

Willard SAC Meeting Notes for December 5, 2016 (Approved)

Present: Liz Berk, Pat Fernandes, Katie Kerr, Kate Mullen, Rudd Coffey, Carolyn Ferraioli, Anne Kilroy, and Rachael Morris.

Absent: Rebecca Comjean

Minutes from November 7 meeting were approved.

Classroom News:

Kindergarten (presented by Rachael Morris)

- Thanksgiving - what it means to be thankful, family traditions, Native American Indians
- Handwriting Without Tears - in the process of finishing uppercase letters
- Math - new concept every day, working on positional words, identifying numbers on the ten-frame, subtilizing, understanding combinations of 5
- Literacy - working on letter sound correspondence, rhyming, blending and segmenting words
- Will begin family unit and gingerbread unit week of December 5

Grade 1 (presented by Rachael Morris)

- Family Traditions – celebrating traditions by sharing one from their family
- Persuasive Writing – doing a grade-wide project about healthy snacks. Do some research and then create posters to persuade the Willard Community that they should pack and eat healthy snacks
- Short vowel review
- Handwriting – finishing up learning about lower case letters

Grade 2 (presented by Rachael Morris)

- Finishing up unit on Long Ago – led the All School Assembly on November 30 all about Long Ago
- Working hard on Pebbles, Sand and Silt unit in Science – updated FOSS unit lots of good hands on learning and exploring with rocks
- Beginning Unit 4 in EM4 which will continue to review concepts from first 3 units but also incorporate measurement and time
- December is Small Moment writing and all classes will give the prompt for this before winter break

Grade 3 (presented by Katie Kerr)

- Math - Unit 3 Operations, talking about multiplication using equal groups, practicing multiplication facts X1, X2, X5, X10
- Reading - reading groups, working on comprehension skills
- Writing - informational writing, writing about Social Studies and the Wampanoag- using details and evidence that they have learned throughout Social Studies
- Science - Weather and Water- surface/air temperature to learn about evaporation and condensation
- Bri Eggers - comes December 8: meteorologist from Channel 7

Grade 4 (presented by Katie Kerr)

- Math - Working on equivalent fractions. Continuing to practice multiplication facts
- Reading - author study. Practiced the skill of inference - figuring out information from the text using the clues that the author gives and what you already know. Starting to focus on nonfiction text-text structures, close reading
- Writing - finished personal narratives, now beginning persuasive writing. Fact vs. opinion and author's purpose. They will be writing their own 5 paragraph essays. They considered the pros/cons of chocolate milk in the cafeteria and using the electoral college/popular vote.
- Science - weathering and erosion, experiments are built into almost every lesson. They have used water tables to build dams and create floods.
- Social Studies - exploring the continent of Africa and working on passports and enrichment projects to get stamps in their passport.

Grade 5 (presented by Katie Kerr)

- Math - Finishing up Unit 3. Working on renaming fractions and mixed numbers with the same denominator and adding/subtraction fractions with different denominators. Playing lots of games and using lots of visual models, like fraction circle pieces and number lines.
- Reading/Writing - assorted reading groups. Working on strategies for reading non-fiction texts. How to build prior knowledge, close read to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words, determine text structure, and write a summary.
- Science - started the new FOSS Earth & Sun science unit. Learning about the position of the sun, moon, and earth in the solar system. Doing nightly observations of the moon. Made a mini model of the earth and moon to show the relative size and distance between the two.
- Social Studies - some classes are doing Native Americans or have moved onto Exploration. Learned about the branches of government and the electoral college prior to the election.
- Open Circle - talking about inclusion (how to be inclusive in the classroom and on the playground). Currently working on giving and receiving compliments.

Art – Kristin Saunders (presented by Kate Mullen)

K and Grade 1 - Drawing on color paper with color sticks (a Crayola product that is like unwrapped color pencils) Theme this week: animals and habitats

Grade 2 - Paper sculpture unit continues. Finger puppets made from paper cylinders

Grade 3 - Painting unit continues, mixing bright colors by using turquoise and magenta as "mixing Primary colors" and oil pastel and water color resist

Grade 4 - Painting unit continues, oil pastel and water color resist. Theme: ways to be helpful at home or at school

Grade 5 - Painting unit continues. Next up: observation painting (of fake flowers, toys etc).

Physical Education – Mike Germond (presented by Kate Mullen)

This month some Grade 3-5 classes are finishing up their soccer/kicking unit. Some classes in Grades 3-5 are a little further along and are starting a 2-week unit on the rock climbing wall. All Grade K-2 students have started a 2-week unit doing activities and games on the rock climbing wall.

