

INSTRUCTIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 7, 2017

4:30 p.m.

Spencer Borden Elementary School

1400 President Avenue

Fall River, MA 02720

A roll call at 4:30 p.m. showed:

Mr. Coogan: Present

Mrs. Panchley: Present

Dr. Costar: Present

Also present were Ms. Jesse Clements, Principal Kate Cobb, Ms. Melissa Fogarty, Mr. Joseph Martins, Mr. Raymond Medeiros, Mr. Kenneth Pacheco, Principal Maria Pontes, Principal Brian Raposo, Dr. Fran Roy, Ms. Fatima Silva, Ms. Jessica Vinacco, and Mr. Andrew Woodward.

Mrs. Panchley read the Open Meeting Law. A salute to the flag followed.

1. **Discussion:** Benchmark Data Update

Mrs. Panchley announced that they would be switching the order of the items on the agenda and starting with Benchmark Data.

Dr. Roy began by saying that she had more ELA data to share than math data. She said that Principal Cobb was leading the K-8 literacy group and Principal Raposo was leading the K-8 math group. The data that she presented was big picture data and the best predictors for MCAS-like work. On the benchmarks for elementary, there are MCAS release items. They deem students “Proficient” if they get 80 or above and “Warning” if they score 60 or below. In the “elementary world,” they were able to use the same benchmarks as last year and it was very comparable. Dr. Roy pointed out that anything shaded in orange showed that they improved.

Mrs. Panchley pointed out that Spencer Borden was doing well in 3rd grade but asked what the plan was for them to continue to improve. Principal Cobb said that her team has met twice. The first time was to come together to look at the planning process with teachers. Basically, ELA leaders in the district coming together with the hope of looking at that rigorous planning cycle and to do some walkthroughs and data analysis as a team. The first walkthrough took place in January. The team got a chance to go to the 3, 4, and 5 classrooms and look at the planning time and the instruction in the classroom. They are trying to get on the same page as far as instructional strategies. They also plan to go to Letourneau to look at some practices for ELA.

Principal Raposo added that they have a co-hort of math leaders throughout the district and have had two walkthroughs so far. They do one meeting to look at practices which is a learning walk. With that walkthrough there is a takeaway that they go back and implement. The other meetings are around data analysis, sitting as a team to look at specific items and determine if one school did really well on an item, what did they do differently and how can they learn from that. They identified a gap in 3rd grade where they struggled in a common area across the district. They put a plan in place for 4-6 weeks, they all went back and re-taught that skill and came back and looked at reassessment data.

Mrs. Panchley pointed out that there are a lot of new people and asked if they found it to be a challenge as far as this work. Principal Raposo admitted that there was a learning curve and they're having to retrain people as quickly as they can. They're currently trying to work on how to build capacity in their buildings and trying to look at how they can move instruction forward.

Dr. Costar noted, in regards to Spencer Borden, that the number of Proficient in 5th grade ELA has declined and the number of Warning in the 5th grade has gone up. He asked if there has been a big change with this group of students from the 4th grade to the 5th grade. Principal Cobb said that there was not and she thinks that that the next round of benchmark data is going to show an improvement. The students have taken similar types of assessments and they have seen improvements. The first round of data showed that they improved on all indicators. Mrs. Panchley said that she remembered from the last meeting that Spencer Borden had gone up during the first round and noted how remarkable it was. Principal Cobb added that the Grade 5 team went through a pretty thorough data analysis to look at what the strengths and weaknesses were.

Mr. Coogan asked if the students from the Grade 4 December 2015 data would be the same students in the Grade 5 December 2016 data. Principal Cobb answered that they were. She acknowledged that the numbers for 5th grade were lower than the other two grades. Mr. Coogan asked if the 5th grade test piggy backed on the Grade 4 test or if it was a stand-alone test. Principal Raposo answered that the 5th grade test was more complex. Principal Cobb agreed. Principal Raposo added that when they baseline kids at the beginning of the year, they have a lot of kids who may have been Proficient in 4th grade but end up in Warning in 5th grade based on the complexity of the passage. Dr. Roy added that every passage is unique. Some passages are more difficult than others. SGP is not being taken into consideration. These are 5th grade release items. Principal Raposo added that these were also different groups of kids. When he looked at the data for Letourneau, in 4th grade, all but two students who scored in Warning were new students to the country last year. Letourneau improved in 3rd grade and those are two teachers who were in their second year of teaching 3rd grade ELA. Last year was their first year using the curriculum. In 5th grade, he has a brand new teacher so there's a learning curve there.

