

**Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 9, 2017**  
**3:30 p.m. - Governing Board Room**

**Members present:** Amy Nesper, Andrew Arthur, Annette Fuelling, Brent Kuszyk, Carrie Hetzel, Christine Werner, Case Cortese, Debbie Bedell-Au, Emily Blaney, Grace Lee, James Carnal, Jan Rappleye, Kate Zhang, Lewis Roberts, Sara Gardner, Tracy Lee, Wendy Sinnette, Anais Wenn and Beth Mumper.

Mrs. Wenn welcomed the committee members and informed them that three teachers from the high school will not be in attendance due to doctor appointments and family obligations.

Mrs. Wenn thanked Lindi Dreibelbis for attending the meeting to present on Standardized Science Assessments. Lindi shared the district's CAASPP testing calendar and distributed handouts on state mandated assessments in Spring 2017, California Science Pilot Milestones, CAST pilot components and a training test that is available on CDE's website. She also gave a quick overview on the California School Dashboard and shared some of the reports with the committee. Lindi announced that she wrote a news release about these items and it appeared in both local papers.

One of the teachers asked if there were any interim science assessments available online and Lindi responded that those are not available yet. At this time only a training test is available online.

One of the teachers said that he tried to access the training test but was unable to open it. Jim Carnal showed him how to access it.

Lindi asked if there were any questions or comments from the committee. One of the elementary school teachers shared that she liked that the new academic measure of success focused on growth during the year. There were concerns from administrators regarding the focus on improvement since LCUSD is such high performing district and continuing to make growth when a district is in the 90s can be challenging. Another concern that was raised had to do with number of suspensions. Implementing effective discipline sometimes requires a suspension yet may reflect negatively on the district's dashboard.

Mrs. Wenn invited the elementary teachers to share their reports with the committee. PCY reported that they administered the same survey as LCE to collect input from their teachers regarding NGSS implementation. They reported that 2nd grade is still confused on expectations and using notebooks. 3rd grade is utilizing the science aide well. They engage students in cross curricular (science & art) projects. 5th grade is using interactive notebooks. 3rd, 4th & 5th still have difficulty with phenomenon. One of the principals shared how she introduced the NGSS implementation to the staff and the two follow up activities she conducted with the staff to

communicate expectations and discuss phenomenon and notebooks. A teacher from LCE reported that teachers enjoyed their training with WestEd and learned how to implement NGSS. She shared that some teachers wished that the notebooks could go home. Also, wished the training was earlier in the year so that the teachers could learn about NGSS sooner.

Mrs. Wenn reviewed the expectations for elementary school teachers based on the implementation plan. The two things they were asked to implement this year were the inclusion of phenomenon in their science lessons and the use of notebooks. She shared that the committee wrote a simple plan with realistic expectations not to overwhelm teachers given the fact that they would be using a new math curriculum as well as piloting new ELA materials. One of the administrators stated that the teachers may have been over thinking the science notebook. Many teachers have been doing science notebooks long before NGSS.

Mrs. Wenn shared that the trainer spent some time at the last training on notebooks and what should be included in them. She also brought sample notebooks for teachers to see so that they would have a clearer understanding on what's expected. A second grade teacher brought a sample notebook from her class and shared with the committee. An upper grade teacher explained how she has used notebooks for years. She spoke about "Student Wonderings" that support her science instruction daily.

Mrs. Wenn invited the 6th and 7th grade teachers on the committee to share their pilot experience with the committee. The 6th grade teacher using **FOSS** reported loving the hands on materials and kits for Science lessons. She mentioned the that boxes came filled with everything needed for projects along with an Investigations Guide. It included step-by-step instructions for teachers. She mentioned a "Line of Learning" (a quick write up of what the students may know about the topic) then after project is done, comparing what they learned with what they already knew. There was a textbook included in the box. She shared that it was easy to implement and had the quality, flexibility and alignment with NGSS. Two other lower grade teachers shared their experience with FOSS at other districts prior to coming to LCUSD. One of the teachers asked if all teachers could have these kits. Mrs. Wenn responded that they are not fully aligned with NGSS and the state adopted lists have not come out yet for us to choose from. At this time, LCUSD is only piloting materials so that we can make an informed decision when a list of textbooks/materials becomes available.

