

Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on June 7, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Reed Intermediate School Library, 3 Trades Lane.

D. Zukowski, Chair	L. Rodrigue
J. Vouros, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
R. Harriman	15 Staff
D. Cruson	60 Public
J. Kuzma	
J. Larkin	
C. Savo	
M. Irving	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Celebration of Excellence

Lorrie spoke about celebrating the retirees and students tonight. The retirees include Tom Einhorn, Principal of Newtown Middle School and teachers Linda Baron from Middle Gate School, and Karolyn Baumgartner, Carol Skolas, Randi Kiely and Margaret O’Callaghan from Newtown High School. The teachers unable to attend were Nancy Cedor from Reed Intermediate School, Mary Connolly from Newtown Middle School and Janet Filmer and Doreen Merritt from Newtown High School.

The top 5% of the Newtown High School class of 2022 included Rachel Arena, Brian Garten, Sean Kenny, Norah Kolb, Elliot Lurie, Juan Mendez, Naha Nawaz, Benjamin Ochs, Jeremy Pankow, Christina Savo, Samuel Stably, Aiden Waaler, Jasper White, Jordan Wittmer, Andy Zhang and Salutatorian Amanda Stowe and Valedictorian Cate Fischer.

The CABE Student Leadership Awards were given to Stephen Mammola and Luke Stewart from Newtown Middle School and Christina Savo and Rayna Toth from Newtown High School. The Western Connecticut Superintendent Association/CAPSS Student Recognition Awards were given to Madeline Norrett and Benjamin Fitzgerald from Newtown Middle School and Allison McCarthy and Matthew Irving from Newtown High School.

Leah Rojas, Newtown High School Senior was recognized for placing fourth in the 2022 Congressional Art Show. Saahil Ray, Newtown High School Junior was recognized for receiving the 2022 George A. Coleman Excellence in Equity Award.

The student Board of Education Representatives next year will be Kirtana Kunzweiler and Daniel Godino.

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the correspondence report. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Participation

Item 5 – Reports

Chair Report: Ms. Zukowski said Board members would be involved in three committees. Mr. Vouros will be on the middle school principal search committee, Mr. Ramsey will be on the director of teaching and learning search committee, and she and Mrs. Larkin will be on the NFT negotiations committee. The Legislative Council will be discussing updates to the Town Charter

this week. CABE is waiting for the contract from the State regarding the CABE Lighthouse Training.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Rodrigue said she will be sending a final communication to parents and staff. Middle School moving up ceremonies will be held June 14 in the high school gym and high school graduation is June 15 in the stadium. She thanked everyone at the school level for taking advantage of the at home Covid testing. She is finalizing staffing needs for next year and thanked our student representatives for their reports is year.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Cruson reported the Policy Committee focused on tonight's policies to pass before July 1.

Mr. Ramsey said the Communications Sub-committee meeting spoke about highlighting those that work on the front line. Matt Memoli spoke about what occurs during the summer months.

Mrs. Kuzma noted that Hope Bray spoke about the Bounce Back program at Reed at the Social Emotional Health and Wellness Sub-committee meeting. Anne Dalton spoke about community initiatives.

Mr. Vouros said that the Curriculum and Instruction Committee discussed the grade 6-8 math pilot program and Mrs. Uberti gave the curriculum audit update and encouraged the public to look at the minutes from that meeting.

Board members shared how much they enjoyed the various school concerts and art shows they attended.

Student Representatives:

Ms. Zukowski thanked the students for being wonderful representatives on the Board and wished them the best.

Ms. Savo spoke about end of the year activities such as the spring health fair, the seniors presented their Capstone projects, and 53 new members were inducted into the National World Language Society.

Mr. Irving noted that May 26 was the senior dinner dance. The marching band was in the Memorial Day parade in Washington D.C. The Best Buddies prom was Saturday and final exams have begun.

Item 6 – Presentations

Action on Grade 6 – 8 Math Pilot Resource:

Dr. Frank Purcaro presented information on the grades 6 – 8 Math Pilot resource chosen which is *HTM Into Math*.

Mrs. Harriman thanked Dr. Purcaro for what he has done for the district as he has made an incredible difference. She asked how his resource will work with grade 6 plus students to which Dr. Purcaro said they offer an accelerated version of the resource.

Ms. Zukowski said Amity will get a great assistant superintendent. She thanked him and wished him the best.

Mrs. Uberti said it has been a pleasure to work with Dr. Purcaro and it was a real blessing when the Board supported his position and that he walked in the door. What we did during the pandemic could not have been done without Dr. Purcaro and his experience.

Dr. Rodrigue thanked the Board for supporting this position. Dr. Purcaro was the right person and she thanked him and Mrs. Uberti for their outstanding work.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve *HTM Into Math* as the Grades 6 – 8 Math Pilot Resource. Mrs. Harriman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7 – Old Business

Hawley Update:

Dr. Rodrigue wanted the Board to have the final update on the Hawley relocation. Kelly MacLaren spoke about the Sandy Hook piece, Jenna Connors spoke about welcoming students to Reed and Carla Tischio thanked them for their collaboration. Hawley will be comfortable in their spaces and is grateful for how welcomed we are.

Mr. Ramsey thanked them for this tremendous effort.

Mr. Vouros was glad there will be co-teaching.

Item 8 – New Business

Ratification and Implementation of the New Superintendent's Contract:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education ratify the contract negotiated between Christopher Melillo and the Board for a period of three years commencing on July 1, 2022 and continuing through June 30, 2025. Mr. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Possible Action on Mentor for the Superintendent:

Ms. Zukowski spoke to Dr. Collins. The cost for two meetings per month and phone calls when necessary is \$475 per month which is \$5,700 for 12 months. She prefers to allow the amount of \$6,000.

Mrs. Vadas noted that we have funds to cover that amount.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education designate Randall Collins as Christopher Melillo's mentor for a period of one year and for a total cost of not more than \$6,000. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Mrs. Harriman asked if the calls are billed at \$195 per hour.

Ms. Zukowski said that amount is if he needs to meet in person or by video.

Mrs. Harriman asked if we had a comparison between CUBE and CAPSS regarding time and availability.

Mr. Cruson also wanted a comparison between CAPSS.

Mr. Ramsey was in favor of Dr. Collins because of his work with the Board and knowledge in connection with Mr. Melillo. It's worth the expenditure.

Mrs. Larkin felt that Dr. Collins would be a good fit. He spent a considerable amount of time with the search and everyone involved and did a good job.

Mrs. Harriman wanted to clarify this was not an indication of not supporting Dr. Collins but we pay dues for CUBE and CAPSS and we should see what they offer and possibly not have to spend the Board's money.

