

Math Adoption Oversight Committee Meeting
February 15, 2017
Governing Board Room

Members Present: Rob Hajek, Sheri Burns, Lara Berdahl, Kim Slattery, Holly Russell, Emily Blaney, Barb Drange, Amy Kelly, Linda Posod, Rachel Harter, Kaitzer Puglia, Tonya Mizrahi, Debra Craddock, Ajay Perumbeti, Karen Hurley and Anais Wenn.

Assistant Superintendent Anais Wenn opened the meeting at 3:33 p.m. She thanked everyone for attending the 3rd meeting of the year.

Mrs. Wenn asked if the previous requests made by the teachers were addressed at the final training in January, and if teachers felt there was a need for more training next year. Usually publishers provide training during the first year of implementation; however, if there is a need for additional training, Mrs. Wenn will speak with the publisher.

A teacher from PCR shared that all previous questions were answered related to pacing and that teachers at PCR do not think more training is necessary. A teacher from PCY also reported that there is no need for more training. She added that teachers will need to continue to work on pacing and the online components on their own to become fully proficient on EDM, but there is no need for training by the publisher. One of the teachers from LCE shared that she would like personal training on the online component of EDM, but she is representing her own needs not a collective need from LCE teachers.

Mrs. Wenn brought up a few items from the last meeting and asked if teachers had been able to talk with colleagues and bring their input. The first item was about practice tests. The question was, "Should all teachers give a practice test prior to administering the actual test?" An upper grade teacher on the committee shared that teachers in grades 3-5 districtwide administer some type of practice test or study guide prior to the test. A lower grade teacher shared that in lower grades, each teacher does what's needed for his/her students to prepare them for an upcoming assessment. They agree that no formal practice test is needed.

The second item was about the report cards. The question was, "Should the report card be revised to reflect the specific standards being taught to mastery at the end of each trimester, or should it be left as is, whereby teachers mark NA when a particular concept had not yet been taught to mastery?"

A teacher from PCR mentioned that it would have too many NAs for the first trimester and they would not feel comfortable with that. She asked if they could put a checkmark for "area of focus" in boxes which list the concepts and give one overall grade for math. This would require revising the report card. Someone else suggested using a slash instead, which shows that it is in progress but not necessarily mastered.

A teacher from LCE asked if it would be acceptable to leave boxes blank for concepts that have not been taught to mastery instead of an N/A? Administration stated that leaving boxes blank could be misinterpreted by parents and cause confusion. Another suggestion was to shade out standards for each of the trimesters that have not been taught to mastery so teachers would only mark those that have been taught. The committee acknowledged that there needs to be consistency of practice districtwide. Astrid Longo, the representative from EDM offered the help of their consultant to identify standards that are taught to mastery for each trimester so that it can be reflected on the report card. Mrs. Wenn welcomed this offer and mentioned that once it is decided at IPG that the report card would be revised, a group of teachers and administrators will utilize the guidance of the consultant to revise it.

The third item was on common assessments. The question was, "Can the EDM assessments be used as common assessments for the next school year?" Mrs. Wenn shared that Astrid had connected Jamie Lewsadder, LCUSD's tech officer, with their technology specialist to link EDM's online assessments to Illuminate. This will alleviate the task of teachers inputting test items by hand. One of the teachers asked if the tests could be hidden from access until all teachers were ready to administer it. There were concerns that some students would see the test prior to the test date and share information with peers at other sites. Teachers would like the test to be administered on the same day district wide. Astrid will check on this feature and get back to us.

A teacher from PCY asked how "Show your thinking" would be entered in Illuminate? Should there be a score for this written portion? This may be inconsistent from teacher to teacher. Teachers will have to agree on how to grade these portions in Illuminate. Teachers must communicate to students what should be included in their written response to earn a certain score and give examples. Someone asked if EDM has special rubrics that would help the teachers with this. Astrid will check and get back to us.

Mrs. Wenn asked teachers to share feedback from their sites. A Kindergarten teacher shared that the set up for math lessons takes too much time. The mid year assessment takes an hour per student because the assessments are supposed to be done verbally. Keeping the other students engaged while testing one on one is challenging. The Kindergarten team will be meeting to come up with a more manageable assessment method. Mrs. Wenn had asked the trainer to help Kindergarten teachers with this at their last training. She asked if teachers found any of it useful or if they need more training. She also reminded the teachers that they are not expected "to teach the book, they are expected to teach the standards that students are supposed to master to progress to the next grade level." If they find that some of the resources are repetitive or unnecessary, they do not have to use them. They should use resources that are useful in teaching the standards. A question came up with regard to use of math worksheets in the Kindergarten classrooms. If there is a concern with lack of time to teach EDM, why is there a need to utilize so many math worksheets? We should use the resources that come with the program instead. The teacher shared that she uses the worksheets when students are done with their work, not during instructional time at the centers.

A teacher from PCR was curious as to why the Kindergarten teachers were not using the unit assessments. She shared that first grade uses the unit assessments and finds them useful and not too time consuming. The Kindergarten teacher responded that they have not used the unit assessments but are using the mid year assessment to determine students' level of proficiency. Does the Kindergarten program have a math journal? The teacher confirmed that there is a math journal but there is too much to cover and not enough time to keep up with the pace.