Mr. Coogan asked how long students have to do the ELA benchmark in Grade 3. Principal Cobb replied that there's a recommended time of about two hours or so. Some students take a little longer than that. MCAS is untimed so there's a little wiggle room.

Dr. Roy said that, for the middle schools, this was the first time they were using this passage. The MCAS passage that they used was given last spring in 2016 because MCAS was changing slightly to 2.0 so they felt this was more aligned. This data is comparing the March MCAS 2016 to the kids right now. She got spots of math data across the schools. The only one she had for all schools was the 8th grade Foundations of Algebra which looked pretty good for the majority of the schools.

Mrs. Panchley asked why there was an "N/A" next to Henry Lord. Dr. Roy said it was because they didn't have an 8th grade last year. Their current ELA benchmark is not in yet. This data looks better for middle school than the last time.

Mr. Coogan asked what the ELA average was. Dr. Roy answered that it was truly an average of all the scores. Mr. Coogan asked if this was on a 100 scale. Dr. Roy said that it was. Mrs. Panchley asked why the scoring wasn't done the same way. Dr. Roy answered it was because they were using the MCAS test from 2016. She wasn't able to pull the spread.

Dr. Roy said that for the high school benchmarks, she's going to turn it over to the Durfee team. ELA has been a little more set in stone. She provided a sample of the 9th and 10th grade benchmarks and the percentages that were Proficient and in Warning.

Ms. Vinacco said that for Grade 9 they were running PARCC Assessments. The current 9th grade students have taken two benchmarks this year. They noticed that more students were scoring higher. On the last benchmark, 40% of the kids scored above a 71 whereas the first time around only 1% scored above a 71. Those benchmarks were different questions so it's not really fair to compare them. They ran the same benchmark with last year's group of freshmen and compared them with this year's freshmen and they noticed an increase. Forty percent of the current freshman scored above a 70 and last year only 5% did.

Mr. Coogan asked about the number of students because he thought they had 450-500 freshmen. Ms. Vinacco said that it depended on attendance and whether or not the subseparate or ELL students were in the group. Dr. Roy said that the Gate kids may not be included in this count. Ms. Vinacco agreed and stated that the Pre-AP and AP students were also not included in this count.

Transcriber's Note: At 4:52 p.m., Superintendent Malone entered the meeting.

Ms. Vinacco said that in the AP classes, they have their own test that they're doing and collecting data on. Dr. Costar asked if she felt that this was representative of the whole class. Ms. Vinacco answered that it was a good sample size. She pointed out on the 10th grade chart that they used the release items of last year's MCAS exam which showed how the sophomores in the spring and the sophomores now did on the same passage. She pointed out that they were almost in the same place.

Dr. Costar asked if they had skipped over one of the pages in the handout. Dr. Roy said that she did. She said that the page that Dr. Costar was referring to was a snapshot that she took. She took a Grade 9 linear functions benchmark which showed 36% of the students were scoring 80 or above and 32% were below 60.

Ms. Clements said that they were building their end of unit assessment so they didn't have the comparison from last year because they're revising their Geometry and Algebra I curriculum. She picked their last three unit assessments of Geometry. On the Unit 4 test, 45% of their Geometry students scored 61-80% while 27% of students got an 80% or higher. The Algebra I team did a mid-unit assessment for linear functions where 49% of students passed. At the end of the year, 66% of students passed. For the Geometry benchmark, every single unit assessment includes problems around volume because these are the problems that are frequently assessed. For Algebra I, they wanted to focus on solving equations and inequalities with fractions and decimals. Dr. Costar asked why they focused on those. Ms. Clements said that the Algebra I team wrote a benchmark at the beginning of the year that they gave on the third day of school based on the middle school standards. Fractions and decimals are something that students struggle with. They were predicting that was the data they were going to see. She said that there is content that they have to teach but they continue to sprinkle in their solving equations and inequalities problems and make sure there is a good variety of problems. The Algebra I team is most consistent from last year to this year. They took advantage of a lot of time at the end of last year to have a scope and sequencing plan to support students. They're all still very new teachers.

Mr. Coogan asked if the under 40% were flunking math. Ms. Clements said that the next step for them is to look at the mid-year assessment in Terms 1 and 2 where they will look at the students who are struggling. They have their Algebra Essentials Intervention. They handpicked the students that should be in there. They're doing walkthroughs and doing the reteaching similar to what Letourneau is doing. Mr. Coogan

wondered how far behind these students were and what they can do to catch them up. Ms. Clements said that that was a lot of the work that they were doing in Algebra I with the curriculum and using their classroom time as much as possible to build in those skills. Dr. Roy pointed out that in ELA there were 18% of the 9th graders who scored below 40 and wondered if these were the same kids that scored below 40 on math. If so, it might not just be a math issue.