Ms. Zukowski asked Mr. Cruson to reach out to CUBE to see what is available from them and qualifications a mentor would have.

Mr. Ramsey said that due to his start on July 1 he did not want to have a delay.

Ms. Zukowski would reach out to CAPSS.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to postpone this motion until the June 21 meeting.

Vote: 6 ayes, 1 nay (Mr. Ramsey) Motion passes.

Food Service Bid:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education award the food services bid to Chartwells as recommended by the food service committee. Mrs. Kuzma seconded.

Mrs. Vadas thanked the committee members and spoke about the bid process. Chartwells came out on top with a 95. The contract has to go to the State of Connecticut before approved. Motion passes unanimously.

School Activities Fund Accounts:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the continuation of the school activities fund account. Mrs. Harriman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Mrs. Vadas spoke about these which are approved each year. They are special revenue accounts that belong to the students and are audited every year. The balances are increasing a little due to Covid.

Motion passes unanimously.

First Read of Policies:

Mr. Cruson noted that these policies are required to be approved by July 1. There were three policies but were combined into two and will meet the State of Connecticut requirements. Policy 6141.51 / 6141.52 were combined and deals with enrollment in an advanced course or program and challenging curriculum.

Mrs. Harriman asked why the change was made on the bottom of page c under #4 regarding marginalized groups.

Mr. Cruson said minorities are chronically misrepresented. Shipman had concerns about the language but we shared concerns it was happening in our schools. We changed it to broaden it so it's not just minorities.

Mrs. Harriman appreciated the change to marginalized.

Policy 6172 Gifted and Talented Students Program is the CAFE version. Mr. Cruson noted that the biggest concern is PPT is crossed out and was being replaced by Screening Team. Special education PPTs generally include parents. Mrs. Earle said the state doesn't include parents. We heard back from legal and they are in favor of using PPT and not changing it to screening team.

Mr. Vouros agrees there is no need to change.

Mr. Ramsey concurred.

Minutes of May 17, 2022:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of May 17, 2022.

Mrs. Harriman seconded. Vote: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mr. Vouros)

Item 9 – Public Participation

Danielle Lozer, 1 Grays Plain Road, thanked Dr. Correia for discussing racism in Reed regarding the uptick in using the “N” word. She was asked to report the incident to see if DEI was necessary. Dr. Correia moved to not punish, but to educate.

Linda O’Sullivan, 8 Farmery Lane, spoke about affirmative action and racial conflicts.

Tony Keating Oak Ridge Drive, noted criticism of Newtown students and gave his opinion on DEI.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education go into executive session for the discussion and possible action on non-union wages and invited Dr. Rodrigue and Mrs. Vadas. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 10 – Executive Session

Executive session began at 8:49 p.m.

Mrs. Harriman left the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Item 11 – Public Session for Possible Vote

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the salary adjustments for all non-union employees for 2022-2023 as per the Superintendent’s recommendation. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 12 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

Correspondence Report
05/17/2022 – 06/06/2022

Date	Name	Subject
05/17/2022	Noelle D'Agostino	Support of Wes Johnson
05/17/2022	Sabeena ali	Importance of DEI Coordinator position
05/17/2022	Nicole Maddox' via	Thank you and congratulations
05/17/2022	Connell, Sarah	Anonymous Alert App Summary (Redacted)
05/17/2022	Trey Hazard	BOE Meeting Tonight
05/17/2022	Nerlande Foote	Profiles in Professionalism
05/17/2022	Deborra Zukowski	To Carrie, newtownboe
05/18/2022	Newtown Board of...	Appointment of the Superintendent
05/18/2022	Kiley Gottschalk	(no subject)
05/21/2022	Carrie Grummons' via	Praise for Dr. Matt Correia and Wes Johnson
05/21/2022	Bethany Leece	Reed 6 th Grade Racism Conversations
05/21/2022	Maria Wallenta	Re: Concerning Issue at Reed
05/21/2022	Jess Velasco	SUPPORT FOR DR. CORREIA
05/21/2022	Carrie Grummons' via...	Praise for Dr. Correia and Wes Johnson standing up against racism at Reed
05/21/2022	Wendy Leon-Gambe...	In Support of Dr. Correia
05/21/2022	Melissa Houston	Fwd: Concerning Issue at Reed
05/21/2022	Laura Main	Racism has no Home in Newtown
05/21/2022	Dana Schicker	Support for Dr. Correia
05/21/2022	Cate Sciarretto	Support for Dr. Correia
05/21/2022	David Weiss	Dr. Correia's email was well received and appreciated
05/21/2022	Gary Jeanfaivre	I support DEI in NPS, Mr. Johnson, and Dr. Correia
05/21/2022	Denise Buzy-Pucheu...	Completely and Utterly in SUPPORT of Dr. Correia and

		standing up to ZERRO Tolerance for Racism & Bullying
05/22/2022	Don Lococo	Praise for Dr. Correia, Mr. Wes Johnson, and SRO Chapman
05/22/2022	Jane McEvoy	Thank you for support against racism
05/22/2022	Jordana Bloom	Support For Dr Correia
05/22/2022	Barbara Wojcik	Latest Racial Slurs in Our Schools
05/22/2022	Linda O'Sullivan	Thanks to Dr. Correia for having the courage to acknowledge a racism problem
05/22/2022	Kholden@landdesig..	Zero Tolerance
05/22/2022	Zukowski, Deborra	May 22, 2022 Week in Preview
05/22/2022	Rodrigue, Lorrie	Fwd: CABE Policy Highlights 5-13-2022
05/22/2022	Janice fields	Support for Dr. Correia
05/23/2022	Christine Miller	Addressing racism
05/23/2022	Michelle D'Aprile	Support for Dr. Correia
05/23/2022	Christine Wilford	Re: Concerning Issue at Reed
05/23/2022	Anthony Nitopi	WES DEI Social Media Post
05/24/2022	Suzie Spiro	Re: Concerning Issue at Reed
05/24/2022	Carrie Battaglia	Support for Dr. Correia
05/24/2022	Lorrie Rodregue	Sad News in Texas
05/24/2022	Randall Collins	Texas Shooting
05/25/2022	Jeff Magnano	Support for Dr. Correia
05/25/2022	Trey Hazard	May 17 th Meeting Minutes
05/25/2022	Kiley Gottschalk	BOF 5-26-22 Agenda
05/25/2022	Chris Melillo	Sending Support
05/25/2022	Deborra Zukowski	My community statement
05/26/2022	Torres, Rachel	NHS Geography Club

