

## Curriculum Forum Overview – April 2, 2009

The purpose of the meeting was to review the K-12 Math program to date and to introduce the Curriculum Review Process for next year's Language Arts review.

Elementary Principal Tery Susman, gave the overview of the K-5 Math program. Teachers have been implementing *Everyday Math* since the 2008 adoption. Teachers are finding the program very accessible to them and their students and teachers are seeing positive student learning outcomes. One of the advantages of having a K-5 adoption is that teachers are discussing the same curriculum during articulation times. They can create and review common assessments, discuss pacing, share information and plan for supplemental materials to support the program. The elementary Math program is achieving equity and access for all students throughout the three elementary sites.

Teachers are thriving with the professional development the District has offered this year to support their Math instruction. When the *Everyday Math* program was adopted, the publisher offered professional development at the beginning of the school year. Along with the publishers in-service, teachers also participated in the "Math Solutions" professional development program. The programs are complementary and teachers are pleased with the implementation of *Everyday Math* for this year.

Math teachers from the middle school gave a positive report about the Math program. Sixth grade pre-algebra is going well. The textbooks that were adopted have been positively received by teachers and students. Teachers appreciate all the technology that is embedded in the program. The technology offers online assistance to students and their parents for home study. Teachers also access the technology to support class instruction and make-up instruction for students who miss class.

Teachers at the Middle School have found some of the assessments with the adoption are not as comprehensive as they would like and they have spent a lot of time creating assessment to complement the program. This has taken time, but will be valuable through the adoption.

Middle School Principal Jeanne Donovan shared concerns that came to her from the Parent-to-Parent Network (PPN). Some parents were concerned about the Math program being too rigorous and not accessible to learners who struggle in math. She set up a meeting with teachers and parents to discuss this concern. It was clear that parents want to discuss curriculum questions/concerns at the sites and the District will continue to provide opportunities for public input and engagement.

Piedmont High School Math Department Head, John Hayden, discussed this year adoption for Algebra I, Algebra II and Math Analyses. The textbooks have

been discussed at Site Council and will be proposed to the School Board on April 29<sup>th</sup>. At that time, there will be a 30-day public review, allowing for public comments. PHS will also have another Site Council meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup> to give another opportunity to discuss the proposed books. There will also be our last Forum meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup>, if more discussion is merited. The School Board will receive the final proposal June 10<sup>th</sup> and can take action on that date.

Mr. Hayden discussed the department's intent to keep the *Discovering Geometry* textbook. He acknowledged the areas of concern that came up last year and addressed them. One of the areas was the inability for students and parent to access the curriculum for home support. The department has listed on their syllabus the website and online service for home study support. The Math teachers will continue to monitor and evaluate student learning outcomes in Geometry. As a District, we are committed to reviewing and reporting out throughout the adoption of all textbooks. The Math Department will be giving School Board reports next year to keep the District abreast of the Math program.

On that note, Piedmont High School Principal Randy Booker brought to the group's attention the teaching strategies teachers are implementing for equity and access for students in the Math curriculum. Professional development in differentiated instruction is a key component as well as adopting instructional materials that support teachers. Different pathways in Math have been discussed which include offering honors classes in Algebra II, but will be put on hold until next year's data can be analyzed.

A draft of the Curriculum Review Process was distributed at the end of the meeting and is included here. Teachers and administrators have been contributing to the draft and now we are requesting public input. We will spend the next Curriculum Forum meeting (May 28<sup>th</sup>) discussing the process so all parties will have a working document for the 2009-2010 Language Arts adoption.

## DRAFT

### Piedmont Unified School District Curriculum Review Process

The District curriculum review process follows the state timeline. (See <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/document/frwkdevsch.doc> for latest adoption cycle schedule.) When new standards are adopted by the State they are reviewed by teachers and administrators at collaboration times and curriculum articulation meetings.

#### Timeline

August – June

- Elementary, middle and high schools have curriculum articulation meetings at grade levels and in departments throughout the year.
- Articulation meetings are headed by site administrators/department heads/teachers and supported by the Director of Curriculum.
- The articulation meetings follows a series of steps:
  - Standards are reviewed. If they are new, teachers look for matches and gaps between the “old” and the “new” to make sure they understand any different expectations. If the standards have not been replaced, teachers look at areas in which there are relative strengths and relative weaknesses across the District by grade level to identify the program’s areas for continuous growth.
  - Teachers look to current data and research as they review program. Reports and studies from a variety of sources relevant to the particular subject area are examined and considered and best practices for the content area are identified.
  - Community contributes by giving input and supplying research at Site Councils and Curriculum Forum meetings. Their perspectives and contributions support teachers in their continued inquiry.