Dr. Costar asked if there was a vehicle to provide students with math intervention. Ms. Clements said that they have Algebra Essentials and the Algebra I team sat down and looked at a group of students and their scheduling. They have six sections of about 10 students in each one.

Mr. Woodward said that their plan was to expand Algebra Essentials because they've had some success with the students who participated in Terms 1 and 2. Their goal for next year is to expand it and move it from a teacher duty to an actual teacher class. They also want to expand it to the 10th grade. Mr. Coogan said that he knows that this is tremendous strain on the high school when the students aren't performing to a certain standard. The Grade 10 test is what counts and it's reflected in the scores.

Transcriber's Note: At 5:04 p.m., Ms. Clements, Principal Cobb, Principal Raposo, Dr. Roy, Ms. Silva, and Ms. Vinacco left the meeting.

2. **Discussion:** CVTE Education Plan for the MSBA Durfee Project

MOTION: Dr. Costar-Mr. Coogan: To recommend the discussion of CVTE Education Plan for the MSBA Durfee Project to the full School Committee.

Discussion:

Superintendent Malone stated that they were currently in the design phase of the MSBA project. Because of the tight timelines with the MSBA, it forced them to get in front of some of the things they were planning. One of them was the plan for CVTE instruction and what it will mean at the new Durfee. There's a set of hurdles that they have to jump through with the MSBA to ensure that they are fully funded in the design process. Their design needs to include what CVTE looks like now and what it will look like. They have put together a plan that encapsulates what their current programs are, what they're applying for, and what future space needs they will likely have. The good news is that they are in front of this. He is asking the subcommittee to vote to approve the concept for CVTE plan because they have to submit this by next Tuesday (the day after the School Committee meeting). Dr. Costar asked Dr. Malone if he was looking for this subcommittee to recommend this to the full committee as a whole. Dr. Malone confirmed that is what he would like this committee to do.

Mr. Pacheco said that the concern was that they won't have the building to house the programs. They're not going to have a second chance to do this. This will be a placeholder and the MSBA will do their part to move the programs forward.

Mr. Medeiros said that they needed to look at the programs they currently have and decide if they should continue with each program. The programs are doing well and they are Chapter 74 approved. There are some programs that need improvement. They have six approved programs. There are some new Chapter 74 applications based on the new criteria based on student interest and market/labor demand. They are also trying not to duplicate programs that are in area schools, like Diman. They have an Engineering Technology Program that uses Project Leads the Way curricula. There are students in the program. These students could be brought into a Chapter 74-type program. The deadline for the Letter of Intent is February 10. These new guidelines were just announced. Between December 31 and last week, they couldn't apply for a Chapter 74 program. As they started to put their new regulations in place, they have a pre-application process and full

application process just so people don't get to the end of the road after the year and they realize they're missing something. The February 10 date was just thrown out last week for the Letter of Intent for programs to be approved in November of next year. They are trying not to disrupt what is currently being taught so they have the same curriculum. There may be options of an AP at the end as a capstone. For Radio and TV, there are students currently in a pathway. The market demand could be debatable but the state came out with this new labor demand site, which seems to support the program in the application. The issues there are the staff and equipment are currently funded by Comcast. Marketing is a new program. The new school would have a school store type of set up. Market demand should be there for something like that. They would have to be creative with the space that they use until the new building goes up.

Mr. Coogan asked if these were programs that they were wanting to put in the building now. Mr. Medeiros answered that they would take what they have right now and go for Chapter 74 approval, along with the funding that would come with it. Superintendent Malone explained that they already have the space for those programs in the current building. Dr. Costar asked if they were trying to take existing programs to make them Chapter 74 programs. Superintendent Malone clarified that the MSBA won't reimburse for those programs in the new design unless the School Committee approves to continue down this path. They are trying to get maximum reimbursement and maximum flexibility in a new space.

Dr. Costar said, in the Performing Arts area at Durfee, there's a corner of that program that deals with technology as it applies to lighting and stage craft. He's known several students who have gotten really good paying jobs at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun. He was wondering if there is a way to make this a CVTE program because these kids learn stuff that makes them immediately employable. Superintendent Malone asked if these programs were Chapter 74. Mr. Woodward said that they were not Chapter 74. They're electives. It's a pathway. Mrs. Panchley asked if they were eligible for Chapter 74. Mr. Medeiros said that he could see some of this fall under Radio and TV. Superintendent Malone recommended adding this as a bullet under Radio and TV.

