and coherent SIP professional development?

Turning Average Instruction Into Great Instruction by John O'Connor is published by Rowman and Littlefield. Copyright 2009. ISBN-13: 978-1-57886-949-7. Available through AASA Publications.

Key Train

This school year, MHS grade 11 students are learning in Key Train. Key Train serves as the high school's online requirement for Merit Graduation. This online interactive program helps students with WorkKeys. Workkeys is part of the MME test required by the state.

Staff Professional Development

Please be sure to check cancellation policies when you register for any professional development opportunity through Title IIA funds.

State and Federal Professional Development Update: **The federal government will not pay fees for federal grant-funded conferences if the registrant does not attend.**

In order to fund professional development fees and classroom substitutes with Title IIA funds, the professional development must have been approved in the Federal Grant Application. Field services will only approve professional development that is in both the building and district submitted SIP (School Improvement Plan). If the professional development is not approved in the yearly-submitted building and district SIP and supported with explicit data and research, as well as details in the district consolidated application, the professional development cannot be paid with Federal Title IIA funds.

The goal of MDE and Federal Government: laser-like instructional focus, combining district professional development with yearly building and district needs, and SIP goals, based upon data and research.

Staff members wishing to register for after-school and summer professional development that is free or self-paid may register directly with RESA. However, be sure to keep documentation of the PD activity for your file.

District SEDPAC (Sex Education Development Parent Advisory Council)

SEDPAC is updating their district advisory By-Laws this school year. An advisory sub-committee has been reviewing input from advisory members. The advisory sub-committee continues to meet in December and early January. Draft versions will be shared with the entire SEDPAC for further feedback in January, prior to the next SEDPAC meeting in February. Further, SEDPAC members would next like to revisit current district reproductive health goals and objectives next.

Challenges to Prevent Students from Dropping Out

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan, says that the dropout problem isn't just a high school problem; it is incubated at grade levels way before high school.

"This is a national, state, district, building, teacher, student, parent and community concern, as well," Flanagan said. "To turn the tide, we must think differently and build a shared vision to support and engage students so they are able to succeed, not drop out of school."

Early warning signs of potential dropouts include:

Poor grades in core subjects

- Sixth graders who fail math have only a one-in-five chance of making it to the 12th grade on time and often repeat ninth grade. Those failing English have a one-in-eight chance.
- Thirty-three percent of eighth grade students scoring in the lowest mathematics achievement quartile fail to graduate.

Grade retention

- Sixty-four percent of students who repeated a grade in elementary school and 63 percent of those who were held back in middle school left school without a diploma.

Low attendance

- In one study of the eighth graders in Philadelphia who attended school less than 80 percent of the time 78 percent eventually dropped out.

Disengagement in the classroom, including behavioral problems

- Sixth graders who receive a poor behavior mark have a one-in-four chance of making it to the 12th grade on time.

Stay Up-To-Date with MDE

If you want to find the most up-to-date official information on science education in Michigan, you should visit:

<http://mi.gov/science>

If you want to find the most up-to-date official information on the MEAP test in Michigan, you should visit:

<http://mi.gov/meap>

If you want to find the most up-to-date official information on the Michigan Merit Exam, you should visit:

<http://mi.gov/mme>

"Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

—John F. Kennedy

On the Horizon: Curriculum Updates From Michigan Department of Education

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have released the first official public draft of the college- and career-readiness standards in English language arts and mathematics as a first step in the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a process being led by governors and chief state school officers in 51 states and territories.

Michigan is one of the states participating in the initiative and will seriously consider adoption of the Common Core State Standards. National grade-by-grade standards and guidelines in language arts and math are expected to be finalized early 2010. A next step in the standards development process in Michigan includes aligning the K-8 standards and expectations with standards for success beyond high school. The K-12 Common Core Standards will be vertically aligned standards and expectations for English language arts and mathematics in Michigan.

These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have to succeed in entry-level, credit bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The grade level standards were researched and evidence-based on the following guiding considerations:

Fewer, clearer, higher: It is critical that a national standards document be translatable and teachable in the classroom. As such, the standards must cover only those areas that are critical for student success.

