

Woodbury City Public Schools
January Curriculum Presentation to the Board
New Initiatives for 2016-17 School Year

Elementary Grades

Continuation of the Elementary English Language Arts Initiative

2016-17 will be the last of a three-year implementation of the new Language Arts Literacy curriculum. Writer’s Workshop will roll out to all classrooms, marking the final major change under this literacy umbrella. September of 2016 will be the first point that all components – Wilson Foundations, Benchmark Word Study, Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop, increased time with “eyes on print”, and cross-curricular content integration – will be fully deployed in all designated classrooms across the elementary schools.



This deliberately slow and open implementation process allowed for direct feedback from teacher practitioners and enabled the tweaking and streamlining of the curriculum to be the absolute best fit for Woodbury students.

Mathematics Curriculum Pilot

Striving to provide a more engaging yet thought provoking curriculum that placed the cognitive burden of learning squarely on students’ shoulders, a hard-working group of teachers codified a number of emerging best practices with the structural backbone of the Common Core Standards, to forge a new mathematics curriculum this past summer. Teaching strategies such as Number Talks and Three-Act Lessons are embedded throughout the new curriculum to ensure students are thinking critically and practicing complex problem solving. A stronger emphasis is being placed on the eight mathematical practices accompanying the Common Core along with the standards.



At the elementary level, we are taking a cautiously, slow approach to the roll out of this curriculum. Next year, one teacher from each grade level and at each of the schools, will be asked to formally pilot this approach. Working closely with Mrs. Realley, our Academic Coach

for Mathematics, they will examine each piece of the curriculum, discuss strategies that work in their classrooms, adapt techniques when necessary, and provide crucial feedback to appropriately adjust the curriculum. Progress will be monitored and changes recorded for the following year.

Elementary Summer Programming

The Summer Safari Reading Camp from last year is undergoing some adjustments. As you recall, the program is offered to all students entering first, second, or third grades. The absolute main focus is to improve student reading through increased exposure to books and guided instruction from a teacher over the summer months. While initial interest was high at the beginning, attendance began to wane as the weeks progressed.



To combat this decline and make the program appealing to more students over the long term, the implementation team of Strand I of the Strategic Plan, under which this initiative falls, is exploring the following potential changes:

- Altering the program to make it full-day (morning would be focused on reading; the afternoon students would have choices of activities)
- Student choice activities could include theater, art, instrumental music, science, coding, sports
- Shortening the overall length to five weeks from July 18 – Aug 18 instead of the entire summer
- Adding a book club open to students in fourth and fifth grades

While none of these specific alterations are finalized quite yet, the overall structure of the summer programming will reflect these ideas. All modifications to the program will fall within the budgetary expenditure of last year's program.

Student reading scores will be tracked to determine the efficacy of these changes in the 2016-17 school year.