Mrs. Panchley said that there was a vote on record to not make Radio and TV a Chapter 74 program. This vote was taken last year. She asked what the advantage of making this a Chapter 74 program. She wondered if AP kids who are taking advantage of the program now were going to be shut out if it were made into a Chapter 74 program.

Superintendent Malone said that they have to stop thinking of CVTE as vocational and non-vocational and think of it as blended. In blended CVTE programming, there are some students who are taking specific coursework who will be taking it as majors and there are other students who will be taking it as electives. Some of these classes will be blended while others will be separate. In terms of reimbursement from the state, if the School Department increases participation in a Chapter 74 program, they would receive more money for those kids who are majors; however, that does not dissuade any other student from taking it as a course. He doesn't know why the School Committee, in the past, was told this would not be good to have as a Chapter 74 program. Down the road, it is likely that they will repurpose positions. In the new building, they're looking at the design of a 21st Century studio that they would not get if this were not a Chapter 74 program. It would not be eligible for 80% reimbursement. There is nothing that prevents non-major students from being able to take this program.

Mrs. Panchley asked Mr. Kochman if he thought that they would be able to serve everyone's needs. Mr. Kochman said that he was not sure what the future holds for FRED-TV and the Comcast contract. That contract is due to be renegotiated in 2019. Whether or not there will be guaranteed funding is questionable. His concerns about it was having the program be given to all students. He was also concerned about the

funding that they would get from the state. He thinks that should come directly back to the program. If they were getting reimbursed per student, the program should see the benefits.

Superintendent Malone explained that when they are reimbursed, there's a formula for Chapter 70 and it's weighted. It's additional funds for the district which goes into the foundation budget. The money isn't a direct pathway back to the program. The money that goes to the foundation goes to the city and the city must pay for net school costs. In the long run, the more students they have eligible for weighted revenues comes back to the district but it's not a direct pathway. As they're using zero-based budgeting now, the budget is becoming much more transparent. They're trying to invest and grow all of their hands-on, integrated programs.

Mr. Kochman said that he understood net school spending but, if they don't go down this road of potentially exploring it as a CVTE program, FRED-TV may not have a studio. He would like to see the program grow. When a new school is built he wants to make sure that they have a home and a state-of-the-art one. Superintendent Malone said that they have had two visioning sessions and FRED-TV is set to be the centerpiece of the new design. In his view, Comcast has been committed to Gateway cities so he thinks that they will sustain and continue and negotiate a really good deal. They are not trying to eliminate or do away with any of what they're doing now.

Dr. Costar said that one of the things that he had heard from Mr. Andrade was from a student's point of view that they were not in favor of Radio and TV or some of the other programs becoming CVTE programs. He thinks that students, in general, at Durfee sometimes take the view of what vocational used to mean. Somehow students in vocational programs were viewed as students who were lesser. He can understand students saying they don't want to be vocational students. They have kids in their Gifted & Talented programs and half of them go to Diman because they want to have some kind of hands-on career which allows them to also go to college. There are things that Durfee can do that are college-bound programs, they just need to generate an interest and explain to people that this can lead to some kind of paying career or job.

Mrs. Panchley does not think that the student who represented himself didn't want to be a part of the vocational program. Her take was that the students he was in school with were taking a heavy courseload and did not have the time in their schedule to have a CVTE program plus the other courses they felt they needed to take. He felt that his peers could not handle the CVTE courseload.

Principal Pontes said that what they would like to do going forward is create a pathway for that student who wants to take that class as an elective. What they haven't done well at Durfee was talk up what they have to offer. This is an opportunity for them to build themselves up and get the word out there. They don't want students to choose one school over the other because they don't know what Durfee has to offer. Mrs. Panchley said that she feels like Fall River Public Schools are not addressing the reasons students are choosing Diman over Durfee. They need to try to identify that if they want to capture Gifted & Talented students.

Ms. Forgarty said that there are kids who can't get into their vocational programs because of criteria that they have set, which they've had to in order to keep the numbers down because they don't have the spacing for it.

Mr. Coogan asked why they couldn't have an Honors TV I and II. Mr. Medeiros said that there is already a sequence to the current courses. Normally students take the I then they go to the II then possibly to the III. Some classes offer a capstone. That's also the criteria for a Chapter 74 program. Mr. Coogan asked if there were extended time requirements in CVTE. Mr. Medeiros said that most of these programs don't have time requirements, they have competency requirements.

