UXBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 15th 2016

UXBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

School Committee Members in Attendance:

	Present	Absent
Debbie Stark, Chair	X	
John Morawski, Vice Chair	X	
D. Brett Pomeroy, Secretary	X	
Charlene Miller, Member	X	
Jen Modica, Member		X
Laura McGee, Member	X	
Matthew Keane, Member		X

1. Call to Order - Debbie Stark at 7:00pm

2. Public Comment- none -

3. November 8th Professional Development Day Update -
- Dr. Rich Drolet - Joint staff meeting for teachers across schools - discussed PARCC and MCAS -
- BVCC - held at UHS - keynote speaker was Nancy Clements -
  - also had 4 (1hr) sessions that staff could attend.
  - positive feedback was received.
  - Para-Professional - development was held at Mccloskey

4. District Literacy Action Plan Update - Dr. Rich Drolet -

- A group 10 - Administrators & Teachers currently working on Literacy - ongoing
- Oct. 24th 2016 attended, Literacy for All - Conference in Providence.
  - Lucy Calkins - Keynote speaker -
- Curriculum Director Plans (2016-2017)
  - teams of 6-8 teacher-leaders from both Taft ELC, and Whitin ES will attend a 5 day Literacy Leading Conference.
- Creating job descriptions for reading specialists (did not exist before). Woking on job title (reading specialist / Literacy Coaches.
- Will get an update in January 2017 with 5 action steps to be implemented in the Fall 2017.
- Current Curriculum PK-5 (storytown) K-3 Fundations.
- Committee has a robust discussion about this agenda item.

5. Superintendent's Update -

- Abigail & John Adams Scholarship Recipients -
- reception this Friday Nov. 18th.
- Integrated Learning Systems Grant - Application submitted.
- January 3rd 2017 (suggested the only agenda item would be the budget).
- Mr. Hyde will be working with John Morawski to set up a sub-committee budget meeting to review budget increase requests.
- The budget that comes out in December/January in an initial budget before any adjustments. The budget will be most likely revised in January 2017.
- Nov. 16th is community reader day - Mr. Carney will be reading at one of the classrooms. Mr. Carney complimented Mrs. O'Donnell for organizing the event.
- Sports Updates - Fall sports - great results across many teams.
- Matthew Kelly - scored in top 1% on the SAT.
- Mr. Carney enjoyed the MSC Conference last week.
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6. Old/New Business -

- Debbie Stark made a motion that we accept the annual school report for the 2015/2016 years. John Morawski - seconded it   voted: 5-0 all in favor.
- Dec. 6th Next meeting.

7. Adjournment - Debbie adjourned at 8:03pm - Debbie Startk made a motion to adjourn, John Morowski seconded it, voted 5-0 in favor.
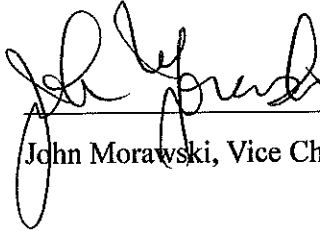
Respectfully Submitted,

D. Brett Pomeroy, Uxbridge School Committee Secretary

School Committee Members:

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Debbie Stark, Chair

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John Morawski, Vice Chair

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D. Brett Pomeroy, Secretary

_____
Jen Modica, Member
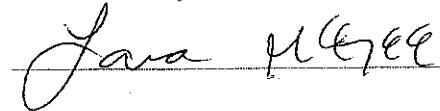
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Charlene Miller, Member

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Matthew Keane, Member

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Laura McGee, Member

PK-5 Literacy Improvement Plans

November 15, 2016

Dr. Rich Drolet

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, & Accountability

District Literacy Action Plan has been drafted

- Select PK-5 group composed of Curriculum Director, Pupil Services Director, Taft and Whitin principals, Taft and Whitin ELA C&I Leaders, special education and regular education teachers, and reading specialists

- The PK-5 District Literacy Action Plan will include a connection with the district literacy initiatives (close reading, self-regulated strategy development) and other district goals/improvement plans, why a District Literacy Action Plan is needed in Uxbridge, a literacy "vision statement," district literacy improvement goals, plans for assessing and reporting district progress, district expectations and supports for schools, and district literacy team members

- We will create "Action Plan Maps" for each of the aforementioned steps by January of 2017

Oct. 24th "Literacy for for All" Conference in Providence

◆ A group of 11 elementary school literacy leaders attended this conference to learn from Lucy Calkins, attend workshops that promoted best practices in close reading, and learn about successful school/district literacy improvements

◆ I learned about the integral role of the literacy coach (currently only 1 of our 4 elementary reading specialists serves somewhat in this capacity)

◆ A PK-5 Literacy Programming and Instruction Coordinator, and/or 1-2 PK-5 literacy coaches, could serve in this role working closely with teachers – this position would compliment the elementary Math Coordinator position we created this year

Curriculum Director plans 2016-17 (this year)

- Teams of 6-8 teacher-leaders from both Taft ELC and Whitin ES will attend a 5-day Literacy Leadership Team Training at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA through the Literacy Leader Initiative in March/April

- FY18 budgeting has been done to propose increased professional development for teachers and literacy leaders PK-5

- Reconfigure the roles of our reading specialists to have at least 1-2 of them act more like literacy coaches in 2017-18 – I will write new job descriptions, work on the push-in vs. pull out model, and improve teacher efficacy

- We are looking at a common benchmark assessment system for all grades for consistent the literacy assessment of all students

- We are analyzing how the Wilson Fundations phonics program is being utilized K-3

Curriculum Director plans 2016-17 (this year) continued

- We are looking at the use of Storytown reading series K-5

- We are evaluating the use and effectiveness of other programs currently being used (*Handwriting without Tears*, *Telian Lively Letters*), and we will decide where they need to be implemented and to what end

- We will continue to model and incorporate close reading and SRSD (self-regulated strategy development) strategies

- We will continue to model "best practice" instructional techniques with teachers through principals, reading specialists, literacy coaches, and other teacher-leaders

- We will conduct school site visits to elementary schools where similar initiatives have been implemented with perceived success (Forestdale ES, Sandwich; Burke Memorial ES, Medway)

Curriculum Director plans 2017-18 (next year)

- LILs (Literacy Initiative Leaders – teachers who get a small stipend) at each school will be supported with grant money to model successful practices at Taft EL and Whitin ES, creating grade-level and subject-area literacy leaders like at McCloskey Middle School

- We plan on conducting extensive training for some of our reading specialists to act more as literacy coaches to support teachers and students throughout this process

- We will conduct extensive training for school leaders (principals) to prioritize literacy into the school culture (scheduling, mission statement, intervention times)

- We will conduct more training for teachers in areas such as guided reading, benchmark assessment systems, and reader's and writer's workshop

Feedback from Leaders in elementary literacy

- *Lucy Calkins:*

1. We need a shared vision and shared community of practice for increased collegiality and our teachers to share their best practices and also plan best practices in literacy together

2. We need school leaders to be on board with the role of a literacy coach. Successful implementation of the literacy coach has everything to do with the literacy coach's relationship with the principal(s)

3. We need to create a shared vision and shared beliefs of what all kids need. Look at how writing has taken the place of talking – look at emailing in today's work world, for example. We need to do better as schools. Are there classrooms where there are red flags – where kids aren't writing every day, or reading at least 30 minutes in class every day?