05/26/2022	Deborra Zukowski	NMS Project Adventure
05/27/2022	Deborra Zukowski	Fwd: Director of teaching and Learning Search
05/29/2022	Deborra Zukowski	May 29, 2022 Week in Preview
05/29/2022	Randall Collins	Checking – In
05/29/2022	Rodrigue, Lorrie	Sunday Highlights
05/31/2022	Donna Mills' via Ne...	More advocacy
05/31/2022	Kate	Request of Information
05/31/2022	Matthew Brodie	Student data leak
06/01/2022	Gabriel, Janice	Unified Theatre presents "Time Upon a Once"
06/01/2022	June, Kathy	Fwd: Document shared with you: "They thought Sandy Hook would wake up the US
06/02/2022	Chivinski Ron	Re: NMS Project Adventure Challenge Course Maintenance—Request
06/02/2022	Correia, Matt	Fwd: RIS Update
06/03/2022	Colclough, Dennis	Microsoft Office vulnerability
06/03/2022	Dannen, Mary	2022 NHS Commencement Ceremony
06/03/2022	Kathy June	BOE Mailing
06/05/2022	Zukowski, Deborra	June 5, 2022 Week in Preview
06/06/2022	June, Kathy	Revised Agenda

NPS
Newtown Public Schools
Activity Accounts
Period Ending March 31, 2022

Hawley School
Acct# 729519990
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$4,419.88

Middle School
Acct# 729519974
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$72,499.56

Sandy Hook School
Acct# 729519931
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$6,114.97

High School
Acct# 729519624
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Activity Balance: \$734,631.65
Bond: \$195,184.23
Total Account: \$929,815.88

Middle Gate School
Acct# 701053826
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$3,790.76

Custodial Account
Acct# 729516781
Managed by: Assistant Business Director
Approved by: Director of Business
Current Balance: \$74,692.25

Head O'Meadow
Acct# 729519851
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$1,776.72

Continuing Education
Acct# 729519755
Managed by: Bookkeeper
Approved by: Director of Continuing Ed
Current Balance: \$86,957.17

Reed Intermediate
Acct# 729519966
Managed by: Secretary
Approved by: Principal
Current Balance: \$28,082.26

Instruction

Enrollment in an Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum

The Newtown Board of Education (the "Board") understands the importance of providing opportunities for students to enroll in an advanced course or program and offering students challenging curriculum in the Newtown Public Schools (the "District"). In accordance with Connecticut law, this policy shall explain the manner in which the District determines eligibility for enrollment in advanced courses or programs and creates academic plans for students in the District.

The Newtown Board of Education (the "Board") believes in the basic principle that academic rigor and the opportunity to accelerate learning are powerful motivators for students to meet intellectual challenges and excel in the an academic environment. Therefore, the Board endorses the goal to ~~create~~ foster a culture of deliberate excellence through its commitment to in which all students who have the capability, potential, or motivation to may access advanced academic curriculum and instruction. As a further part of that goal, the Board encourages students to pursue rigorous, challenging academic coursework such as, but not limited to, honors classes, dual enrollment, dual credit, advanced placement classes, International Baccalaureate courses, and the Cambridge International Program, as may be provided by the Newtown Public Schools (the "District").

To better realize such a goal, and in accordance with Connecticut law, this policy shall explain the manner in which the District determines eligibility for enrollment in advanced courses or programs and creates academic plans for students in the District.

I. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

"Advanced course or program" means an honors class, advanced placement class, International Baccalaureate program, Cambridge International program, dual enrollment, dual credit, early college or any other advanced or accelerated course or program offered by the Board. ~~in grades nine to twelve, inclusive.~~

"Advanced placement" program is a program authorized by the College Board that offers college-level courses and exams that students take in high school.

"Cambridge International program" is an internationally recognized academic program for students aged five (5) to nineteen (19). High school

level courses, available only through approved Cambridge International Schools, provide students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit that is accepted by colleges in the United States and abroad.

P6141.51/6141.52(b)

Instruction

Enrollment in an Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum

“Dual credit/Dual enrollment” courses are college courses offered by high schools in partnership with a college or university. Students taking these courses in high school are simultaneously enrolled with the partner higher education institution. Students who successfully complete a dual credit/dual enrollment course earn credit toward high school graduation as well as college course credit that appears on a student transcript issued by a college or university.

“International Baccalaureate (“IB”) program” is a program that offers international education through four programs for students aged three (3) to nineteen (19). The four programs are: Primary Years, Middle Years, Diploma Program, and Career-related Program. Schools must be authorized to teach IB programs. Every authorized school is known as an IB World School.

“Prior academic performance” means the course or courses that a student has taken, the grades received for such course or courses and a student’s grade point average.

II. Eligibility Criteria

Consistent with state law, the District will identify students in grades eight and nine who may be eligible to take or enroll in an advanced course or program. Students will be eligible to enroll in advanced courses or programs throughout their high school career, even if they are not identified as eligible in grades eight or nine.

Eligibility for enrollment in an advanced course or program shall not be based exclusively on a student’s prior academic performance. There are multiple methods by which a student may satisfy the eligibility criteria for enrollment in an advanced course or program, including:

- Recommendations from teachers, administrators, school counselors or other school personnel.
- A student's prior academic performance, as determined by evidence-based indicators of how a student will perform in an advanced course or program.

- GPA improvement over time
- Student interests and persistence
- The District administration may, in its discretion, identify and publicize additional criteria, including but not limited to student or parent request. Any such criteria shall be established prior to the commencement of an academic term.

P6141.51/6141.52(c)

Instruction

Enrollment in an Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum

III. Creation of an Academic Plan/Challenging Curriculum

The District will create an academic plan for each student who is identified in grade eight or nine as eligible for enrollment in an advanced course or program. Such plan will be designed to enroll the student in one or more advanced courses or programs and allow the student to earn college credit or result in career readiness. Such academic plan will also be aligned with:

- The courses or programs offered by the Board,
- The student's student success plan, created pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221a(j),
- High school graduation requirements, and
- Any other policies or standards adopted by the Board relating to the eligibility for student enrollment in advanced courses or programs.

A student, or the student's parent or guardian, may decline to implement the provisions of an academic plan created for such student.

The academic plan may be part of the student's success plan, required for each student by Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-221a, if the student success plan's academic component intentionally focuses on advanced course and program participation.

IV. Guiding Principles and Implementation

The Board is aware that marginalized groups may be are chronically underrepresented in advanced level high school courses and programs of similar rigor. Low awareness of advanced courses and programs, insufficient preparation or failure to identify students with potential, and fear of social isolation may prevent low-income and minority marginalized groups from enrolling in such courses or programs. ~~Further, other barriers to participation~~

~~include the failure to identify students with potential, insufficient motivation and incentives on behalf of teachers and/or students, and funding.~~

The Board recognizes that course access and academic planning should be guided by considerations beyond traditional course eligibility criteria. An emphasis on equity must include a focus on increasing student's access to rigorous learning opportunities to assist all students to be prepared for success after high school. ~~The following District and school level principles~~ The proceeding eligibility criteria will contribute to fostering greater equity in student participation in advanced courses or programs.