Mr. Coogan asked about Woodworking and Construction Craft Laborer. They already have those programs but it's not listed as an existing program. Mr. Medeiros said that it's considered a Perkins Program not Chapter 74 approved. It could possibly be Chapter 74 approved but Diman has Carpentry so Durfee's chances

of getting Carpentry wouldn't be very strong so, by going with Construction Craft Laborer, they have the flexibility to provide students with skills that they could probably use in the summer or when they graduate like citing contractors, roofing contractors, masons, and tile setters. They're trying to amp that program up so that it can become Construction Craft Laborer. As far as the space for the MSBA, they're going to see that they have two huge woodshops for Masonry and Tile Setting.

Mr. Coogan asked if there were space requirements on the TV studio that might constrain them from going forward. Mr. Medeiros said that there are square footage minimums. Superintendent Malone added that they are in a transition phase. The state would have to bend a little bit on square footage. Mr. Coogan asked if they would grant it to them without the square footage minimum. Superintendent Malone said that, because they are in the building process with the new building, they would have to. Mr. Medeiros said that they could use a side classroom as part of the instruction.

Superintendent Malone said that they have the current programs and the potential that they're putting a letter of intent in for. They are adding a bullet under the Radio and TV to include something about the Performance/Production Technology. Marketing is the title of the program that is on the third one but, he wants the subcommittee to think very differently about that because they can't do Printing because Diman has that program; however, the Marketing program is all encompassing of what they do in advertising. They would have the materials of a print shop where they could create their own marketing materials. The two programs under consideration – the Construction Craft Laborer and Diesel Technology – require very significant architectural space to be able to do those in. The architects included those in the design plan. A vote to move this forward signifies to the MSBA that there is a system where they're going to have this vocational space that would be reimbursable under the construct. Mrs. Panchley asked if there would be a letter of intent for the bottom two programs. Superintendent Malone said not yet. This Letter of Intent would be for the following year because they have another two years of design with the MSBA. But if they don't move forward right now, this is off the table.

Mrs. Panchley said if the Engineering Program would need another two out of five periods, she would be worried that it would not be well attended. Mr. Medeiros said he would put this in place because they are not trying to harm what they have right now. He can see using the sequence of courses they have right now which doesn't include extra time. They could have a pathway going forward and offer the course as a second session to a different set of students. Mrs. Panchley said that, if the time was similar, she thinks that it would be really well received and it would bring students in. Mr. Medeiros said that they currently have freshmen who are taking that as Project Leads the Way based on stuff that they have been doing in the middle schools so they also have to take that into consideration.

Dr. Costar asked how this would impact course leveling, GPA, and transcripts. He pointed out that students do not want to take a course that would impact their GPA. Mr. Woodward stated that they currently have a GPA system that encompasses electives so all their electives count toward GPA but it doesn't hurt their GPA. For CVTE specifically, the highest level a class is given is Honors weighted. The Project Leads the Way are all honors courses but most of the other CVTE courses like Cosmetology, Health Assisting, and Early Child Care have all been weighted honors at the senior class because the students are going out into clinicals because they have articulation agreements with BCC where they can earn college credit.

Mr. Medeiros stated that, in Visual Design, they're considering having both the CP option and the Honors option for the student that wants to go do an advertising campaign by themselves as a separate project. They are trying to get the Honors option in there if they could come up with a class that could be a separate project.

All were in favor

None were opposed

Motion passed

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Superintendent Malone ended by stating that he has been doing his instructional observations across the district and he was impressed with what he's been seeing in schools. At Durfee, he's seen some good examples of collaboration. Teachers were working together. Instruction is becoming much more student centered, competency based, and real-world relevant. Durfee will see an improvement, which is great timing because of the planning that is forcing them to vision. Sixty people have attended the first two visioning meetings. The final visioning meeting will be on February 28. The architects have told him that this is the best district they have seen doing this kind of work. He will be meeting with the entire Teaching and Learning team on February 10 to discuss what they do well, what they need to do to improve curriculum instruction assessment, and he will report this back to the Committee.

MOTION: Mr. Coogan-Dr. Costar: To adjourn.

No discussion

All were in favor

None were opposed

Motion passed (5:51 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,



Administrative Assistant

ADA Coordinator: Gary P. Howayeck, Esq.- 508.324.2650

Please note: A videotape/DVD of this meeting is on file in the School Committee Office and is available for review by contacting the Administrative Assistant for the School Committee Services