

Willard SAC Meeting Minutes for April 11, 2016
(Prepared by Kate Hennighausen)

Present: Pat Fernandes, Liz Berk, Jeanne Connolly, Katie Kerr, Kate Mullen, Rudd Coffey, Rebecca Comjean, Kate Hennighausen, and Anne Kilroy

Absent: Rebecca Comjean

Classroom News:

Kindergarten (presented by Jeanne Connolly): In Math, Kindergarteners are working on combinations of numbers, addition/subtraction, being able to solve addition/subtraction story problems, and 3D shape identification. In Literacy, students are learning vowel sounds and working on segmenting or blending words. Students are writing stories with a beginning/middle/end, and working on including sight words in writing. Handwriting lessons are covering lowercase letters. In science, students planted seeds and recorded their observations. They learned about what plants need to grow and parts of a plant. In Open Circle, students learned problem-solving skills using the traffic signal model.

First Grade (presented by Jeanne Connolly): First graders finished up “all about” books. They are revisiting narrative writing with small moments and will then cover poetry. In Reading, students are on their last round of small group sessions with reading tutors. They will read *Frog and Toad* books and the *Monster* series. Teachers will complete their last TC assessments. In Math, students just finished their second math swap with a number sense unit. They are learning about addition, subtraction, completing story problems, patterns, and coins/money. In science, students are studying life cycles of frogs and butterflies. Open Circle covered inclusion and problem-solving skills using the traffic signal model.

Second Grade (presented by Jeanne Connolly): Second graders are reading a mixture of fiction and nonfiction to build comprehension and fluency. Teachers will combine Making Meaning with Reading Response Journals to build Close Reading Strategies. Poetry is coming up. In math, students are using graphic organizers to solve addition and subtraction story problems, and learning that many problems can be solved different ways. In Social Studies, students began the Concord Long Ago unit with a focus on Henry David Thoreau. In Science, students are studying life cycles of chickens and Brassica plants. Classes just completed research projects on whales, bears, or apes. Open Circle is covering problem-solving skills.

Third Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): In Math, third graders are learning fractions and multiplication facts. In Reading, students are learning how to cite evidence from the text to support reasoning. They are reading historical fiction to learn more about Massachusetts in the Revolutionary War. Third graders are also studying poetry. April 1st was Idiom Day. Students dressed up like an idiom and tried to guess each other's idioms

Fourth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): The Fourth Grade magazine project is underway. Each student creates an entire magazine on a topic of interest. This project incorporates nonfiction reading skills, writing skills from many genres, research skills, and technology skills. Parents will be invited to magazine parties in June to celebrate the final work. In Math, students are currently in flexible groups to study fractions and decimals. In Social Studies, students are studying the five regions of the United States, including their historical significance, landmarks, natural resources, and landforms. In Literacy, students are alternating between the Immigration Unit and mini-lessons on focused skills that will also help for the upcoming PARCC exam. In Science, researchers from Grassroots Wildlife will be visiting classrooms to share information about the turtles' recent laparoscopies at the Franklin Park Zoo. These researchers will also help students prepare for the turtle release in June.

Fifth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): In Math, fifth graders are learning about fractions, multiplication/division of decimals, and powers of 10. In Reading, students are responding to short texts using evidence and completing the Junior Great Books unit. In Social Studies, students are learning about explorers, colonization, and the American Revolution. There was a Freedom Trail assembly on April 6th. The DARE program is underway. Fifth graders assisted with the Annual Willard School Food Drive that was organized by Julee Vitello to benefit Open Table.

Physical Education (presented by Kate Mullen): Grades K-2 started a two-week unit on rope jumping skills to improve fitness and agility. Grades 3-5 started a two-week unit on cooperative games that require teamwork, cooperation, communication, and problem solving.

Library (presented by Kate Mullen): Kindergarten classes will hear stories about spring and tricksters. First graders are researching weather terms to reinforce their science curriculum. Second graders are learning about Digital Citizenship and how to stay safe online (e.g., identifying appropriate websites, checking with parents about websites). Third graders will be reviewing research skills before starting group projects. Fourth graders are working on weather research projects. They are using print and electronic sources to find information and will be presenting their research using Google Slides. Fifth graders are starting a unit on Media Literacy with a focus on stereotypes in the media.

Music (presented by Kate Mullen): All students in grades 2-5 will learn about symphonies. Kindergarteners will sing spring songs, notice beats to songs, and listen to bird songs. First graders are learning about high/low sounds and how to write these sounds on the musical staff. Second graders continue to sing rounds and will be learning a new note in April. Third graders are reading notes from the staff without written note names. They will be learning some new rhythms. Fourth graders are finishing up a Theme and Variation unit and will learn about minimalism. Fifth graders are learning about the history of western music from Medieval/Renaissance times to the 20th Century. The Willard Arts Night is Monday, May 23rd.

Art (presented by Kate Mullen): Kindergarteners are finishing up painting portfolios and moving on to clay and collaborative projects. First graders are working on painting and clay projects. Second graders created clay tiles based on their classroom animal research projects. Third graders are making papier-mâché puppets. Fourth graders are working on printmaking. Fifth graders are working on printmaking and observation drawing. They are also preparing for the Willard Arts Night.

Principal's Report (presented by Pat Fernandes):

Ms. Fernandes reported both the Willard Spelling Bee and the Math Fair ran smoothly and were well attended. The Science Fair is May 1st. PARCC testing will begin in late April for grades 3-5. The fifth grade celebration will be June 20th.

District Report (presented by Pat Fernandes):

Ms. Fernandes reported the teacher contract has been finalized. Concord-Carlisle High School hired a new principal, Michael Mastrullo.

Overview of the Willard School Improvement Plan (presented by Pat Fernandes):

Ms. Fernandes stated the leadership team met with teacher SAC members to discuss possible changes to the school improvement plan. The literacy goal will be revised to better reflect academic language from the common core and to expand upon close reading strategies. Data from the 2016 PARCC will be used to help measure literacy skills. The math goal will be revised to focus on the implementation of the new curriculum, *Everyday Math 4* (EM4). The social/emotional goal will continue to include a focus on mindfulness strategies. This initiative has been well received by staff and students. Although not specifically part of the School Improvement Plan, Pat mentioned that next year all grade levels will implement curriculum revisions from the Next Generation Science Standards. New STEM activities will be infused in units throughout the year. The technology goal will emphasize having staff develop a good working knowledge of the Google platform and new EM4 technology tools.

Adjournment:

The April meeting was adjourned. The next Willard SAC meeting will be May 2nd at 6:00 p.m. in the Willard conference room.