Feedback from Leaders in elementary literacy (continued)

How can we rally as a whole district?

(1) Reading Specialists – can some of them act more like Literacy Coaches?

(2) Reading Specialists/Literacy Coach(es) – I will create job descriptions

(3) We need to support teachers with what really matters. How can we increase student engagement where our methods of teaching change to where our small groups of students are working harder than the teacher?

(4) What's our work here? What are our goals? How can we establish these goals? Are we scaffolding for kids too much – not letting them struggle or work hard enough (special education, for example)?

Examples of successful school practices

Mark Smith – Forstdale PK-2 Elementary School Principal, Sandwich:

1. Offer professional development to coach teachers for how to implement more successful guided reading

2. Principals/evaluators need to take time to write teacher observations focused in guided reading – to push teachers to make improvements in this area

3. Take control of the schedule. Define blocks for instruction as well as time for intervention. Principals need to be good schedulers – have your schedules reflect your values – literacy. Schedules need to be built on what we need to teach (not lunch and recess and teacher preps) with intervention included

4. Establish your mission to include literacy ("grow readers", for example) and the Growth Mindset.

Examples of successful school practices (cont.)

Challenges: Who teaches literacy interventions? Who receives literacy interventions? Do we include children with IEPs? What do we use for interventions? Time? Space?

Successes/Solutions: Use highly trained professionals for ongoing training and coaching, use assessment data from the Spring to schedule grades 1 & 2 for 6-week interventions, next use Fall assessments to form flexible interventions, next use Fall assessments to form flexible groups using clearly defined criteria, consider children with IEPs case-by-case, use leveled literacy intervention push-in model during literacy block/intervention block, use data meetings to adjust student groups every 6-8 weeks

Examples of successful school practices (cont.)

- *Coach/Principal relationship:* coach needs to be comfortable knowing more than principal (and vice-versa), principal needs to publicly value coaching and literacy PD, never violate the coach/teacher relationship

- Evaluate school Mission Statements – Does it set a goal for literacy?

- Evaluate relationships – Do coaches and principals meet regularly? Is there trust in the building? Is there a culture of learning together?

- Evaluate structures – Does the schedule prioritize literacy? Does the schedule define time for intervention? Does staffing meet student intervention needs? How is data being monitored?

Closing Thoughts

- We need increased professional development and we may also need some curricula materials for PK-5 Literacy

- We need to evaluate our PK-5 curricula: Telian Lively Letters; *Handwriting without Tears; Storytown;* How Guided Reading is being taught; How *Fundations* is being implemented; *Readers and Writer's Workshop;* Assessments – STAR reading? DRA?

- Assess how our Reading Specialists function and think about changing some of their roles to be more like Literacy Coaches
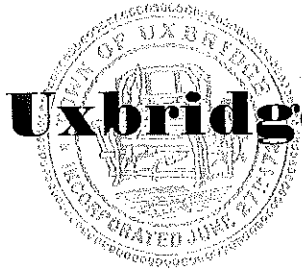
Uxbridge Public Schools

Office of the Superintendent
21 South Main Street • Uxbridge, MA 01569
Telephone (508) 278-8648 • Fax (508) 278-8612

Kevin M. Carney
Superintendent of Schools

October 25, 2016

Lucas Orwig, Program Officer
Nellie Mae Foundation
1250 Hancock Street, Suite 205N
Quincy, MA 02169

Dear Mr. Orwig,

I support Uxbridge's application as part of the MAPLE consortium's application for the Integrated Learning Systems Grant.

The Uxbridge Public Schools and Uxbridge High School have been working towards student-centered learning for a number of years. Our District Strategic plan, and consequently, the School Improvement Plan focus on "providing students with learning environments and opportunities that are differentiated and inquiry-based, as we structure opportunities that are practical, relevant, and thought provoking," per our District Theory of Action. In order to become more effective leaders in this realm, administrators at the high school level have focused on infusing the staff with independent means for collaboration, time for productive dialogue, and opportunities to turn that dialogue into action within the classroom, as well as focusing School Improvement initiatives on utilizing research on student learning styles and personalizing student achievement goals.

From an instructional standpoint, goals at the district, school, and individual teacher levels focus on innovative teaching practices, the crux of which can be found in the lesson analysis and study being integrated through common planning. In order to personalize student learning, teachers are encouraged to share project-based and authentic assessment practices, as well as integrating the technologies that have been provided through the use of 1:1 iPads. As such, teachers have attended professional development offered through Teachers21, colleagues at Nipmuc Regional High School, and the University of Connecticut, which has helped form a basis for the implementation and consequent sharing of best practices. Finally, more than half of our teaching staff have started to integrate the use of Google classroom as an online learning platform, increasing professional capacity, elevating student efficacy, and personalizing feedback through this content management system.

To integrate all of these skills, Uxbridge High School will be focusing on standards-based reporting on individual habits, which will be seen through our work in developing and implementing school-wide learning expectations. We propose connecting the cohort of individuals using Google classroom and other content management systems as a cohort from all disciplines to explore and examine specific skill development for all students.

The cohort will build on skills and collaboration that have already taken place and will represent most disciplines, including English, mathematics, social studies, science, visual and performing arts, wellness, and guidance. Our library media specialist will also play a critical role in supporting educators with the pilot. In addition to my involvement, Michael Rubin, Uxbridge HS Principal, Patrick Mistler, District Technology Director, Richard Drolet, Director for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will be supporting this pilot.

