

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2017
3:30 p.m. - Governing Board Room

Members present: Amy Nespor, Andrew Arthur, Annette Fuelling, Brent Kuszyk, Carrie Hetzel, Christine Werner, Case Cortese, Edita Khanlarian, Grace Lee, James Carnal, Jan Rappleye, Kate Zhang, Richard Weld, Sara Gardner, Tom Traeger, Tracy Lee, Wendy Sinnette, and Anais Wenn.

Mrs. Wenn opened the meeting at 3:31 p.m. by welcoming the committee members to the last meeting of the year.

She asked the teachers on the committee to share the feedback they collected from colleagues regarding their progress on the implementation of NGSS.

A lower grade teacher from PCR reported that the 1st grade team has been working on biomes and habitats with the help of their science lab aide. They conducted labs on insulation (blubber) and have been using interactive notebooks effectively. Third grade has been studying the phases of the moon and using their interactive notebooks. The teacher shared that some PCR teachers were concerned with the materials and resources. Will they use the current textbooks next year? Will there be supplemental materials to use? Mrs. Wenn stated that teachers will continue to use the current textbooks until a new adoption is made. Teachers will implement the phenomena and the 3D approach in their lessons and use supplemental materials to teach concepts that are not included in the textbooks. They should contact Mrs. Wenn or their principals to share the materials aligned with NGSS prior to using them for instruction.

A middle school teacher reported that the science pilot test was successful. Students were comfortable with taking the test on the computer. They mentioned that there was content on the pilot tests that they had not learned this year. The teacher shared that he will need some training in teaching a unit on waves. Mrs. Wenn asked him to let her know which specific concepts they would like to be trained in so that she can communicate it to WestEd.

A lower grade teacher from PCY reported that the 1st grade team did a STEAM activity using The 3 Little Pigs. Students constructed a house and had it blown down. The article made it to the Outlook. She praised PCY's Science lab aide, Mrs. Babish for doing an outstanding job with all grade levels.

LCHS teachers reported that the Chemistry PLC and Physics PLC are meeting to learn how to implement Earth Science into their subject areas. They also shared that the pilot test went well

and students had no problem with the format or the content of it. Mrs. Wenn reminded the committee that this year's pilot test was intended to test the technology, not science content. The Physics team has also been meeting to plan the scope and sequence for the new 9th grade Physics course. A 7th grade science teacher reported that they are currently modifying the labs to add phenomenon and are exploring with supplemental materials to align their instruction with NGSS.

Teachers from LCE reported that they have been doing a lot of work on NGSS at their staff meetings. They have ordered supplemental materials recommended by WestEd which address the integration of engineering practices in their instruction. They are looking forward to using this resource with the students.

Mrs. Sinnette gave a shout out to LCE for the video presentation they created for Teacher Appreciation Week. She mentioned that students talked about loving their science journals which were a result of NGSS implementation.

An upper grade teacher from PCY reported using FOSS kits and the interactive notebooks. She too praised Mrs. Babish for her support with labs in upper grades.

The science coordinator started her report by thanking JPL parents and volunteers, students and other parent volunteers for their contributions to the Maker Faire at LCE. Over 200 people attended and 45 activities were organized to engage students. She hopes to plan 3 STEAM nights next year at the elementary schools. Amy thanked LCFEF and the technology department for funding the Maker Faire.

Mrs. Wenn reported on the status of the science aides. The positions were created based upon the input from the steering committee. She added that part time positions are hard to fill. Only 1 aide at PCY and 1 at LCHS will be returning next year. All the others are pursuing full time positions. The District will fly and fill the positions prior to August 4 and will arrange for the new aides to meet with the returning aides to learn about the position and site expectations.

Mrs. Wenn asked the committee to review the next year's NGSS implementation plan to see if it is realistic and achievable, given the progress made this year. A teacher from PCY suggested adding 6th grade going integrated next year. It will be added for next year. A Board member asked how the district communicates with colleges on the implementation of new Science Pathways. Administration reported that there are many ways to inform colleges but the primary vehicle of communication is through the school profile. It is uploaded directly to keep them informed of LCUSD's curriculum changes. As part of the NGSS implementation our courses must be appropriately aligned. This is what all public schools in the state are expected to do.