P6141.51/6141.52(d)

Instruction

Enrollment in an Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for implementing this policy and developing procedures in furtherance of this policy and in accordance with guidance provided by the Connecticut Department of Education.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221w

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221x

Connecticut State Department of Education, *District Guidance for Developing an Advanced Course Participation Policy* (March 2022 Draft)

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

4/29/2022

Instruction

Gifted and Talented Students Program

The Newtown Board of Education (Board) recognizes its responsibility to identify gifted and talented students within the school district and to provide these students with appropriate instructional adaptations and services. ~~(Districts are required to identify but provision of services is at the discretion of the local district.)~~ The Board is committed to providing identification and assessment which is responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, disabling conditions and cultural diversity.

For purposes of this policy, "gifted and talented students" means a each child identified by the Screening Team ~~Planning and Placement Team (PPT)~~ as (A) possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative or specific academic capability and (B) needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the general education program in order to realize the child's intellectual, creative or specific academic potential. The term shall include children with extraordinary learning ability and children with outstanding talent in the creative arts.

For purposes of this policy "outstanding talent in the creative arts" means a child identified by the Screening Team ~~Planning and Placement Team~~ as gifted and talented on the basis of demonstrated or potential achievement in music, the visual arts or the performing arts.

The school district shall provide educational programs for the gifted and talented, within budgetary constraints, that include a broad spectrum of learning experiences which increase knowledge and develop skills necessary for the student to function successfully in society while encouraging students to excel in areas of special competence and interest. *(optional language)*

Though early identification of the gifted and talented is important, it is essential that the identification of these students be recognized as a continuing process in that special abilities and skills appear at different times in the lives of many children and new children are regularly being enrolled in the system.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop procedures for an ongoing kindergarten through grade twelve identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity or a specific academic area.

Multiple measures may include, but are not limited to, tests of academic achievement, aptitude, intelligence, and creativity; achievement test scores; grades; student performance or products; samples of student work; parent, student, and/or teacher recommendations; and other appropriate measures. The identification methodology will include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or 504 Plans, be developmentally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered by the District.

The final determination in the identification of students as gifted and/or talented must be done by a ~~PPT~~ Screening Team. Such ~~PPT~~ team charged with this responsibility shall be composed of a group of certified or licensed professionals representing each of the teaching, administrative and

pupil personnel staffs.

Instruction

Gifted and Talented Students Program (~~Version #1~~) (continued)

~~Though early identification of the gifted and talented is important, it is essential that the identification of these students be recognized as a continuing process in that special abilities and skills appear at different times in the lives of many children and new children are regularly being enrolled in the system.~~

Upon the identification of a student as gifted and talented, the District shall provide a paper copy and electronic notice of such identification to the parent/guardian of such student. Such notice shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. an explanation of how such student was identified as gifted and/or talented;
2. the contact information for the District's employee in charge of the provision of services to gifted and talented students, or, if there is no such employee, the District's employee in charge of the provision of special education and related services;
3. the employee at the State Department of Education who has been designated as responsible for providing information and assistance to Boards of Education and parents or guardians of students related to gifted and talented students, pursuant to section 10-3e of the General Statutes; and
4. any associations in the state that provide support to gifted and talented students.

~~The school district, should it decide to offer services to the gifted and talented, shall utilize the guidelines, developed and promulgated by the State Department of Education (SDE), for providing services to those students. The guidelines include best practices for the district to consider for (1) addressing the intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students in schools and (2) providing teacher training and professional development on gifted and talented students.~~

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-76a-(e) Definitions.
10-76d-(e) Duties and powers of Boards of Education to provide special education programs and services.
Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Sections 10-76a-1–10-76l-1.
P.A. 19-184 An Act Concerning the Provision of Special Education.
Gifted and Talented Education: Guidance Regarding Identification and Service. SDE Guidance, March 2019.
P.A. 21-199 An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Statutes Relating to Education and Workforce Development, Section 2.

Policy adopted:
rev 6/17
rev 7/19
rev 4/22

**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on May 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Reed Intermediate School Library, 3 Trades Lane.

D. Zukowski, Chair	L. Rodrigue
J. Vouros, Vice Chair (absent)	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
R. Harriman	25 Staff
D. Cruson	40 Public
J. Kuzma	1 Press
J. Larkin	
C. Savo	
M. Irving	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Celebration of Excellence

Dr. Rodrigue spoke about the profiles in professionalism program which recognizes staff and community members who have made a positive impact on someone in our schools. Those receiving this award includes Sabeena Ali, Parent Volunteer, Hope Bray, Social Worker, Reed Intermediate School, Kathy Gramolini, Teacher, Sandy Hook School, Justine Hensey, Speech/Language Pathologist, Head O'Meadow School, Wesley Johnson, Coordinator of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Kimberly Longobucco, Principal, Newtown High School, Jennifer Padilla, Hawley PTA President & Newtown Middle School PTA Co-Vice President, Richard Paloian, Maintenance Department Electrician, Shannon Pierce, Teacher, Middle Gate School, James Ross, Assistant Principal, Newtown Middle School, Amy Santoro, Paraprofessional, Hawley School, Susan Steimel, Attendance Secretary, Newtown High School, and Rachel Torres, Teacher, Newtown High School.

Dr. Rodrigue spoke about the Weller Foundation award which was given to Katie Mauro, library media specialist at Sandy Hook School. Ms. Mauro spoke about her winning lesson.

Item 3 – Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appointment of the Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Zukowski thanked Janet Kuzma and Dan Cruson, the search committee co-chairs who ensured that the search process was well organized and effective.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin **MOVED**, in accordance with Section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes, that the Board of Education appoint Christopher Melillo as Superintendent of Schools, effective July 1, 2022 and continuing through June 30, 2024, subject to the following conditions:

1. approval of the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes;
2. satisfactory completion of all statutory requirements concerning the hiring of Board of Education employees;
3. completion of satisfactory negotiations on the terms of conditions of his employment.

MOVED FURTHER that the Board Chair be authorized to negotiate, finalize and execute the proposed employment contract with Christopher Melillo on behalf of the Board.

Mrs. Harriman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Cruson spoke to the motion and said that NESDEC conducted the hiring search. Chris Melillo was chosen the best candidate after the second round of interviews.