Our high school students have experienced a 1:1 iPad environment since September 2012, when the new campus for Uxbridge High School opened. While supporting infrastructure for this development at UHS, the UHS staff has experienced turnover, and district professional development resources have not necessarily kept pace with the changing nature of technology's ubiquitous role in the classroom. Our School Council is exploring the likelihood of staying with an iPad and Apple environment over the course of this year, specifically studying the role that the devices are playing both in terms of instruction and student performance. In the classroom, educators and students are actively using open educational resources, online texts and online subscriptions, Google apps for education, Digital Portfolios, common assessments, a few select learning management systems, and Atlas Rubicon, a virtual curriculum repository. Some students also take online courses, both for credit recovery, course replacement, and course support in times of long-term convalescence.

Many of our teachers utilize a flipped classroom model, and we have a number of students who would participate in online courses if we were to offer these course opportunities. The implications of a grant supporting an integrated program such as this could not only support additional online learning and create opportunities for staff to collaborate and acquire new skills to support personalized learning, but also help us better manage the online and personalized learning that is already happening at Uxbridge High School. Without question, this effort will extend the district forward and continue our work toward student-centered learning, given its focus on skills and individual learning planning.

From the standpoint of demography, Uxbridge can be considered a suburban district located equidistant from the urban hubs of Providence and Worcester, with roughly 1900 students and a high school of 500. Some consider Uxbridge rural, as we have many rural characteristics, including an agricultural element to the community. Our tax base is predominantly residential, as Uxbridge has little industry on our town. Our student population is on the smaller side for Massachusetts districts.
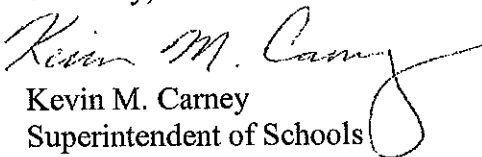
The proposal is aimed to personalize learning for all students across subject areas in order to address individual student needs, particularly by looking at individual student learning styles, the development of student learning plans, and the establishment of academic goals for individual students, as well as the implementation of school-wide learning outcomes, reporting on personalized skills, beyond the traditional grade reports. Focusing on English language learners and students with disabilities, and tailoring their experiences as part of this research, we will reduce achievement gaps for all students, knowing that technology plays a critical role in this effort by allowing educators to meet the needs of many students and families. The involvement of the guidance department is a unique aspect of our proposal; we seek to explore the way in

which targeted counseling and support services might also be personalized in order to support student achievement.

In the pilot, we look to create a student-centered instructional reporting system that will meet the needs of our students and support creating a whole picture of student performance, thus supporting enhanced success for post-secondary planning. Given its planned success at the high school level, we would anticipate exploring its integration vertically with the middle school over time.

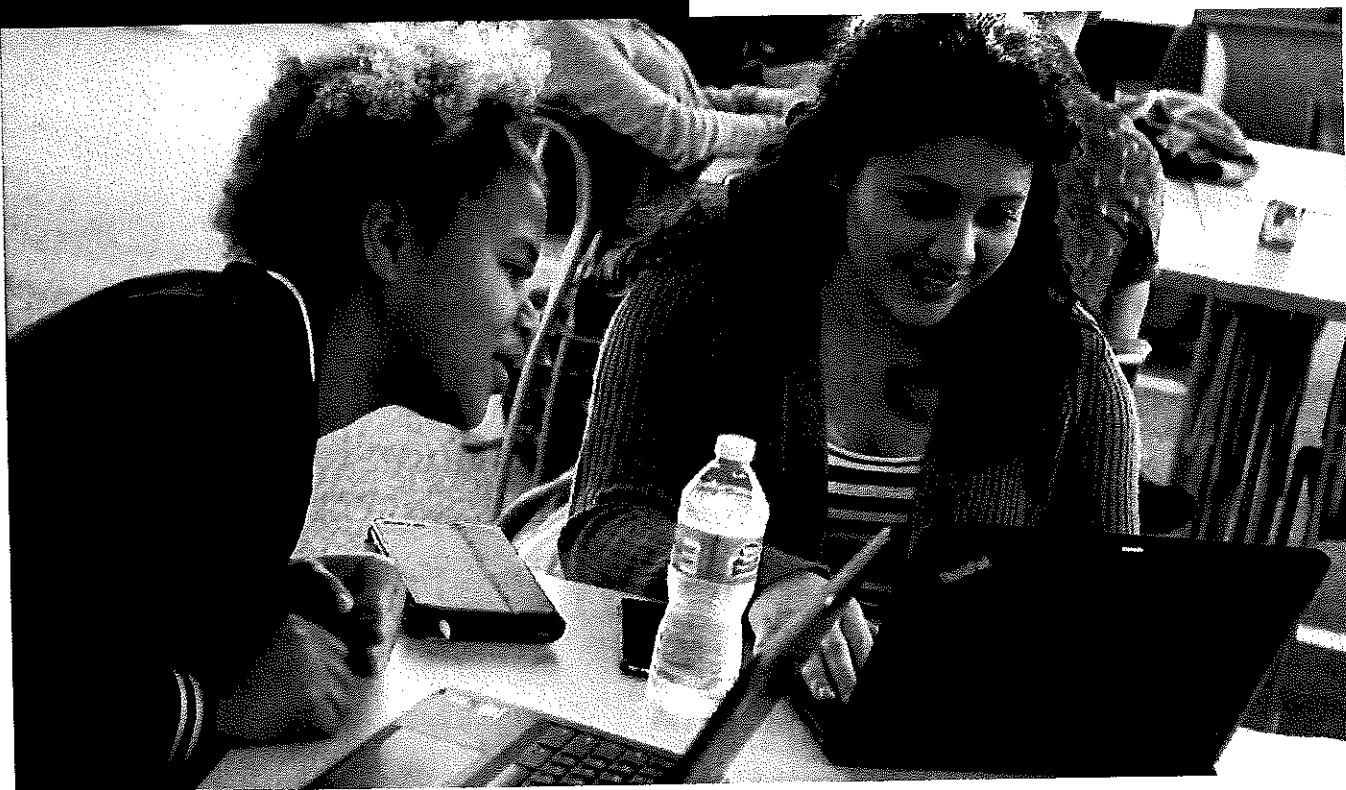Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Carney
Superintendent of Schools

Integrated Learning Systems

Leveraging Education Technology for Student-Centered Learning

September 2016

EDUCATION **FOUNDATION**

About the Nellie Mae Education Foundation

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation (NMEF) strives to stimulate transformative change of public education systems across New England by growing a greater variety of higher quality educational opportunities that enable all learners – especially and essentially underserved learners – to obtain the skills, knowledge, and support necessary to become civically engaged, economically self-sufficient life-long learners.

As the largest philanthropy in New England dedicated exclusively to education, NMEF is committed to reshaping the high school learning experience by working with districts, schools and organizations to implement the principles of <u>student-centered learning</u> - learning that is personalized, engaging, competency-based, and happens anytime, anywhere.

