

Curriculum Council
March 11, 2020

Dr. Towle opened the meeting and introduced the day's activities. She reviewed our activity from the prior meeting, "Name, Place, Intention" and we discussed in table groups to identify common themes for our Committee work. Those that were shared included:

- Being a learner
- Sharing – inviting into the learning
- Understanding Perspectives
- Bridging Gaps
- Excitement
- Be the missing link between school and home
- Here because of students
- Empathy for the student experience
- Thankful & grateful for the opportunity to share via this platform

Mr. Rooney presented on the Reading Program. He described the strengthening of our robust professional learning environment for the science of reading in grades K-2 through opportunities for training in LETRS, OG, and Wonders PD sessions. He described additional administrator training over the course of the year to enable continued support of the professional staff. Mr. Rooney shared information about the systematic nature of the Reading Program Selection Process. It included multiple stakeholders, piloting, rubric development, evaluation and input from outside reading experts. Mr. Rooney provided further detail on the rubric used to evaluate the seven different series that were examined. Through this process, Wonders 2020 was selected. Mr. Rooney noted there were strong phonemic awareness tools in the new series and described the screenings offered in Kindergarten and grade 1 to identify students in need of support. During the 2020-2021 school year, grades 3 & 4 will evaluate the Wonders program based on the experience of K-2 teachers.

Dr. Towle discussed the Leadership in Literacy program for administrators sponsored by PaTTAN. She shared a draft project developed by District administrators, including Dr. Demming, Dr. Towle and Mr. Rooney. The project is designed as a self-reflection tool for teachers as they continue to implement practices tied to the 5 pillars of literacy instruction. Dr. Towle provided context

for the project, a set of essential questions and asked the Committee to provide feedback on the tool. The members of the Committee worked in small groups to review the tool with focus on alignment to the 5 pillars and the usefulness as a self reflection device. Comments and questions from the Committee included the following:

Table 1

- Consider calling it a log
- Could it be placed on line in order to collect data and analyze trends?
- Is there a student self-evaluation?
- Could there be a place for teacher notes?
- What information can be gathered to inform instruction?

Table 2

- How is it useful as opposed to being just one more thing?
- How often should it be used?
- Could there be a notes section – what worked, what didn't work?
- Would the tool be used with administrators?
- Would the tool be used with families to open conversation?
- Could there be a student self-reflection?

Table 3

- Likes the purpose and intentionality, could use for professional planning
- Teachers could meet together to use tool as a group, this could reduce any fear
- Could we focus on strands across the curriculum and share with families?
- Consider a simplified version for parents so families can use it to understand more about how their children read
- Is this an assessment tool? (NO, for teacher only)
- Modify heading
- Clarify "higher order thinking"

Table 4

- Laminate and put on desk
- Pre-lesson tool as well as post-lesson reflection?
- Weight of the five pillars might be different across the grades
- Use to increase parent understanding to help them know what they are doing, might put some fears to rest
- Still wondering how a checklist blends with individual artistry

Table 5

- The tool could be useful to share in Parent workshops
- Pieces could be incorporated into current newsletters
- Add a line that says, I checked for understanding
- What other tools or checks are already occurring?
- How does this interact with what is already being used?

In closing, Dr. Towle stressed that the tool is designed to be helpful not evaluative and might be useful to teachers to continue thinking about what they have learned. She shared what a valuable opportunity it was to receive this feedback as they continue to refine the scope and use of the tool.

Dr. Towle drew the meeting to a conclusion by sharing the District Literacy page, which has been recently developed and she reported that it will be updated regularly. Dr. Towle thanked the Committee again for their work and for their input and the meeting was closed.