Mrs. Kuzma was impressed with his entry plan and that he will be invested in a strong working relationship with the community with a focus on our students reaching their highest potential.

Mrs. Harriman said he was kind, empathetic, smart and funny and the right person for this district.

Mr. Ramsey noted that he captivated us with his quiet strength and command of what the superintendent has to do.

Mrs. Larkin said this was a very bittersweet process for her because she wanted to be on the Board to work with Dr. Rodrigue. Chris rose to the top and was a standout. He is looking forward to being part of the community and wants to work with faculty, parents and students.

Ms. Zukowski shared what Mr. Vouros said which was to extend to Chris a heartfelt welcome to our community and stellar school system and he looks forward to assisting him as he challenges all of us to new heights. She agreed and stated that he outshined his recommendations and it will be a pleasure working with him.

Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Melillo said it was an honor to be the next superintendent and appreciated the Board giving him a chance to lead one of the premier school districts in the state. He cares about the community and children he serves. He thanked his wife Diane and sons Chris and Thomas and Dr. Rodrigue and her team for what they did during the pandemic. He will work to build transparency and trust. His door is always open and he appreciated this opportunity.

Item 4 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the donation to Newtown High School and the correspondence report. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 5 – Public Participation

Item 6 – Reports

Chair Report: Ms. Zukowski reported that Mr. Vouros will be representing the Board on the search committee for the Newtown Middle School Principal. We will also have to organize a contract negotiations committee for the teachers' contract.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Rodrigue thanked the Board and staff during the time she was out due to the loss of her father and appreciated the condolences. Last night she attended the Western Connecticut Superintendent's Award ceremony along with Dr. Longobucco and Mr. Einhorn where two middle school students, Madeline Norrett and Benjamin Fitzgerald, and two high school students, Ali McCarthy and Matt Irving, received this award and will be recognized at a future board meeting. We will also honor the top 5%, CAFE student leadership award winners, and our retirees at that meeting. "US News and World Report" ranked Newtown High School in the top 25 in the State of Connecticut. There has been an uptick in Covid cases which has impacted staffing and we are still monitoring cases. Hospitalizations remain relatively low and we continue working with our director of health. Anne Dalton will be sending a newsletter to parents with tips to keep everyone safe. The Covid screening program tested 1,129 individuals since the beginning of May and only found 15 cases. Congratulations to Chris Melillo. He is going to love the students, staff and entire community.

Committee Reports:

Mrs. Harriman reported that the DEI Subcommittee met last week and discussed professional development for subcommittee members and then a roll out to the board. Equity and sustainability planning was also discussed. We will be meeting the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 in central office.

Mr. Cruson noted that the Policy Committee met last Wednesday. They discussed three policies that need to be approved by July 1.

Mrs. Larkin said the CFF Committee met this week and discussed the financial position of the budget and the out-of-district tuition. The transportation contract is with legal and will be presented to the Board in June. Mr. Gerbert spoke about the service contract and the upgrade and replacement of Newtown High School parking lot lights.

Mrs. Kuzma noted she attended the Reed art show last week. The PTA was also involved and it was a great event.

Mr. Cruson added the art show was well put together and congratulated everyone involved.

Mrs. Larkin said Middle Gate had an art show also and held a fundraiser called Middle Gate Madness which is like a carnival. They had a Mr. Rick day also for one of the custodians who is a most amazing person. Also, kudos to Mr. Geissler for being in the dunk tank.

Student Reports:

Ms. Savo reported that AP testing concluded last week. The junior and senior award ceremony will be held May 25 at 6 p.m. Senior spirit week starts next week. The Choir will be traveling to Disney on June 19. Congratulations to teachers of the year Ms. Gonski and Ms. Gabriel.

Mr. Irving reported there was a chorus concern tonight and a band and orchestra concert this week. He congratulated Christina Savo and Rayna Toth for receiving the CBE Student Leadership Award.

Financial Report:

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report and transfers for the month ending April 30, 2022. Mr. Cruson seconded.

Mrs. Vadas spoke about the financial report and transfers.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7 – Presentations**PEAC Presentation:**

Dr. Rodrigue said the goal of PEAC is to promote a partnership between educators and parents. The committee work is timely and never ending and is always to support families and staff needs. She will miss everyone and thanked them for their dedication.

The presentation began with the Budget Committee of which Tanja Vadas is the facilitator and Chris Geissler and Dr. Christianne Golesky are members. Their goals are to increase community engagement, community awareness, increase voter turnout, and support our schools through the budget.

The Communications Committee facilitator is Janice Gabriel with members Monica Kwarcinski, Nadia Papalia, Deborah Petersen and Denise Strong who spoke about the Blackboard app and the mission statement revision.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee facilitator is Wesley Johnson and includes members Katherine Abrego, Suzanne Hurley, Dr. Frank Purcaro, Rachel Torres, Sara Wasley, Sabeena Ali, Satra Arokium, Jess Velasco, Jennifer Padilla, David Weiss and Christine Wilford. The mission statement is to cultivate, nurture, and sustain a safe, respectful, and inclusive culture across the district. The vision statement is to recognize the integrity of diversity and use this to inspire dialogue and forge community bonds. The Anonymous Alert app was also discussed.

The Partnership Committee is facilitated by Deborah Lubin and members are Kelly Chokbengboune, Kim Hettenbach, Mary Murphy, Jennifer Arnold, Anne Dalton, Cynthia McArthur and Michelle Hiscavich. The goals are to support, nurture, and assist in maintaining positive relationships between the Newtown Public Schools and our surrounding community. Accomplishments include an after school social/emotional learning group pilot program called Kids Core, a March multicultural Reading Palooza, developed a database of permanent senior and volunteer readers for grades K-4 students, and launched a parent emotional support survey.

Item 8 – Old Business

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve policy 4112.6/4212.6 Personnel Records. Mr. Cruson seconded and stated there were no questions on this policy. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve Policy 4112.8 Nepotism. Mr. Cruson seconded with no questions on this policy. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve Policy 4114/4214 Assignment/Transfer/Reassignment. Mr. Cruson seconded with no questions on this policy. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 – New Business

Mr. Gerbert spoke about the two service contracts for approval. He reported that Eastern Mechanical Services was the low bidder and that prices are in line with what we budgeted next year.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education award the HVAC service contract to Eastern Mechanical Services Inc. for Year 1 with the option to renew for Years 2 and 3. Mr. Cruson seconded. Mrs. Larkin noted this was discussed and passed through the subcommittee. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Gerbert spoke about the waste hauling and recycling bid being awarded to Associated Refuse Haulers who we have been using. They have been very generous to the district and donate services to the drama club or other groups when requested. They have not passed on any gas charges.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education award the waste and recycling services contract to Associated Refuse Haulers for a period of three years. Mr. Cruson seconded. Mrs. Larkin noted that the subcommittee also supported this recommendation. Motion passes unanimously.