The Foundation's grant-making strategy acknowledges that the focus of education has historically been to fix one part of a broken system by improving one school among many, for example, or by addressing the needs of one group of students rather than another. This narrow approach has contributed to consistently and profoundly unequal results for historically underserved populations by leaving untouched the core aspects of a system that enable such results.

The Foundation has a Big Goal: universal post-secondary attainment supported by universal college and career readiness for all New England public school graduates. Currently in New England, only 50 percent of students (32 percent of low-income students) who enter high school as freshmen will graduate ready. We have made progress on readiness in recent years, but we are moving too slowly.[1] As a benchmark to the Big Goal, the Foundation seeks to increase the rate of readiness in New England to 80 percent by 2030. In 2015, the Foundation adopted an ambitious, five-year plan that incorporates four new initiatives to catalyze change more urgently. We believe that the interaction of these initiatives will advance the 2030 readiness goal:

Build Public Understanding and Demand:
The goal of this initiative is to build stronger public awareness and understanding of innovative approaches to public schooling, while cultivating public support and demand. <u>Learn More.</u>

Build Educator Ownership, Leadership, and Capacity:
To implement student-centered approaches to learning with rigor and reliability, tools and resources must be developed and utilized. <u>Learn More.</u> The opportunity described below is a part of this initiative.

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[1] At our current rate of improvement, it would take 100 years to reach 80 percent readiness in New England and 70 more years to reach 100 percent readiness.

Develop Effective Systems Designs:
A cornerstone of the Foundation's mission is to promote the transformation of education systems towards student-centered approaches. <u>Learn More.</u>

Advance Quality and Rigor of Student Centered Practices:
This initiative focuses on building a research base of evidence supporting student-centered learning through evaluations of student-centered practices in high schools, researcher-practitioner collaborations, and establishing criteria for what it takes to put high quality, student-centered learning into practice. <u>Learn More.</u>

Background

The implementation of student-centered learning requires fundamental changes away from traditional local educational agency (LEA), school and educator practices. It involves complex, data-intensive tasks like differentiating instruction for every student, ensuring that each student is mastering competencies at their own pace, and facilitating students' progress through a range of pathways. In order to ensure that every student benefits from student-centered learning, it must be implemented at scale across education systems – meaning implementation must not require heroic levels of effort from the educators charged with employing it. The right set of tools should help pave the way forward for that systemic implementation, speeding progress and ensuring that all students leave school ready for college and career.

Education technology may be one critical tool that can make such a transformation possible, by streamlining the execution of student-centered practices – such as data collection and analysis, differentiation, individualization, or formative assessment – and allowing teachers and administrators more time to focus on teaching and learning. Technology can potentially help students engage in their learning in new ways, allowing them to become active participants in their own education. These tools can include learning management systems, student information systems, assessment systems, learning resources discovery and management systems, data and analytics systems, collaboration and social learning tools, and many others. The various functions that technology can play in education are categorized and analyzed in the iNACOL publication *Functional Requirements for Integrated Systems to Optimize Learning*. If technology tools are designed from the ground up to support student-centered learning, they may even help accelerate the pace of change, by lowering the bar for entry and encouraging more educators to experiment with features that lead them to student-centered practices.

Unfortunately, education technology products tend to be built to serve the largest segments of the industry. Development costs are high, and there is incentive to create products that will have immediately large markets. As such, many products are designed around our current, antiquated

systems – they might, for example, use courses, not competencies, as the primary organizing structure – and are intended to help digitize traditional models of teaching and learning. The feature limitations of these tools may translate into limitations on the implementation of student-centered learning, as education systems dependent on a particular tool find themselves wanting to pursue practices that are unsupported by their technology.

The procurement of education technology products is similarly problematic. Choices about particular technology tools, like a particular piece of online curriculum or a learning management system, may be selected one at a time to meet single needs. Multiple people – individual teachers, IT staff, LEA officers – may be involved in selecting and vetting tools. Many schools and LEAs lack staff with deep understanding of both technology and teaching and learning, making it hard to effectively translate between the language of education and that of software developers. Individual tools may not always comply with data and interoperability standards, limiting the flow of data and requiring arcane and time consuming work-arounds. Plus, choices for some tools – like the student information system – may be limited by state or LEA mandates. The result is often a mismatched suite of tools, used unevenly across the system, that is not always clearly connected to pedagogy and the school or LEA's vision for instruction and learning.

Problems at both the supply and demand sides of the education technology market mean that the needs of educators interested in student-centered learning are not being articulated in ways that translate into the creation of viable products. Schools and LEAs pursuing student-centered learning encounter a market that is not catering to their needs. And those shopping for technology to support more traditional models of education do not routinely encounter options and features that might prompt them to consider other possibilities. In many cases, individual teachers, schools, or LEAs are all working at different levels of this complex market to solve their problems – developing multiple and overlapping solutions.

Goals

The Foundation is interested in exploring more effective ways to address these issues. We seek to ensure that tools and resources that support the implementation of student-centered learning are effectively utilized by New England educators. For education technology specifically, we believe that the existence and implementation of integrated suites of technology tools designed to work seamlessly together in support of student-centered learning will accelerate the transformation of traditional public education systems to student-centered systems. We hope to support the development of these "integrated learning systems" while also refining a replicable process for tool design and implementation. Achieving this goal will entail a number of considerations:

1. *An integrated, comprehensive approach:* It is unlikely that a single product will be able to adequately address the range of features needed to support student-centered learning. It will

be important to consider a suite of products as an integrated, modular stack, with attention paid to integration points, interoperability, and the ability to swap out components as needs evolve over time.

2. *Matching technology features to specific needs:* In order to make informed decisions about which technologies to employ and how they should be integrated, educators need to be able to articulate their needs related to instruction and student learning and to translate those needs to specific technology functions.

3. *Productive partnerships with vendors:* Some of the most student-centered technology tools – like Summit's PLP or Innovate EDU's Cortex – have been developed through deep partnerships between educators and tool creators. These partnerships ensure that educators' needs are met and that tools can progress through iterative design cycles that hone their utility.

4. *Scale and spread:* It is not reasonable to expect each school to develop unique solutions to their technology needs. While schools or even individual teachers may wish to preserve a level of choice around some aspects of the technology stack, it is likely that LEAs, groups of LEAs, or states are better placed to broker solutions that make it simpler to scale and spread the use of student-centered learning supportive technologies. State-level coordination of early efforts can help gather learning from a select cohort of LEAs and use it to inform similar work across the state in a variety of local LEA contexts. Scale and spread should be considered from the outset for this work to drive progress towards 80% readiness by 2030.