Evidence: Each document includes sources of evidence for the standards. Evidence informed what was included in the standards

Internationally benchmarked: These standards are informed by the content, rigor and organization of standards of high-performing countries and states.

Special populations: In the development of these standards, the inclusion, of all types of learners was a priority.

Assessment: The standards will ultimately be the basis for a system of high quality assessments.

Standards and curriculum: Standards are not curriculum. The curriculum that follows will continue to be a local responsibility (or state-led where appropriate).

21st century skills: The draft English language arts and mathematics standards have incorporated 21st century skills.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI is a scientifically research-based approach that identifies students not achieving at benchmark and provides a collaborative problem-solving framework to address the student learning needs, as well as the needs of all students. The eight practices of RTI are:

1. Shared belief that each and every child can succeed
2. Adoption of early intervention practices
3. Adoption of research-based interventions
4. Use of multiple assessments
5. Implementation of tiers of intervention
6. Team use of data-based decision making
7. Team use of shared problem solving
8. Team use of progress monitoring

Source: *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation*, NASDSE

Professional Learning Communities – PLC

According to Richard Dufour, a PLC has 3 main ideas.

“To create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold oneself accountable for results.”

Three Tiered Response to Intervention

The three-tiered RTI approach embraces both general and special education by focusing on:

Enabling the majority of children to make expected rates of progress by providing them a curriculum supported by evidence of effectiveness (**Tier 1**).

Universal screening that identifies children not learning as expected, and providing the students additional, focused, intensive instruction; and monitoring their progress (**Tier 2**).

Supporting the learning of students who have the greatest challenges learning the subject matter and who need an even more intensive intervention (**Tier 3**).

Charles R. Greenwood, professor of applied behavioral science at the University of Kansas, explained that in RTI, children with disabilities are expected to be represented in all tiers of intervention, as are children without IEPs.

“To assume that Tier 3 is only for special education is a myth,” said Greenwood, co-principal investigator at the Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood.

To read the full report, go to:

www.rtinetwork.org/images/stories/learn/roadmap/oprekrti.pdf.

UPCOMING CURRICULUM EVENTS

DECEMBER

7		SEDPAC Sub-Committee
8	8:30 a.m.	Grade 4 Science Kit Training
9	8:30 a.m.	Grade 5 Science Kit Training
9	7:00 p.m.	Informational Board Meeting
10	8:00 a.m.	Grade 6 Science Kit Training
11	8:00 a.m.	Elem. Foundations Training at RESA
17	7:00 p.m.	Board of Education Meeting
18		Last day of classes/Holiday Break

JANUARY 2010

4		Classes resume
6		SEDPAC Sub-Committee
12	3:45 p.m.	PSC Meeting at Central Office
13		Smart Board Training
13	7:00 p.m.	Informational Board Meeting
21		AM Kdg / PM 1st grade Writing Workshop
21	7:00 p.m.	Board of Education Meeting
26		AM 2nd / PM 3rd Writing Workshop
27		AM 4th/ PM 5th Writing Workshop

FEBRUARY

2		Elementary Writing—ELA Representatives
5	8:00 a.m.	6th Grade Science Kit Training
10	7:00 p.m.	Informational Board Meeting
12-15		Mid-Winter Break
16		Teacher Professional Development Day
18		MISD Reproductive Health Meeting
18	7:00 p.m.	Board of Education Meeting
22	9:15 a.m.	SEDPAC Meeting—Morton Library
23		Grade 11 Writing/Scoring
23	3:45 p.m.	PSC Meeting at Central Office

MARCH

10	7:00 p.m.	Informational Board Meeting
12		Building Performance Indicators due to MDE
18	7:00 p.m.	Board of Education Meeting
30	3:45 p.m.	PSC Meeting

Vision Statement

Every student will excel both personally and for the benefit of humanity

Mission Statement

Personalize learning for every student through rigor, relevance and relationships