Minutes of May 3, 2022:

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of May 3, 2022. Mr. Cruson seconded.

Ms. Zukowski made a request to the Policy Committee to discuss whether correspondence be appended to our minutes because a speaker requested his statement be attached.

Mr. Cruson said in the past we discussed that at the Board level. The policy does not allow or deny being able to do that. Ultimately, it rests on the decision of the Board and not policy.

Ms. Zukowski felt that the Policy Committee should investigate if there is a set of guidelines to be presented to the Board for a vote.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 10 – Public Participation

Sabeena Ali, 8 Quail Hollow Lane, was are in support of Wesley Johnson, DEI Coordinator. She spoke about her daughters who dealt with bullying issues in school.

She wants the DEI Coordinator to be a full time position and not a grant-funded position.

Konrad Miller, 72 Forest Drive, spoke about his son's assignment on World War II. His lesson did not include anything about atomic bombs and it should have told about the bombings. The only way to actively work against these misrepresentations is to continue to support our DEI initiative.

Tony Keating, Oak Ridge Drive, said at the last board meeting there was a discussion about a new student app to report discrimination and bullying. He stated reasons why DEI violates student, teacher, and parental rights. He urged the Board to consider the facts going forward.

Matthew Brody, 9 Old Lone Meadows, was concerned about notification sent Friday to parents regarding a security breach. He researched this breech and expected the Board to launch a full inquiry into this matter. The schools should protect our children including their identity.

Linda O'Sullivan, 3 Farmery Lane, spoke about white parents' messages to children about black people and about our expectation of violence by black people. She referred to the State-mandated policy from the last meeting and asked the Board to look at their own ideologies.

Trey Hazard, 10 Arthur's Court, offered congratulations to our new superintendent. By attending this meeting and seeing the different perspectives that you are either racist or anti-racist he hopes he witnessed the dynamics in Newtown and that this can be a fresh foot forward on taking a strong stance against allowing those views to flourish in our community.

MOTION: Mrs. Larkin moved that the Board of Education go into Executive Session to discuss the incoming superintendent's contract. Mrs. Harriman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 11 – Executive Session

Discussion of the Incoming Superintendent's Contract

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 12 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

6-8 MATH PILOT 2021-22

END OF YEAR REPORT & RESOURCE SELECTION



Agenda

- Background Information – Why Pilot?
- Goals of the Pilot and Descriptions of the Programs
- Pilot Teams
- Evaluation Rubric Results
- Feedback and Classroom Observation Findings
- Final Resource Selection
- Next Steps

Background Information: Why Pilot?

- In 2019, students experiencing three different math resources in grades K-8, one in K-4, another in 5-6 and a third in 7-8. Resulting in inconsistent presentation of material, strategies, terminology through the K-8 span.
- Resources in K-4 and 5-6 were outdated (2011 & 2014 editions). Concerns regarding standards alignment and rigor – confirmed by classroom observations, math performance on standardized testing, and feedback.
- Resources in grades 7-8 operating on a series of one year renewals, only partially meets expectations for rigor and standards alignment from EdReports.org.

Background Information: Selecting Pilot Resources

- The process for selecting a new math resource began in the Spring of 2021. Team of math teachers, specialists, and administrators met to vet resources for potential use.
- EdReports.org (<https://www.edreports.org/reports>) used as a guide to filter selections – Only resources that “Meet” expectations for standards alignment, rigor, and usability were selected for initial review.
- Recent publishing date also considered as a factor.

Selection of Pilot Material

- Narrowed to 3 resources: *LearnZillion Illustrative Math*, *McGraw Hill Illustrative Math*, *HMH Into Math*.
- Representatives from each resource invited in to present to the team and to provide both print materials and online access for review.
- Team narrows the selection down to 2 resource for Fall 2021 pilot.

Description of the Programs

McGraw Hill's Illustrative Math:

Illustrative Mathematics is a problem-based core math program for 21st century learners that focuses on preparing students to solve problems, reason, communicate, and think critically using real world examples and contexts.

Illustrative Math receives one of the highest ratings for 6-8 math programs on EdReports.org



HMH Into Math:

The *HMH Into Math* program emphasizes the importance of establishing conceptual understanding of math and reinforces that understanding with procedural practice with real world applications.

As with *Illustrative Math*, *Into Math* received one of the highest ratings available for 6-8 math programs on the market.



Pilot Teams and Programs

	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Illustrative Math	Ellen Buckley Dawn Ford John Sicbaldi Jessica O'Connell	Michelle Maag	Jennifer Pope
Into Math	Matt Brown Lauren Moore Shannon Ottowell	Elizabeth Stevens Jillian Morais	Bonnie Hart

Goals of the Math Pilot:

1. Adopt a resource that supports rigorous math instruction and is fully aligned to current curriculum standards.
2. Adopt a resource that may be used by students uniformly through the grade spans to support more consistent instructional practices. This includes finding a resource in grade 6-8 that aligns with the instructional strategies and rigor presented in Bridges Math K-5.
3. Commit to a resource for multiple years to build internal capacity and understanding for staff as well as long-term familiarity for students and families.

Final Resource Selection: Considerations

- Data from Fall and Spring Resource Evaluation Rubrics, with emphasis on the “Content” category which included feedback on level of rigor, standards alignment, building conceptual understanding, and assessments.
- Classroom observations throughout the year.
- Feedback from Math Specialists and Teachers.



Evaluation Rubric – Key Components:

- The evaluation rubric asks team members for feedback in three major areas: **organization, content, and technology**
- Team members will also be asked to provide written feedback and overall impressions as part of the evaluation.