Funding Priorities

The Foundation seeks a state department of education or an organization with state-wide influence to lead an effort supporting at least six LEAs within a single state through the planning and piloting process described below. Funding will be provided to support the process, to engage technical assistance providers and other partners, and to re-grant to participants to support local work. Grants will be made by the end of 2016, for 18-month grants beginning in January 2017.

The Foundation sees four elements as critical to the process: selecting the right group of participating LEAs, technical assistance providers, and vendor partners; a self-assessment process; an iterative design and piloting process; and developing a plan for scale. The description below and the proposal questions in the next section represent a particular approach to the process that the Foundation believes will be successful. Applicants are expected to detail how they would approach this process or to propose an alternative approach to these four elements along with a rationale for the change.

Selection Process

1. *Identify and vet prospective participating LEAs*
   a. Proposals will name participating LEAs or outline a plan to identify and vet participating LEAs by the first quarter of 2017.
   b. LEAs must show momentum toward student-centered learning and a commitment to pursuing it systemically, as well as an interest in and ability to develop an integrated learning system.
   c. Work within LEAs will focus at the high school level; other grade levels may be included but should not be where the majority of work is carried out.
   d. An ideal cohort will represent a range of LEA sizes and types, may involve various combinations of LEAs or schools, that are employing a range of student-centered instructional models. The cohort will be representative of the state, its underserved students, and a variety of approaches to student-centered learning. Design and piloting must take place in locations that represent the full range of the state's LEAs to ensure scalability of solutions.
2. *Identify technical assistance providers*
   a. Proposals may name one or more technical assistance providers or outline a work plan to engage providers as part of or as a result of the self-assessment process.
   b. The prospective grantee or its contracted technical assistance providers will collectively be prepared to address the activities listed in the following section.
3. *Identify prospective vendor partners*
   a. Proposals may name vendor partners or outline a plan and timeline for engaging with vendors.

Planning and Piloting

1. *Technology self-assessment*
   Lead participating LEAs through a multi-stakeholder process – especially involving teacher and principal leaders - to understand what education technology is currently employed, how it is used – by teachers, students, parents, administrators, and others – and to what extent it is meeting needs related to instruction and student learning
   a. The self-assessment will incorporate the functional requirements and conceptual framework introduced in iNACOL's recently published *Functional Requirements for Integrated Systems to Optimize Learning*.
   b. The self-assessment will include an examination of teaching and learning practices, looking both at the level of student-centered learning and at the degree to which practices are supported by current technologies.
   c. At the end of the self-assessment, LEAs will be poised to make more effective use of current technologies to maximize student learning in a student-centered system, will have a detailed and shared understanding of missing functionalities and any changes that may need to be made to improve technology integration, and will be well-placed to seek out and engage with technology vendors.

2. *Designing and piloting an integrated learning system*

   With each LEA, facilitate an iterative design process with multiple stakeholders to establish detailed, sustainable plans to customize and implement a complete, integrated, modular suite of technology solutions tailored to each LEA's instructional model and local context. Complete integrated solutions will have considered and accounted for the functional requirements and conceptual architecture described in the iNACOL publication *Functional Requirements for Integrated Systems to Optimize Learning*

   a. The grantee will employ a specific iterative design methodology, and build local capacity to employ that methodology. LEAs will conduct small-scale pilots to test and refine their plan along the way. Technical assistance should both help them develop plans likely to succeed in implementation and develop capacity to continue improving during implementation.

   b. The grantee will facilitate input and participation with a range of stakeholders in each LEA community, ensuring that the resulting integrated learning systems are designed with all users in mind.

   c. The grantee will ensure that LEAs build sustainable plans to both develop and implement their integrated learning system. Technical assistance should help LEAs address sustainability and budgeting from multiple angles, including purchasing and customizing needed hardware and software, providing needed training to staff, students, and community members, and ensuring an adequate level of ongoing support through IT personnel and hardware and software maintenance.

   d. The grantee will work with participating LEAs as a cohort to identify sections of the technology stack that may best be addressed at the state level and made available to all participants. They will ensure that LEAs share learnings with one another, so that they can build from one another's successes and avoid repeating mistakes.

   e. The grantee will broker partnerships between LEAs and technology vendors, so that vendors participate during design and piloting, develop strong understanding of grantee needs, and are able to customize products to suit those needs.

Plan for Scale

At the conclusion of the planning and piloting process, the grantee and participating LEAs will be expected to develop plans to scale up successful pilots, so that the work can spread throughout participating LEAs and to other communities throughout the state. The plan will include strategies for ongoing state support of LEAs, full implementation at the LEA and school level, and ongoing sustainability. The plan should detail how scaling and spreading integrated learning system solutions will help advance student-centered learning and improve student readiness across the state. Multiple timelines should be developed for local LEA and state level plans for scale that will be accomplished without additional grant funding but could be accelerated with additional funds. The Foundation will decide in the future whether to pursue a second phase of funding, and that decision will be informed by plans for scale and progress made during this grant period.

Proposal

In no more than 15 pages, provide your responses to sections 1-5 below in a Word document. Additional details may be included in no more than 3 attachments. Please organize your response according to the following structure:

Section 1: Vision
1. Describe the conditions in your state that are supportive of a transformation toward student-centered learning. What momentum towards the four tenets of student-centered learning already exists? How will a focus on integrated learning systems help facilitate systems transformation, and how would it fit within other efforts to improve education in your state?
2. What systemic conditions in your state and in local LEAs perpetuate achievement gaps and how will the proposed activity further equitable opportunity?
3. Describe the expected outcomes of your work within the grant period, along with their indicators and measures.
4. Describe the expected long-term outcomes of your work, along with their indicators and measures.

Section 2: Lead Organization and Partners
5. Describe the Lead Organization, its role within the state, and its capacity to lead this initiative.
6. Describe the key partners that will be needed for success, and how the partnership will be managed. Attach letters of support and endorsement from supporting agencies and organizations or signed letters of intent to participate from LEAs as appropriate (all letters of support should be combined into a single document, which counts against neither the total page count nor the 3 optional attachments).
   a. What capacities do partners bring to the table?
   b. What strategies will be used to ensure effective coordination of effort? How will project management be handled and staffed?
   c. Are there any partners or capacities that are needed but not yet identified? If so, describe how you will address those needs in the early stages of the grant period.
7. How will you select participating LEAs? What criteria must be met in order to participate? How will equitable opportunity be furthered in the selection process? If LEAs have already been selected, describe the process used and explain why selected LEAs are the right early partners for the work.