Music – Charlyn Bethell (presented by Kate Mullen)

K classes: Learning about the composer, Raffi and sing some of his songs. Learned that songs have a heartbeat and exploring how that beat can be fast and slow. Songs: Thorn Rosa, Sorida, Jingle Bells, Tingalayo, This Little Light of Mine.

Grade 1: Learning to write some simple 4-beat patterns using one and two sounds in a beat. Doing the short musical in-house play: The Little Red Hen.

Grade 2: Dancing. Finishing Close Encounters and will start the South African dance, Pata Pata. Learned the three notes: So, Mi and La and are finding patterns in songs that use those notes.

Grade 3: Playing recorders. Still playing by rote and learning the techniques of recorder playing: blow softly, use the pad of your fingers, left hand at the top, "tongue" each note, sit up when playing.

Grade 4: Working on syncopation with several songs. Plan to start to study the musical form, Rondo, this month.

Grade 5: Working on learning chords and key signatures in preparation for studying jazz. Grade 5 chorus is preparing for a concert on January 11 at Fenn that starts at 7 pm which is part of the MLK celebration.

Grade 3 – 5: Henry Mancini--film composer. All students will hear some of the Nutcracker done by Tchaikovsky and Duke Ellington.

Library – Erica Josselyn (presented by Kate Mullen)

Kindergarteners are continuing to practice their listening skills and learn about fiction and nonfiction books.

Grade 1 - continuing to learn about library organization, call numbers, and library sections. They are also practicing alphabetical order.

Grade 2 - learning about parts of a book, including the title page, table of contents, glossary and index. They will also be learning about text features such as title, heading and captions.

Grade 3 - learning how to use the online catalog to find books in the library.

Grade 4 - completing their Digital Citizenship Unit by creating posters. They will also learn how to search online effectively.

Grade 5 - MCBA reading challenge. They will also be starting a unit on effective internet search strategies and evaluating online information. This is in addition to the Digital Citizenship unit completed in September, where students learn how to be safe and conscientious online.

Willard News (presented by Pat Fernandes)

Foreign Language Program

There was a long discussion on the proposed introduction of a Spanish Program to K – 5 (a report was circulated to the SAC before the meeting).

The history of this new initiative was outlined by Pat Fernandes. A lot of parents had asked Pat over the years about a foreign language program, particularly parents moving from other school districts. There was a 1-year pilot program many years ago that lasted for a year. In 2014/2015, the Elementary World Language Consideration Committee was formed, led by Kristen Herbert, and a report was presented to the Superintendent and Concord School Committee outlining the findings. The Committee concluded that there were many significant benefits including the gift that young children have to learn a new language and how it can help with other learning, for example Math. The challenge would be to find the time in the busy school teaching schedule and also the funding.

The Budget FY18 allows for three new K-5 teachers to teach Spanish and the budget meets the FINCOM guideline. It is proposed that Grade 1 to 5 will have two 30 minute lessons per week and K will have two 20 minute lessons per week.

Superintendent Rigby, Kristen Herbert and the Elementary School Principals met with the Music Teachers to discuss options relating to instrumental music lessons. Currently, Grade 5 has a 45-minute instrumental music lesson and a 45-minute band lesson. One suggestion is that Grade 5 consider one lesson, instrument or general music. Another suggestion is that band experience is scheduled for outside the school day. Grade 4 has one 45-minute lesson. A scheduling option could be to choose either instrumental or general music. Another option under consideration is that library classes could be a choice of Library or Instrumental music. The Librarian would push-in to classrooms for special projects, collaborating with the Teachers in the classroom. A further option would be to look at the Special Classes and have them all a 45-minute class length. Currently, Art and Physical Education are 60 minutes, Music and Library are 45 minutes.

A SAC parent questioned whether the time for Spanish could replace the time spent on cursive writing lessons. However, this is integrated into the language arts program and is considered valuable as a Willard goal is to develop handwriting fluency at a young age. In addition, the MA State requirements are for 900 hours of core curriculum instructional time and the district's elementary schools have 903 hours so there is little room to condense any further. The importance of music was also discussed, particularly at a high school level.

All Principals have asked their staff members to submit their ideas. All ideas will be evaluated. It is planned that the implementation will be consistent across all of the elementary schools.

Superintendent Search

The Consultants conducted a number of focus groups and an online survey was circulated. There are approximately 45 interested candidates. Interviews are planned to be conducted the third week in January and a candidate selected by the end of February 2017.

Willard Campus Renewal Project

Rudd Coffey gave an update. A group of interested parents (approximately 10) had met and planned to carry out a parent and teacher survey. There is \$ 200 K in the FY2018 capital budget for fields irrigation and reseeding. The Landscape architects in the parent group think this is a good start for a well, irrigation system and grass seeding depending on the soil quality. The group plan to meet again and have a plan in early 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Kilroy.