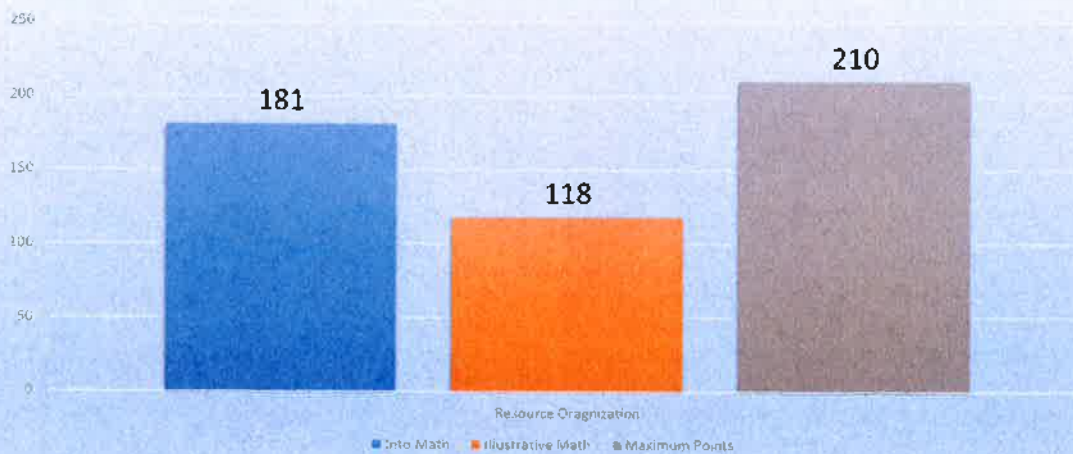
Section 1: Organization – Sample Question

I - Organization and Layout

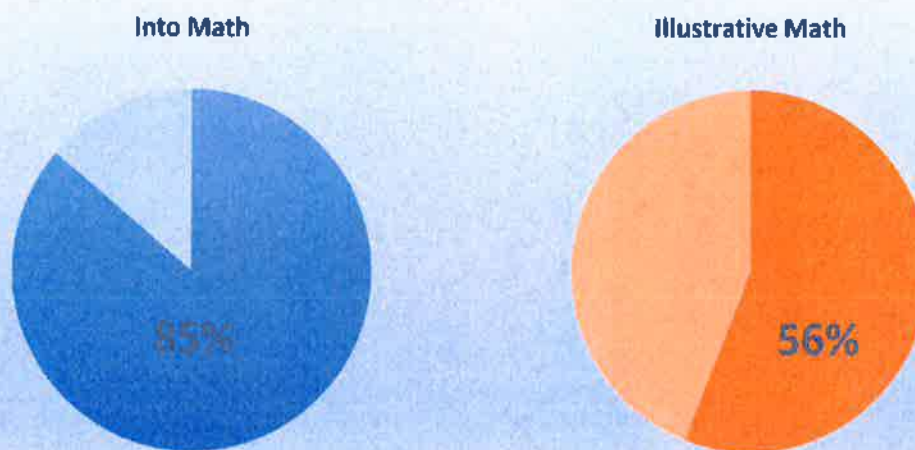
The material is presented in an order that make sense for teaching; The resource provides a useful Table of Contents, Glossary, and Index; the size and format of the print is appropriate; and the non-text content (graphs, picture, charts) are accurate and well-integrated.

Section 1: Resource Organization Comparison

Fall and Spring Rubric Total



Resource Organization: Fall and Spring Combined Results



Section 2: Content - Sample Questions

The resource provides students ample amounts of single step AND multi-step problems in order to develop students' problem solving skills.

The resource is designed to make explicit connections for students between what they have learned and how it extends to mathematical situations and real world applications.

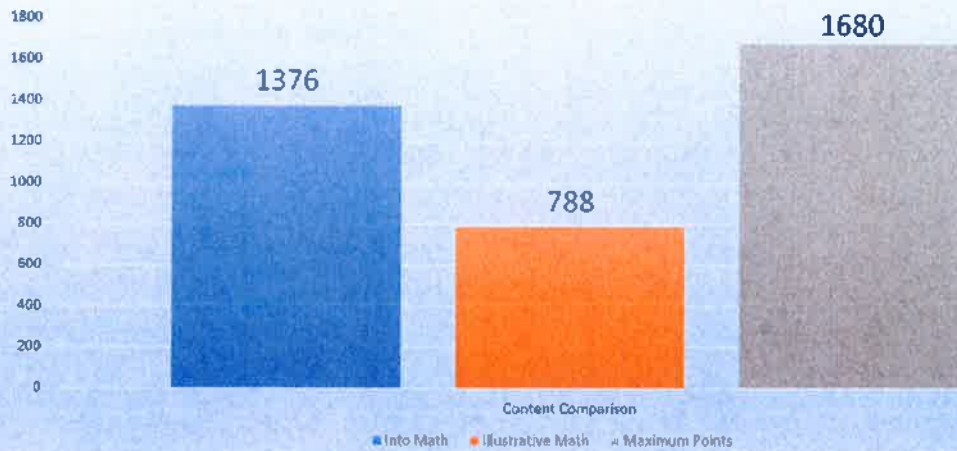
The resource is designed to build perseverance in a grade-appropriate manner giving students the opportunity to grapple with unique, non-traditional problems while applying the knowledge and skills they have learned.

The resource is designed to provide sufficient opportunities for students to reason mathematically through classroom discussion, written work, and independent thinking.

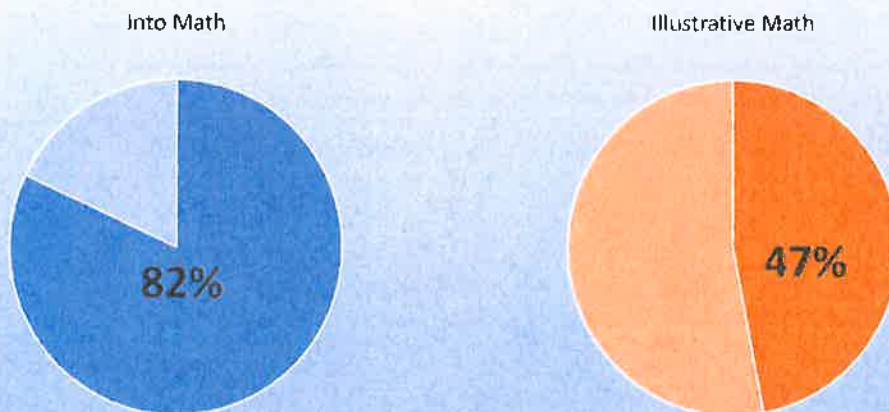
Content instruction respects the differentiated needs of all learners.