Section 3: Technology Self-Assessment

8. Describe the current status of education technology in your state. What is working well, and what are the key problems? What roles do schools, LEAs, and the state play in decisions about education technology? What needed pieces of information are missing?

9. Explain how you will address the Technology Self-Assessment:
   a. What technical assistance provider(s), consultant(s), or organizations will you engage to help lead this work, and why? If you have not identified one, explain how you will select one in early stages of the grant period.
   b. To the extent possible, describe:
      i. The methodology that would be employed to facilitate an assessment process,
      ii. How the process will ensure that the right group of people is able to participates in and meaningfully contributes to the self-assessment process,
      iii. How the process will incorporate the functional requirements and conceptual architecture described in the iNACOL publication *Functional Requirements for Integrated Systems to Optimize Learning*,
      iv. The estimated draw on LEA time, including who should participate, how they will engage in the work, and how often and for how long they would need to engage, and
      v. The final products that will result from the self-assessment and how they could help inform the design and pilot phase.

Section 4: Design and Pilot

10. Explain how you will address the Design and Pilot of an Integrated Learning System:
    a. What technical assistance provider(s), consultant(s), or organizations will you engage to help lead this work, and why? If you have not identified one, explain how you will select one in early stages of the grant period.
    b. To the extent possible, describe:
       i. The iterative design methodology that would be employed,
       ii. How the process will ensure that the right group of LEAs participates in and meaningfully contributes to the design process,
       iii. How the process will incorporate the functional requirements and conceptual architecture described in the iNACOL publication *Functional Requirements for Integrated Systems to Optimize Learning*,
       iv. The estimated draw on LEA time, including who should participate, how they will engage in the work, and how often and for how long they would need to engage,
       v. How the process will build LEA and/or state level capacity to employ iterative design methodology to implement their plans, and
       vi. The final products that will result from the design process and how they will help LEAs move forward with and without additional grant funding.

c. How you will broker relationships with vendors and facilitate their participation in the design process?
11. Explain how you will engage with LEAs both separately and as a cohort:
   a. How will LEAs benefit from each other's work and learning along the way?
   b. What supports will be offered to participating LEAs?

Section 5: Project Plan and Budget
12. Include a detailed work plan describing the timeline for the work and who will carry out the work.
13. Using the official budget template linked in the online portal, outline a budget and budget narrative that explain how and why funds will be allocated among participating LEAs, TA providers, and other partners. **The total budget should not exceed $1,200,000.**
   a. How will sub-grants to participating LEAs be handled? Will participating LEAs be expected to provide matching funds or in-kind contributions?

Proposal checklist
A complete proposal must include:
- Narrative response to questions above
- Budget formatted in the budget template
- Budget narrative
- Work plan

Proposals may also include the following optional items:
- Letters of support from partner LEAs, organizations, vendors, and/or technical assistance providers, all combined into a single document and submitted as an attachment
- Up to 3 additional attachments as needed

Criteria for selection

Strong proposals will exhibit the following:
- Vision for employing integrated learning systems as tools to transform education systems towards student-centered learning and ensure the success of all students
- Demonstrable momentum toward student-centered learning, with implementation of at least some student-centered learning tenets
- A coalition of partners that bring all needed perspectives, expertise, and capacity to the table, with an appropriate delineation of roles and leadership
   - While not required, proposals that include signed letters of support or of intent to participate from partner organizations, state education agencies and/or governor's

office, participating LEAs, vendors, and other partners will be given additional consideration
- Strong understanding of, insights about, and specific strategies to address inequities in education – especially systemic barriers that contribute to gaps in student achievement by subgroups and differences in technology access and internet connectivity at local and state levels
- Detailed plans to address selection of participants and partners, self-assessment, design and piloting, and planning for scale
- Attainable but ambitious outcomes that connect to proposed activities
- Work plan and budget that show feasible staging and effective coordination of efforts
  - While not required, budgets that show commitment to the work from state and local partners, including leveraging matching funds or in kind contributions from state or local LEA budgets or other sources that directly align with and will fund a portion of the project work will be given additional consideration

Additional Information

The Foundation assumes that a single organization will assume the lead role in this work within each state, and this organization will receive funding to distribute and manage for a number of purposes, such as: grants to support participating LEAs, contracts with technical assistance providers or consultants, purchase of needed technology licenses, and project management.

Eligible organizations to receive this grant include state departments of education, non-profit community based organizations, and others that meet the Foundation's eligibility requirements. The Foundation operates exclusively for the benefit of, and to promote the charitable and educational purposes of, educational organizations, including universities, colleges, secondary schools, elementary schools, and other educational organizations which are described in IRC Section 501(c)(3) and which are not private foundations as described in IRC Section 509(a). The Foundation's activities include making grants to the public charities it supports and providing services to those organizations. The Foundation only supports public charities described in IRC Section 509(a) (1) or 509 (a) (2) and only organizations that are organized in the United States. The Foundation does not support religious groups or individuals, and does not fund capital campaigns, endowments, scholarships or fellowships, debt reduction or cash reserves, building construction or renovation, and certain indirect costs.

Grantees will be expected to participate in an evaluation or monitoring process to track outcomes of the grant fund. This process will involve a Foundation-funded third party organization. Grantees will need to budget staff time to participate in this process.

Proposals should be submitted through the Foundation's online portal by noon on October 12, 2016. Selected grantees will be notified in December 2016. The grant period will begin in January 2017 and will extend 18 months, concluding the end of June 2018. You may direct any questions about this opportunity to Lucas Orwig at lorwig@nmefoundation.org.

Proposal Submission Directions

Please follow these steps to submit your proposal through the Foundation's online portal:
A. Click on the application link that will take you to the login page.
B. Your Username is your email address.
    1. If you do not know your password click on "Can't access account?" and a temporary password will be sent to you.
    2. Once you receive a temporary password click on the link above to log-in.
    3. If the system does not recognize your email address, go back to the link in step A. and click on New Portal User Register. Once you have registered it is important that you go back to the link in step A. to start your request. Do not click on the Login link under "Your user account has been created".
C. Once you log in you will see five tabs
    1. Details (Fill in the fields. Fields with a red line are required. Scroll over the yellow circle with the question mark in it for more information about the field.)
        i. Fill in the Request Name – this is the name of the project or program you are requesting funding for.
        ii. Click Save – Your application has now been started and is saved in the system. You will see some additional information filled in and can now access templates described in this RFP at the bottom of the Details Tab. You can Save (and log out) and return to your proposal at any time before submitting. To return to your application, log in here using your username and password. Do not use the link above as that would start a new application.
        iii. Links to the RFP and templates are located at the bottom of the Details Tab.
            a. Any templates downloaded from the Details Tab will need to be saved in your system and uploaded as new documents in the Attachment Tab.
        iv. Click Edit to finish filling out the Details Tab.
        v. Click Continue when finished.
    2. Additional Contacts
        i. Click on the 📇 and New to add primary contacts associated with the work and managing the grant.
    3. Outcomes & Indicators - Not applicable to this RFP
    4. Attachments

         i. Attach all documents requested in the RFP.

        ii. Only one document can be attached per field. A second document uploaded into a field will override the first one.

