

Dedham Public Schools
Interim Superintendent's Update
February 15th, 2023
Day 103 of the 2022-2023 School Year

Teaching and Learning

Early Bird Data. The District Data Team gathered to analyze the most recent Early Bird data. Principals and coaches met with the EB team to review the middle of year (MOY) results. The [presentation](#) can be accessed here. While there are several subtests in both K-1, Early Bird directed the team to focus on letter sounds and blending in Kindergarten and on the skills of deletion and non-word reading. An [explanation](#) of those skills can be found here.

	Kindergarten			
	Letter Sounds		Blending	
	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year
Above 40th	36%	58%	23%	76%
Between 20th - 40th	46%	26%	14%	12%
Below 20th	42%	16%	64%	12%

	Grade 1			
	Deletion		Non Word Reading	
	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year
Above 40th	72%	82%	61%	69%
Between 20th - 40th	37%	3%	16%	17%
Below 20th	11%	15%	23%	14%

Mental health and student services. Dr. Stetson and Dr. Dubé are pursuing grant funding via the [School Behavioral Health Workforce and Service Expansion Grants](#). This grant opportunity aims to bolster the work of school districts to ensure that all students have access to mental health clinicians, care, and programming in our schools. After many hours of work, Dr. Stetson and Dr. Dubé submitted the following application on behalf of the District on Friday the 10th. The grant submission can be accessed via the link [here](#).

Building Visits.



Interactive writing at Avery. Ms. Merritt's students using Google docs to write in a digital writer's notebook. Kids write, Ms. Merritt writes back an affirming message with feedback to help them grow as writers. Students write back and the cycle continues.



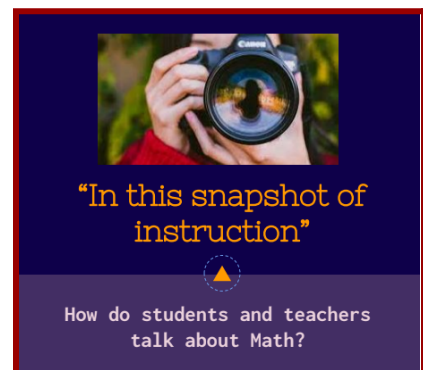
Morning meeting time at ECEC! Ms. DeLong's class prepares for a successful day of learning by building relationships and community within the classroom. Students and teachers greet one another and check in to see how everyone is doing.



DHS students enjoying the new flexible learning spaces in the recently renovated library.

Professional Development

Elementary Leadership Team. On Tuesday, February 7th the Elementary Leadership Team held instructional rounds at Greenlodge. Focus was on mathematics instruction with the guiding objective of “Listening to How Students and Teachers Talk about Math”. Slides are [linked here](#). An intended outcome of this work, facilitated by Dr. Kobierski, is for district leaders to build a common vision for academically productive talk in mathematics instruction. This is connected to professional work of our instructional coaches and teachers that is focused on elevating practices that engage students in mathematical discourse across the district.



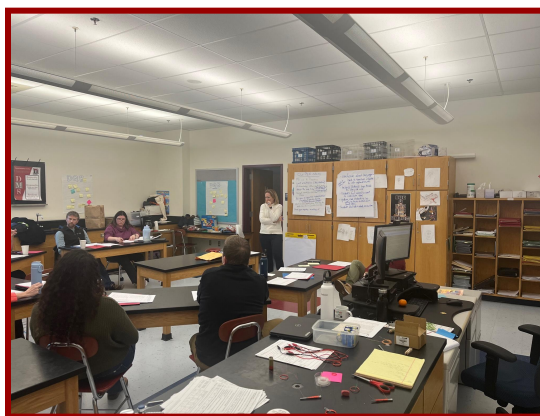
HSS Curriculum Pilot Update. The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, elementary teachers and coaches met on February 7th to discuss how to pilot Inquiry Journeys this spring. [Notification](#) went out to families on February 8th and educators are planning to launch pilots after returning from break. The folks from Inquiry Journeys created a Dedham Community Page about Inquiry Journeys [which can be found here](#).

District Leadership team. Our District Leadership Team met yesterday afternoon to continue its work focusing on supervision and evaluation. One of the primary goals of this effort is to ensure that all of Dedham's educators receive feedback and support that helps them grow and improve their practice. Yesterday's work focused on fostering effective dialog and framing feedback that is grounded in and based on student learning. [Slides can be viewed here.](#)



Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing (LiPS) Training. On February 8th & 9th, elementary interventionists, Occupational Therapists, Special Education teachers and related service providers attended LiPS training. [LiPS](#) is an evidence-based curriculum by Lindamood-Bell that supports students' literacy learning. The LiPS program will supplement the District's existing intervention toolkit to support student acquisition of essential early literacy skills.

OpenSciEd Curriculum (Grades 6-8). DMS is in year 2 of implementing the OpenSciEd units of study in grades 6-8 science classes. OpenSciEd science units are designed to address Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and focus on student driven inquiry based units centered around the investigation of a natural phenomenon. DMS has partnered with the OpenSciEd Equitable Instruction Initiative (OEI) from Boston College to support implementation of this award winning curriculum. DMS was selected to work closely with OEI to identify implementation challenges and collaboratively build solutions. The curriculum adaptations may be used by other districts in the Commonwealth to support their implementation of OpenSciEd.



Community Engagement

Oakdale Visioning. The Oakdale visioning team met on Tuesday February 8th to continue identifying instructional and programmatic priorities for Dedham's next new elementary school. The visioning team is composed of 40 representatives from the community including District leaders, principals, faculty, and parents from the Riverdale, Oakdale, and Greenlodge schools.

DCA Communications Survey. On February 7th, the District Curriculum Advisory met for a preliminary discussion about the Communication Survey for which we received 314 responses. The DCA will spend more time analyzing the survey over the next month and intends to hold focus groups during the month of March in order to gain further insight into how we can support families. Information about the focus groups will go out this week; the district will provide child-care and dinner for families who attend the focus groups.

Panorama Surveys. The District is preparing to begin administration of Panorama surveys to students, families, and faculty. These surveys were used extensively in the years preceding COVID to monitor the District's efforts focusing on school safety, climate, culture, teaching and learning.

Management and Operations

DHS Turf Field. This week I met with DHS Principal Jim Forrest, Athletic Director Steve Traister, Facilities Director Denise Moroney, and Assistant Superintendent Wells to review progress towards replacement of the turf field and track. In the weeks ahead I will have a timeline for the project prepared for the Committee's review and reference.

DMS Distance Learning Lab. On Sunday February 5th we learned that the extremely cold temperatures caused a sprinkler head to malfunction in the DLL. As a result there was significant water damage to the room that will require extensive remediation in the weeks and months ahead. Fortunately Facilities Director Denise Moroney and her facilities team were monitoring our buildings closely over the weekend and discovered this issue before more extensive damage was done. We will keep the Committee informed as this rehabilitation project proceeds.

School Safety. I want to take a moment to thank our crossing guards for their service. Every day they ensure that our students and families safely navigate their walks to and from our school buildings. On Friday February 3rd temperatures had dropped to approximately 16°F with winds gusting from 20 to 40 mph. The conditions were far from optimal and our crossing guards were there to ensure safety for our students and families.