Mrs. Wenn shared a 6th grade teacher's report with the committee. This teacher found **Amplify** easy to navigate. She reported that her students love it and don't even know they are learning. It requires little planning and preparation from the teacher. It is easy to grade and no outside materials are needed. Phenomenon and 3D approach are embedded in each lesson and are easy to apply. She is happy with the program.

A 7th grade teachers reported that although she agreed with some of the comments made by the previous teacher, she did not think that the program was sufficient due to the fact that everything was digital and no hands on labs were included. She shared that the teacher part

was easy and the program was very well put together. She felt that it “held students’ feet to the fire with the writing component.” She thought that the pacing could be improved and there needs to be more opportunities for hands on experiments. She thought there was too much screen time and that some students were playing games. She shared some of her students’ input on Amplify. Positives were: very little homework, simulations, collaborative talk among students, straight forward lessons and to the point. Negatives were: not challenged enough, no hands on labs, too much computer time and repetitive nature.

Mrs. Wenn thanked the teachers for their efforts to pilot and shared that Amplify is working on adding textbooks and other materials to go with the digital component. She mentioned once again that piloting is extremely important so that we can make an informed decision when a list of materials becomes available.

Mrs. Wenn invited Mr. Carnal to share their update on NGSS Implementation. Mr. Carnal reported that the teachers were very happy with the professional development provided through WestEd. They started preliminary work on implementing Earth & Space science into their subjects. There was a collective agreement on wishing there would be instructional materials to go with this change. Mr. Carnal also shared that the teachers have chosen to change the course sequencing and require 3 years of science for graduation. Starting next year, students will be starting with conceptual Physics course that is age and grade level appropriate. Then Chemistry, followed by Biology and in their 4th year they may take any AP science courses. A parent asked if students in 9th grade would have the math skills needed to take physics. Mr. Carnal responded that Algebra would be the level of math required as students will be focusing on concepts rather than the math, and later, when they take Honors or AP Physics, they would add the advanced level math onto the concepts they learned in 9th grade. He also mentioned that there will be several collaborative conversations between Science and Math teachers to better align their lessons and ensure student readiness for these courses.

Mrs. Wenn announced that she will be sending out a professional development survey to ask for teacher input on next years’ training needs. She encouraged all teachers to respond so that the district can provide learning opportunities that are meaningful, effective and applicable to their teaching.

An 8th grade teacher reported that he went to a Phenomenon workshop at LACOE but did not find it very helpful. He was expecting to be given a list of phenomena which did not happen. He shared that it was too time consuming for the teachers to create these NGSS aligned lessons without textbooks and materials to go with it.

Mrs. Wenn mentioned that although change is not in our control, the district is doing all it can to put supports in place for teachers, such as professional development, list of websites and resources that are available to supplement existing lessons and opportunities to pilot available materials upon approval to ensure alignment with NGSS.

The Superintendent added that the district will continue to support teachers in their implementation and make sure they have the skills and resources to implement NGSS.

Mrs. Wenn asked Amy Nespor to share her report. Amy reported that she has had a successful elementary STEAM night at LCE. It included coding and a 3-D printer presentation. It was well attended and enjoyed by students. The Science Fair at PCR is set. She is planning a Saturday event, Makers Fair, on April 8 at LCE. Mrs. Sinnette asked if it would be possible to move it to another day since there will be a Challenge Success event on that same day at LCHS. They will move the date to avoid conflicts.

Amy also shared that she is planning hands on experiments for the elementary sites and reviewing survey results from LCHS related to parent volunteer possibilities. There have been several responses from parents and she is excited to work with them in engaging them in the work LCUSD is doing to implement NGSS.

The last meeting for this year is scheduled for May 3, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. in the District Office Governing Board Room.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Mumper