    5. Review & Submit – Once a proposal has been submitted it cannot be edited. However, it will be available as view only.

D. Before you submit you will need to fill in some information about your organization. Click on the Profile link in the upper right corner and fill in the required fields on the Organization tab.

If you have a question or run into a problem at any time please contact Stephanie Cheney at 781.348.4240 or scheney@nmefoundation.org.

Superintendent Goals: 2016-2017

Goal 1 (District Improvement): Design a three-year (2017 – 2020) District Improvement and Strategic Plan. I will work with the administration team, staff leaders, community leaders, and families to establish a three-year plan to improve/enhance academic, co-curricular and extra curricular programming, professional development and training, and community ownership of the Uxbridge Public Schools. This Strategic Plan will include a facility study of the district's building needs, including technology infrastructure.

Key Actions:

1. By October 1, I will work with the School Committee to identify and establish a study group to determine the school building configuration needs of UPS. A meeting schedule will be determined by October 1.
2. By November 15, the Professional Development Committee will draft a three-year Professional Development Plan that addresses the instructional training needs for our educators. Specialized training for educators working in inclusion models will be a focus.
3. By December 1, feedback will be gathered from staff, students, and parents about co-curricular and extra curricular offerings and opportunities.
4. By January 15, I will work with School Councils and School Committee Liaisons to present academic improvement needs for the School Committee.
5. By April 2017 and based on the school building study recommendations, a technology infrastructure plan will be communicated to the public.

Key Benchmarks:

1. The School Building Configuration Study Group will make a recommendation to school and town boards regarding the facility needs of the district. Together, appointed and elected officials gain the support of the community for the facilities plan by June 2017.
2. The School Committee accepts the three-year Strategic Plan that targets program needs, professional development needs, facility needs, and technology needs.

Goal 2 (Student Learning): Improving student literacy and learning skills in all content areas I will continue to work with the Curriculum Director and Principals to oversee a formal literacy plan for teachers to best help students grow as readers and writers, measured by ongoing portfolio review, STAR Testing, and MCAS Open Response scores.

Key Actions:

1. A formal, rubric-assessed written paragraph will be expected of all students in Grades 6-12 in all content areas on a weekly basis. In Grades 3-5, a formal,

rubric-assessed paragraph will be expected of all students in Mathematics and ELA. ELC students will write one narrative piece each week.

2. On a weekly basis, instructional leaders will collect student writing samples and review with departments/grade level teams for prompt and rubric on a monthly basis.
3. At one administration meeting each month, the leadership team will commit 45 minutes to review student work and provide constructive feedback for improvement needs.
4. District Leadership Team walkthroughs at each of our schools will have a focus on instructional strategies of inclusion programs to gather data for coaching and supervision needs, professional development needs, and program restructure options.

Key Benchmarks:

1. Educators will strengthen assessment skills to gauge students' progress on reading and writing tasks.
2. Educators will strengthen critical thinking questions and activities through writing prompt expectations.
3. The Professional Development Committee, in collaboration with Special Education leaders, will be able to identify and coordinate specialized training for educators working in inclusion models.
4. Pull-out instruction that is currently taking place in inclusion models will significantly reduce.
5. The district average on MCAS Open Response questions in ELA and Mathematics will be 2.5 or higher.

Goal 3 (District Improvement): Establish a College and Career Readiness (CCR) Program Plan As part of the Strategic Plan, I will articulate a program to prepare students for grade and school level transitions, choosing the right program of studies and career pathways, and life planning after high school. By June 2017, students who enroll in post secondary education will reach 95% or better.

Key Actions:

1. By June 2017, I will work with central office and school leaders to revise a CCR implementation plan that will include classroom instructional units in the areas of personal readiness, academic readiness, career readiness, admissions readiness, and financial readiness for all grade levels.
2. College and Financial Planning presentations will be provided to families in grades 6-12 in the fall of 2016.
3. Partnerships with area colleges will be pursued to establish/maintain a dual enrollment program.
4. Each quarter in SY2016-2017, educators will address a CCR pillar to integrate learning skills in the content areas.

Key Benchmarks:

1. School and life planning become part of the instructional fabric for students in all grade levels.
2. "Transition teams" are formed to include students, educators, and parents to assist families in adjusting to changes in school environments and/or expectations.
3. Dual enrollment opportunities are expanded for students to pursue post secondary credits while still enrolled at UHS.

Goal 4 (Professional Practice): Improve School/District Culture and Community Support for UPS

I will improve the perceptions of school/district culture and community support for our schools by actively engaging our staff, administration, and stakeholders by offering two-way communication opportunities in an effort to better understand working conditions and professional expectations and requirements. The Culture Committee will present an improvement plan for the district by June 2017.

Key Actions:

1. An internal Culture Committee will be continued to strengthen a learning and working environment that promotes student learning, communication, collaboration in decision-making, safety, fairness, and a stronger understanding of district policies and procedures.
2. I will have open agenda, voluntary meetings with staff at each building on a rotating basis throughout the 2016-2017 school year.
3. "Listening Tours" (two-way communication opportunities) for citizens to speak with school officials will include meeting visits with parent affiliation groups and neighborhood/community visits between October 2016 – June 2017.
4. Building UTA representatives will meet with building principals bi-monthly to address labor/management issues.
5. The Culture Committee will present a mid year report to the School Committee in January 2017 to outline improvement efforts; a final report with next steps will be presented in June 2017.

Key Benchmarks:

1. Collaborative and distributed leadership among staff and administration is formulated for SY2017-18 and beyond.
2. The Culture Committee will be able to identify root causes of culture and morale issues and establish an improvement plan that will be shared among administration, staff, and students.

Superintendent's Update – November 15, 2016

On behalf of the Uxbridge Public Schools' staff, administration, and School Committee, I would like to congratulate our 38 John and Abigail Adams Scholarship recipients for 2016-2017. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, students must:

- score at the *Advanced* performance level on one of the three high school state assessment tests in ELA, Mathematics, or STE (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering); **and**

- score at the *Proficient* level or higher on the remaining two high school state assessment tests; **and**

- have combined scores from the three tests that place them in the top 25 percent of students in the graduating class in their district.