An upper grade teacher from LCE shared that teachers love EDM and are using the games more often in order to provide more opportunities for practice. A teacher from PCR asked Astrid if the Skills Link workbook key can be formatted to have the problem first and then the answer instead of only listing the answers? Can there be a Homelinks answer key formatted the same way? Astrid will check and get back to us.

Prior to asking parents to share their feedback, Mrs. Wenn brought up two parent requests from the last meeting. One of them was a request for more parent resources on the website. Mrs. Wenn worked with him and with Jamie Lewsadder to add resources that are user friendly. He also asked about parent access to the Student Reference book. Mrs. Wenn checked with the publisher as well as the administrators at the sites and reported that parents do have access to the Student Reference book through the ConnectEd component. Additionally, the parent mentioned that some parents have access to it while others do not. He wondered if it had something to do with the access codes granted to parents. Teachers mentioned that once they give the code to parents, all resources are included. The publisher walked the parents through the online component at the parent Math Night, but not many parents were in attendance. One of the parents shared that there are parents who still can't find the Student Reference book and it would be helpful to have a link that shows them how to find it. Astrid will provide us with a link to a tutorial which will be posted on the district and school websites for parent use. Another suggestion was to reach out to their child's teacher and get help on how to access the resources online.

District realizes that parent education is critical and is doing its best to provide information in multiple ways. Parent feedback to site and district administration is that they cannot attend anymore parent nights. They have other responsibilities, extracurricular activities and obligations which do not allow them to attend these sessions. They would like the information available online so that they can access it when it is convenient for them. Teachers and administrators shared that they try to communicate with parents in different ways. Some share information at Back to School Night, others send newsletters, there are resources online, the presentations and videotapes (when permitted), are posted on websites.

Mrs. Wenn welcomed the parents to share their feedback. One of the parents mentioned that the lower grade parents at PCR were happy with the program, but there were many concerns from upper grade parents. Fifteen PCR parents provided feedback that the parent representative summarized for the committee.

He reported that more parent education is needed. Some parents are not familiar with the new methodology and spend too much time at home learning it to help their child. There are concerns about the transition from 5th to 6th grade math since they are using different textbooks. Some parents have concerns regarding the way differentiation is addressed. A suggestion was made to send anonymous surveys to teachers and parents regarding EDM.

A teacher from LCE shared that the way they are teaching now is how students should be taught to understand concepts deeply and not superficially by just memorizing the algorithms. She brought a specific example on fractions that she had just taught and explained how students grasped it better than if she just gave them the algorithm.

The parent responded that although he agreed with her methodology, parents are not able to reinforce that same methodology at home, which is what creates the frustration. They don't know how it was taught in class. The teacher continued that although parents may be confused about the methodology, students are not because they really understand it and can use it. Parents are welcome to look up the lessons online with the kids and see what they have learned. She also added that parents should let students figure out things on their own and reach out to the teacher for help. They do not have to spend hours figuring things out. Students are learning to persevere and parents should support that.

A teacher from PCY added that she just taught a new method of addition and was surprised how quickly students added two digit numbers without using an algorithm. However, she saw them use the old "algorithm" method on homework because parents told them to do it that way. Parents are teaching how they were taught and not trusting the methods that are used in class. The parent asked if there was strong data to show that this way of teaching is better. Astrid shared that the research behind EDM is really strong and was shared at the first parent math night but was dismissed by parents who opposed EDM. She is willing to provide it to anyone who would like to learn more about the research behind EDM.

In addressing the concerns brought up by parents, Mrs. Wenn asked if teachers felt that an anonymous survey was needed to find out what teachers thought about EDM. She asked them to think of their colleagues and conversations they have had in order to respond to this question. She asked the teachers to talk to colleagues and let her know. Teachers have not had issues in the past communicating their concerns to each other or to site or district administration, however, if they think this would be helpful, it will be implemented.

Mrs. Wenn agreed that a parent survey would be helpful but shared that due to many recent surveys parent participation may not be strong. Surveys coming from the teachers may be taken more seriously and yield higher participation rates. Mrs. Wenn asked the teachers to get feedback from colleagues on the idea of an anonymous parent survey regarding EDM. With teachers' feedback, a survey may be sent home to parents.

In response to concerns regarding the transition from 5th to 6th grade math, it was shared that as long as the grade level standards have been mastered, students will transition smoothly. This was discussed with teachers and they did not share concerns on this. They felt that they are adequately preparing 5th graders to enter 6th grade. The textbooks may be different, the vocabulary and lesson components may vary from publisher to publisher but those are things kids will get used to quickly. What's important is their mastery of the concepts that they need to have prior to entering 6th grade. The overall teaching methodology is the same at every grade level and all teachers have been trained on it.

In response to the differentiation concern, it was shared that teachers use the differentiation component of the program to challenge students as well as several digital resources (MobyMax, IXL, etc.). All these resources are available districtwide. If those are not challenging enough, LCUSD also uses Redbird for students who perform above grade level. Teachers use this resource in grades 4-6 district wide. Teachers contact parents when they decide that the student will benefit from Redbird. It was suggested that if any parent does not think their child is challenged enough, they should contact the teacher for differentiation options.

A few of the same concerns regarding parent education, access to resources, etc. and positive response toward spiraling were shared by a parent from LCE but as she stated "overall, not much resistance from LCE."

The meeting adjourned at 5:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Mumper