#### January - April

- Based on what has been learned and using data regarding student performance, a rubric (\*\*see questions to draw from for rubric below) is designed by the Director of Curriculum specific to the subject area to guide the review of materials. This rubric is used at each level of elimination.
- A list of State-approved textbooks is distributed to sites. K-8 grade level teacher representatives go to the county office and look through all the State approved programs and identify those programs that they would like all the teachers to examine. High School teachers research available texts in their area of discipline.
- Samples of the identified materials are sent to all sites for all grade levels; sometimes this is done at the District Office.
- Opportunities for teachers and administrators to hear publisher presentations are arranged so more depth of understanding can be obtained.
- Teachers continue their articulation, give their input, ask questions guided by the rubric, and pilot lessons. Programs that no one can support are eliminated from further consideration.
- After a period of review, including input from the community at Site Councils and Curriculum Forum meetings, teachers work towards consensus on their recommendation for adoption.
- Teachers submit their recommendations for adoption to the administrators for their review. Principals then submit the proposal to the Director of Curriculum to present to the Board of Education.

April – June

- Materials are then displayed for 30 school days in the District Office for public review. Those who review the displayed textbooks and want to give public input should do so in writing and submit them to the Director of Curriculum.
- All comments are read by the Director of Curriculum and distributed to the teachers/administrators for reflection, consideration and review. Teachers will respond in writing to the comments and submit their responses to the Director of Curriculum. The Superintendent is kept abreast of all written comments and responses and will keep the School Board informed of all shared information.
- During this 30 day period. Site Councils will continue to meet and two Curriculum Forum meeting will be scheduled to continue public engagement.
- After 30 days, all comments will have been reviewed, considered and the final recommendation will be made by the teacher to their site principals. The site principals will inform the Director of Curriculum. The Director of Curriculum will go the Board of Education and request adoption.
- Once adopted, materials are ordered and staff development plans begin immediately. Ongoing support for new programs continues beyond the first year of the adoption as appropriate.
- Since it is rare that any one program addresses all the needs of students equally, supplemental materials are also used as needed to help teachers differentiate.
- During the lifetime of the adoption, updated reports will be made at Forum meetings and School Board meetings on the progress of the implementation.

## **\*\*QUESTIONS TO DRAW FROM FOR DEVELOPING TEXTBOOK CRITERIA RUBRIC**

1. Who has funded/developed the material?
2. What is the research behind the adoption?
3. How well does the core program cover the standards for your grade level?
4. Is it easy to identify the standards in the lessons?
5. Identify the match and the gaps.
6. Are the objectives clear and relevant for each lesson?
7. Is the textual material written in a way that your students will be able to understand?
8. Is the textual material “student friendly” with clear directions and useful organization?
9. Does the developmental level seem appropriate?
10. Is vocabulary presented well?
11. Do the lessons flow in a logical manner?

12. Are the illustrations, photographs and sidebar information useful, well-organized, relevant, and supportive to the content?
13. How does the program utilize and include the “tools” of the discipline, such as charts, graphs, diagrams, investigations, maps, reading strategies, supports writing, spelling program, good literature with multicultural themes, balance of whole language and phonemic awareness, balance with conceptual and skill based learning, fiction and nonfiction connections, leveled texts, hone support, project base learning, etc.?
14. Are primary source documents used if relevant?
15. Is there an appropriate balance between emphasis on facts, skills, concepts, process, problem solving and critical thinking?
16. Are there real world applications, hands-on activities and questions or projects that elicit transfer of learning and critical thinking?
17. Does the program help the students create an understanding of how the past relates to the present, and how the ideas, theories and concepts presented have evolved?
18. Are there challenging support materials for high-achieving students, and are they adequate?
19. Are there reinforcing/support materials for students with special needs and are they adequate?
20. Are there materials designed for EL students and are they adequate?
21. Are there guidelines for differentiation? Projects? Collaboration?
22. Is the teacher manual “friendly” to use, packaged well, and does it provide background knowledge?
23. Are necessary materials and supplies clearly indicated and ready to use?
24. What types of software/internet links, other uses of technology are provided? Do you believe the program will be easy to integrate with our current technology?
25. Can you pick pieces from the adoption – a la carte?
26. What type of school/home connection is provided?
27. Are there both formative and summative assessments and do the assessments appear to be useful/valid?
28. Do the assessments match our standards-based report cards? Do they go beyond the assessment of facts?
29. Review pacing elements
30. How does the program elicit understanding of concepts?
31. Are there cross-curricular ties?
32. What are the strong points about this series?
33. What are your concerns about this series, and how would we address them?
34. What areas would you need to supplement?
35. What is your overall feeling about the series?
36. What is your overall rating for this series with 5 being the highest? 5 4 3  
2 1