The following students are eligible for 8 semesters of free tuition at one of our state colleges or universities

Kyle Alger

Trevor Benoit

Audrey Bergeron

Brooke Blackburn

Krysten Boyer

Russell Bromann

Madison Bruneau

Cameron Butler

Abagail Chartier

Theodore Cole

John Cusolito

Alex Desjardin

Celeste Fredrickson

Morgan French

Tristan Goddard

- I have submitted a letter of interest to participate in Nellie Mae Education Foundation (NMEF) Grant. Recipients and participants in this grant would receive resources and supports to enhance our abilities to improve inquiry-based learning, personalized learning, and authentic assessment practices through the use of technology. It is a $1.2 million grant for approximately six districts across the state. Several districts were solicited to participate.
  - Lexington, Medfield, Holliston, Waltham, and Belchertown are some of the other districts that have submitted interest.

- <u>Upcoming Meetings</u>

  December 6 – Draft summary of entry findings in Special Education from Pupil Services Director Geddes. Potential (and general) recommendations for restructuring may be shared.

  January 17 – Update on Guidance Department Curriculum Implementation Plan in Grades 6-12

  January 17 - Update on Culture Committee Progress

  January 3 – I am recommending that the School Committee entertain no other agenda topics than FY18 Budget Planning and the Pupil Service Director's Entry Plan Report and Plan for Programs and Services in 2017-2018.

FY18 Budget Development Update

- Business Manager Hyde has been meeting with each Principal and Director to review their preliminary expense budgets. Principals are meeting with their school councils to review key requests.
- Leaders who have significant change requests to expense lines will come before the Budget Subcommittee in December. Mr. Hyde will be working with Mr. Morawski to set that meeting date and agenda.
- Prior to winter break, I will submit my first draft of the needs –based budget for School Committee review.

  At the January 3 School Committee meeting, we will analyze FY18 budget together and School Committee will begin its deliberation about areas to address in the budget, whether the SC is considering the Town Manager's recommended budget, or if the SC wishes to seek an increase in school funding.

- In your packet again is a copy of the Annual School Department Town Report for 2015-2016. If there are no recommendations from the School Committee for change, I ask that the School Committee vote to accept the report to be submitted to the Town Manager's office. The School Committee voted to approve the first reading at the November 1 meeting.
- Principal's recognitions

- Lastly, and while it feels like yesterday when we welcomed back staff and families to the opening of the school year, I want to wish everyone in Uxbridge a Happy Thanksgiving. I do encourage everyone to disconnect from the things that can sometimes distract us from our families and truly spend a couple days enjoying the company of the people who care for you the most – your family and friends. And if you know of someone who may be alone for the holiday, please consider opening your doors. Everyone deserves to be with others who care on Thanksgiving.

November 8th, 2016 Professional Development update
for the 11-15-16 School Committee Meeting

For starters last Monday on November 7th we held a joint Faculty Meeting at Taft ELC for all Taft and Whitin teachers. Ms. Sirois, Ms. Fafard, and I led the teachers through an MCAS analysis of ELA, math, and Science open response questions. Teachers worked together in collaborative groups to discuss what we need to do more of grade by grade, and to prepare our 3rd through 5th graders to be ready for these tests. We want our students to learn how to "show what they know" and perform their best on these high-stakes assessments. We looked at Spring 2016 released-item questions Uxbridge students did poorly on, compared our results with the state on these questions, and examined exemplar student responses DESE has released to see what students who are outperforming us are doing differently - we felt this was a great use of time for collaborative inquiry. This is already the second time this year I have led MCAS or PARCC analysis with Taft teachers to help them see what lies ahead for their former students when they have to go take the MCAS at Whitin – I think this helped with shared ownership of our poor MCAS test scores from last Spring.

On Nov. 8th we facilitated a wide variety of professional development here in Uxbridge. The highlight was showcasing our Uxbridge High School as we hosted a BVCC (Blackstone Valley Curriculum Consortium) conference open to all BVCC school district members on Election Day – November 8th. Twelve southern Worcester Country districts from the BVCC were invited to participate in this conference. The Curriculum Director from Mendon-Upton and myself here from Uxbridge took leadership roles to make sure this event was planned and implemented smoothly. Our keynote speaker was Nancy Clements, a leader in New England and an international speaker in the field of Social Thinking and understanding/meeting the social-emotional needs of students. About 450 educators attended this event last Tuesday, which included breakfast and lunch, the use of technology, and the use of Uxbridge High School. Besides the keynote, there were 4 one-hour sessions with about 40 different one-hour workshops in total for teachers to choose from. The feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive. Credit should be given to Stephanie Barstow, our Food Service Manager, and her staff for providing excellent food and refreshments; Mike Belanger and our facilities staff, UHS Staff and Mr. DiMeglio and Mr. Rubin for graciously hosting, and Patrick Mistler and Dave Giles and Taylor, our student helper,

for making sure all of the technology and Wifi was properly set up. Many Uxbridge educators attended this event and the feedback from them has been positive – those from Uxbridge who did not attend this event worked under the guidance of their school principals or attended professional development offerings out of the district.

For example, at McCloskey Middle School our math teachers discussed the implementation of Math in Focus and they analyzed STAR data, Literacy Initiative Leaders planned close reading training for staff in the future, and Science teachers worked with the planning collaborative lessons in Atlas Rubicon using the new FOSS Science kits. There was also a school-wide Google classroom training at McCloskey. At Taft teachers continued their Grades 3-5 MCAS analysis to work toward preparing students for writing open responses. They also continued to plan lessons to support close reading, and the continued development of the Science curriculum.

Professional developent for paraprofessionals and ABA techs was in Behavioral Training and Data Collection, as well as Managing Challenging Behaviors. This training was provided by BCBA Beth Brennan and Pupil Services Director Stephanie Geddes at McCloskey Middle School.

Some specialist teachers attended offerings outside of the district, as these workshop are offered through our collaboration and membership in the LSDO – Local Staff Development Opportunities, in which we collaborate with districts even outside of the Blackstone Valley to offer specific professional development tailored to meet of needs of job-specific educators. From Uxbridge English Language Learner teachers, and PE/Health and Wellness teachers, went to separate workshops in Bellingham; Music teachers went to a workshop in Foxboro, special education Team Chairs went to a workshop in Wrentham, and World Language teachers went to a workshop in Norton.