

**Second Semester
2007-2008**

Curriculum Update

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Findlay City Schools Mathematics

This year the district began the implementation of a new math program for grades k-5. The program, Growing With Math, was selected in the committee process last school year. K-5 teachers received in-service on the new program throughout the 2007-08 school year, including ½ day sessions at their specific grade level with GWM experienced teachers. The FCS math mentors will meet this summer to tweak the curriculum maps and plan and write assessments. Continued support and professional development in this program is planned for next school year.

The 6-8 Math Applications and Concepts series and the changes to the middle school fast math track have been successfully implemented. Students now have the opportunity to enter their freshman year already having one credit in math for 8th grade Pre- Algebra. Those in the Fast Math track can also earn credit in 7th and 8th grade for Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 courses.

All Day Kindergarten

The decision was made to implement all day kindergarten at all the FCS primary buildings beginning 2008-09. This school year all day Kindergarten was piloted at two of our schools, Lincoln and Jacobs. Feedback from the principals, teachers and parents was very positive. Some of the benefits of students attending all day kindergarten and its effect on student progress are already being noted and teachers in the remaining buildings are enthusiastic about the decision and look forward to implementation next year. Kindergarten teachers across the FCS district shared experiences and ideas at grade level meetings and have visited nearby districts for additional ideas.

Findlay High School Task Force

A team of 30 Findlay High School teachers, administrators, parents and community members met throughout the year to study the Ohio Core, 21st Century Learning, and review practices and identify needs. The 2007-2008 team findings will be submitted to Dr. Wittwer this summer.

Technology To Enhance Curriculum

The k-8 teachers have begun using the newly implemented SuccessMaker Math Software. Teachers and data indicate this program has proven to be beneficial. Teacher trainers have received training in all aspects of the program and have trained others in their buildings which has led to successful systemic implementation. Additional licenses have been purchased for the intermediate and middle school buildings to address the demand for increased implementation.

Additional CPS units and the Learning Series content updates have been purchased. Teachers are becoming more experienced in this tool, and training for teacher trainers has been provided throughout the year. Additional professional development is planned for the summer of 2008 to meet specific additional needs with focus of grade bands.

FCS K-5 Literacy Committee

A committee comprised of k-5 teachers and administrators has worked hard throughout this school year to review Reading programs available and make decisions about possible adoptions for K-5 Reading in FCS. The team has decided to field test the program, StoryTown, next school year. The team felt this program included the essential components for quality instruction. It does allow for group instruction and guided reading at differentiated level, and includes intervention materials for struggling readers as well. The committee felt it was important to give this

program a trial run before making the decision to adopt. If the committee determines that it meets our needs, they will move through the curriculum writing and adoption process for implementation in 2009-10. If after the trail period, it is determined it does meet our needs as anticipated, the committee will take a look at other programs (Treasures and/or Reading Street) for piloting. This team is very dedicated to finding the best possible program to meet the needs of all students and increase reading achievement in FCS and they should be commended for their efforts and work this year!

*"I touch the future,
I teach!"*

Christa

McAuliffe

DataWerks Project

The Curriculum Directors and Director of Student Services have been working over the last year to formulate a solution to the management of data, data analysis and data entry overload expressed by principals and teachers last spring. We have been working with, Todd Stark of Testing Werks, to develop a software/web based program that will meet our needs. The program is

nearly complete and operational. Training for principals and teacher leaders will be provided this summer and each building will be training their staff in the use of the program and data entry at out first two-hour delay in-service in the fall. This tool was designed to meet the specific needs of FCS and we hope it will help make data collection and analysis more user-friendly for FCS teachers and administrators.

RSIT Partnership Agreement

Findlay City Schools did not meet all of our AYP for targets for 2007 and is considered a Tier I school district by the state. What that means to us is that we must enter into a partnership agreement with our Region 1 State Support Team. FCS worked with our State Support Team to develop a data driven partnership agreement that would support and enhance initiatives that we already had in place in the district. The agreement also afforded us the opportunity to visit other school districts and to provide additional poverty training.

Progress Book

Beginning in August, all 6-12 teachers went live with posting homework assignments on ProgressBook. Teacher leaders helped their peers with homework posting implementation and using other features of the program. Beginning in the fall of the 2007-08 school-year, the group of 5th grade teachers who piloted ProgressBook this past spring, will go live in the program as well. Elementary administrators have helped develop a plan/timeline to train all intermediate teachers next school year in ProgressBook and allow the teachers time to become familiar with the program before going live with posting grades and homework assignments beginning in the fall of 09-10.

DIBELS K-2

This beginning in the fall of 2007-08 school-year, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy) assessments were administered to all students in grades k-2. Assessments were administered three times during the year (fall, winter, spring) and several teachers utilized the progress monitoring components of DIBELS throughout the school year as well. Primary teachers, assessment teams, Title I teachers and administrators received professional development in the program and/or interpretation of the scores and reports available through the management system online.

Curriculum Writing

Many writing teams have been busy writing new curricula or revising existing curricula. Teams of teachers wrote or revised 30 courses of student during the school year. We appreciate the effort of all the teachers who worked on these courses and also the teachers who serve on Curriculum Council who meet to discuss and approve the courses of study that are developed each year.

Understanding the Framework of Poverty

On August 28, all FCS teachers participated in Day 1 or Day 2 of understanding poverty training. By teacher request, additional Day 2 training was provided on May 15 & 16 and 75 teachers participated in that training. Many of the strategies learned were successfully implemented in classrooms during the course of the year.

Standards Based Progress Reports 1-2

This year many of our 1st and 2nd grade teachers piloted the new standards-based progress report. The teachers who chose to participate in the pilot have been sharing the implementation successes and issues at grade level meetings and the final touches and edits have been made to the new reports. This new report goes into full implementation throughout the district for the 2008-09 school year.

Middle School Language Arts

In addition to the new math programs at the middle school and the new math program k-5, this was also the first year of implementation in a new Reading and Language Arts program at the middle school level, Elements of Literature and Elements of Language. The 6-8 teachers worked hard to cover the materials in their curriculum map and have met throughout the year to make additions and edit the map, as well as share and discuss ideas and experiences in the new program. The teachers have expressed that the new program includes rich literature pieces, suggestions for differentiation of instruction, many additional resources and valuable technology tools.

Professional Development Survey

Teachers were surveyed as to their professional development needs. The results of this survey will be the foundation for professional development planning for 2008-2009.

Elementary Intervention Block Grants

Each of the elementary buildings was provided with intervention "Block Grant" money this year. The principals and teachers in each building were asked to design programs and intervention strategies that they felt worked best in their buildings in order to meet the needs of their struggling students. The money provided for these programs was the district's effort to replace the Ohio Reads grant money which is no longer provided by the state, in order to provide small group tutoring, after-school programs and/or classroom assistance to at risk students as needed. In addition to the money provided for the district, several schools were also awarded grant dollars and were able to offer in Project MORE tutoring and/or TANF funded after school intervention programs for at risk students.

We would like to thank all of you who worked on collaborative teams, advisory committees, the task force and pilot programs. All of your efforts have had a positive impact on student learning.

*Sandy White
and
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