Section 2: Content Comparison

Fall and Spring Rubric Totals



Content Comparison: Fall and Spring Combined Results



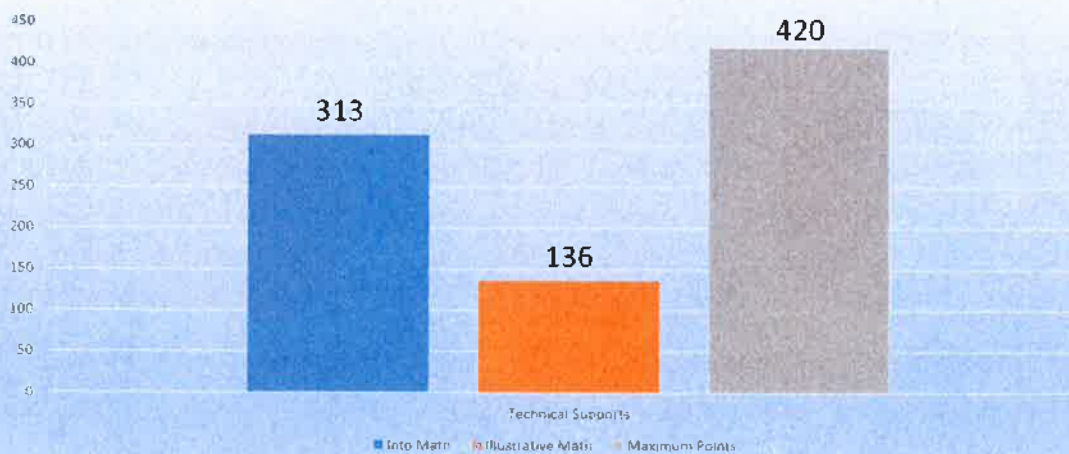
Section 3: Technical Supports – Sample Question

III - Technology

Technology that comes with the text/series enhances and compliments instruction.

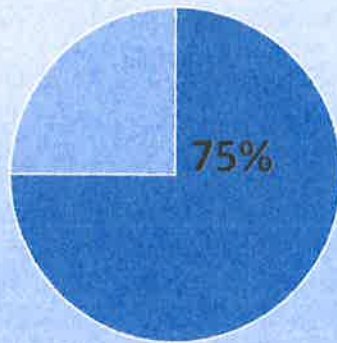
Section 3: Technical Supports Comparison

Fall and Spring Rubric Totals

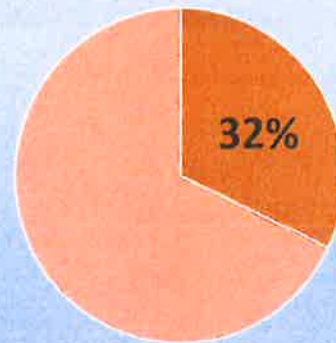


Technical Supports: Fall and Spring Combined Results

Into Math



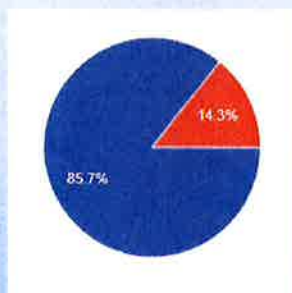
Illustrative Math



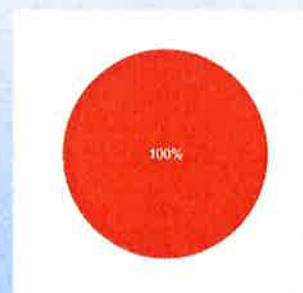
Overall Impressions Comparison

Please choose one of the following that best reflects your overall impressions of the text/series piloted thus far...

Into Math EOY



Illustrative EOY



- At this point, piloting this resources has been a positive experience overall.
- At this point, piloting this resource has been a negative experience overall.

Evaluation Rubric: Final Results



Into Math Prevails In All Three Categories

- Into Math Rubric Totals:
- Organization: 86%
- Content: 82%
- Technical Supports: 75%



Illustrative Math Rubric Totals:

- Organization: 46%
- Content: 47%
- Technical Supports: 32%

Verbal/Written Feedback & Classroom Observations

- Anecdotal data collected through verbal and written feedback, as well as classroom observations for **Into Math** were extremely positive, especially in regard to building problem solving skills, perseverance, and opportunities for engagement in real world application.
- **Into Math** feedback emphasized the extensive materials available for students in need of support and enrichment.
- Teacher feedback indicated that **Illustrative Math**, although rigorous, was not supportive of the differentiated needs of students, as there were a limited number of problems offered in each lesson.

Into Math Comments:



- **This resource will definitely help our students strengthen their problem solving skills!**
- **The online resources are quite extensive** and match the text resource quite nicely. Obviously, there is a learning curve necessary for navigating the dashboard, but it is quite easy once familiarity has been achieved.
- The resource does a particularly good job at posing problems that require **students to build perseverance solving problems** they are unfamiliar with. The resource encourages reading, writing, and speaking about the content. **Students spend quite a bit of time collaborating and reasoning through the problems.**

Into Math Comments:

- Within each lesson, I **particularly like the way the tasks are scaffolded**. Each lesson begins with "Spark Your Learning" which provides exposure to the overarching concept. Then Task 1 and Task 2 builds understanding of the key concept, whereas Task 3 and sometimes 4 (or even 5) dives deeper. By Task 3, many of the students have made connections and are able to work more independently (or with their groups), with the **teacher serving as facilitator, freeing up the teacher to provide more support to the struggling learners.**

Illustrative Math Comments:

- **Resource did encourage discussion among students but it did not offer enough foundational support for students.** They were often confused by expectations. **Resource often jumped to new concepts before students had enough practice to fully understand concepts.**
- **Compared to our old program (enVision) I do think there is increased rigor.** However I have heard from parents that it is challenging to help their child at home. The information is presented in a way that many parents are unfamiliar with. While there are "Family Letters" for each unit, parents find these do not offer the degree of information that they would like to have.

Illustrative Math Comments:



- **I do not like the technology included with this resource.** I have had better luck with the Kendall Hunt version, as well as other teacher-made resources to accompany Illustrative Math.
- While there are online questions that can be modified, it is not easy to do so, and there have been many technical glitches.
- **Some pros regarding this resource are that it does align to the common core learning standards. It provides real-world examples so that students could relate the mathematical concepts to real-world situations.** The questions are presented in a variety of ways, similar to SBAC style questioning, and goals and objectives are clearly stated at the beginning of each lesson.
- **I feel that the cons of this resource far outweigh the pros.**

Final Resource Selection:

Considerations:

- Data from Fall and Spring Resource Evaluation Rubrics, with emphasis on the "Content" category.
- Classroom observations throughout the year.
- Verbal and written feedback.

Resource Choice:

- ✓ Into Math
- ✓ Into Math
- ✓ Into Math



Final Resource Selection:



Next Steps/Resource Rollout:



- Meet with Math Teachers and Specialists to finalize the order of material.
- Meet with Into Math representatives to finalize professional development for the Fall.
- Scheduled support through the school year as needed.
- Written communications to parents and families.



A special thank you to all the teachers involved in the math pilot this year. We are deeply appreciative of your dedication and commitment throughout the pilot process - this included Special Education and the 6-8 Math Specialists.

We would also like to thank the Superintendent and the members of the Board of Education. As always, we are extremely grateful and appreciative for your for all of your support throughout the year.