One of the administrators shared with the committee that with all science opportunities presented due to NGSS, there are a lot more students that want to be involved in different activities than before. With these growing number of students, there is a greater need of

teachers to sponsor or lead these activities. Teachers are struggling to make these commitments to students within work hours. Mrs. Wenn shared that through our science coordinator, we could form partnerships with other organizations who may be willing to serve as sponsors or mentors to our students. This will be a focus area for our science coordinator next year. She has already collected names of parents through surveys and will be working with them to involve them in our schools.

One of the parents asked how curricular decisions were made. "Is it up to the teachers to come up with their own curriculum?" Mrs. Wenn explained the process and reiterated that no new textbooks will be used until an adoption is made. Teachers may use supplemental materials aligned with NGSS which have to be approved by the administration prior to using them with students. Once state approved materials become available, the district will go through an adoption and choose a textbook.

One of the teachers spoke about workshops she attended which focused on the integration of medicine into science. She thought they would be useful at the high school level as well as middle school level as a GATE offering. Mrs. Wenn shared that the district is always looking for adding new GATE offerings at the middle school level and has had difficulty recruiting teachers to teach them. If she agrees to teach it, Mrs. Wenn will work with the principal to add it to GATE offerings at 7/8.

Mrs. Wenn surveyed all teachers regarding professional development needs for 2017-18. Most teachers requested 2 days for training and identified focus areas. Mrs. Wenn will review the teacher requests closely and identify most requested topics to be covered during those two days. She will also work with the principals to discuss other times (staff meetings, collaboration days, common planning time, etc) that can be dedicated to professional development beside the two days of training provided by WestEd.

Mrs. Wenn shared that 6-12 science teachers will use the Buy Back Day and another day during the year for NGSS training. 6-8 grade teachers will start together, then separate by grade levels to focus on grade level specific content and strategies. One of the focus areas for the high school teachers will be the integration of Earth Science in other subject areas. Other requests included bringing in science experts from the community to teach the teachers specific content.

Mrs. Wenn shared that although NGSS materials are not currently available for adoption, the district will work with WestEd and the teachers to get as many resources to the teachers as possible. Teachers may attend trainings and bring back information and resources that all could benefit from. We will continue to use Foss kits for interested teachers as well as Amplify at elementary and 7/8 level.

Mrs. Wenn asked the committee if they would like to continue meeting regularly or to check on the progress through other ways (IPG, principals' meeting, leadership team meetings, etc.).

Although many members shared that they would be happy to continue meeting as a committee, the majority of the members felt that progress checks could be made through other ways.

A 6th grade teacher shared that she would like to be able to talk about the implementation of the integrated instruction in 6th grade to make sure everyone is on the same page. Mrs. Wenn mentioned that she will coordinate 6th grade meetings on few collaboration days so that all 6th grade science teachers can come together to talk about instruction.

One of the parents suggested sending information more frequently to parents from the sites instead of the district because some parents do not attend parent nights nor do they check out the website but when principals send information, they read. Mrs. Wenn will communicate with principals to include NGSS in their monthly newsletters or videos to keep parents informed.

Mrs. Sinnette suggested allocating some time at IPG meetings to monitor NGSS implementation.

Another parent asked if 6th and 7th grade teachers have the opportunity to meet and discuss transition. Mrs. Wenn commented that she has allocated collaboration time for the 6th-8th grade teachers this year and will continue to do so if teachers express interest.

The NGSS Steering Committee decided not to continue quarterly meetings next year; however, the district should monitor the progress on NGSS implementation through the following:

- 1) Dedicating a special time at IPG meetings to address NGSS
- 2) Science coordinator soliciting parent feedback and reporting to Mrs. Wenn
- 3) Having principals communicate updates to parents on NGSS regularly
- 4) Meeting with 7-8 and 9-12 departments quarterly to check on their progress
- 5) Meeting with the 6th grade science teachers on collaboration days each trimester to check on their progress on the use of the integrated pathway

Mrs. Wenn thanked all committee members for their contributions to the committee and wished them a successful end of the year.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Mumper