Bedford Central School District

Tri-States Visit

January 25-27, 2023

Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum

TRI-STATES REPORT OVERVIEW

Board of Education CIA Subcommittee Meeting
### April 17, 2023

What is Tri-States?

Tri-State Consortium

- "Critical Friends" consultancy model for districts across the region

- Brings more rigorous and systematic attention to student performance standards within member districts

- **48** Districts members

- more than **200** District visits

- Average of **13** visits each year

- Visits BCSD every 3 years with 2-year follow up visit to check on progress

Our "Why?"

- Reading and Writing is in Phase I of Curriculum Review Cycle

- "How to Teach Reading" is in current debate

- Lingering impact of the pandemic

- Bedford is not alone in this journey: tapping the wisdom and expertise of educator colleagues in the region

- How do we measure success with the nuanced complexities, strengths, and challenges of a diverse student population?

- Concerns regarding reading assessment data
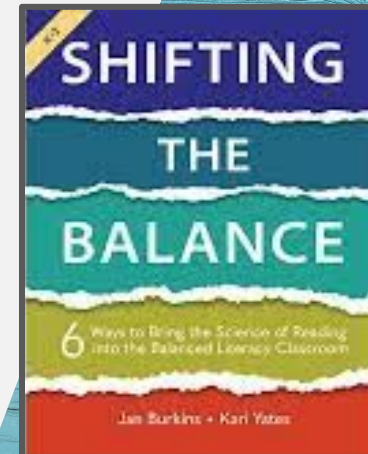
Essential Questions:

1. To what extent does the BCSD **identify and support** a diverse range of readers and writers, particularly our struggling readers and writers, in elementary, middle, and high school?

2. To what extent do our **current instructional practices** (Curriculum/ Instruction/ Assessment) and programs provide explicit and systematic instruction in reading and writing?

3. To what extent does the BCSD provide reading and writing opportunities and experiences in **all content areas**?

Indicators

Indicator #3: Metrics of Student Performance

A variety of assessment practices, including norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, provide data and evidence of student knowledge and higher-level thinking. The districts' system engages teachers and administrators in collecting and analyzing multiple forms of student performance data and disseminating the information to appropriate constituencies. Teachers and administrators use this information collaboratively to make informed decisions to advance student learning.

Indicator #4: Curriculum and Instruction

Teachers and administrators collaborate to develop an articulated and aligned curriculum designed to ensure optimal student results.When making curricular and instructional decisions, teachers and administrators consider current research and evidence of student performance from multiple sources. In their planning, teachers purposefully select and differentiate strategies and resources that advance the learning of all students.

Indicator #6: Equitable Support for Student Needs

Processes and practices are in place that identify and address students' academic and non-academic needs. These processes are informed by data and evidence gathered from a variety of sources and are aligned with learning goals for students at all performance levels. Policies and practices that govern student access to all curriculum and programs are non-discriminatory and set expectations that permit students to be challenged at the highest levels. All students have equitable access to all programs.

BCSD Steering Committee

District Leadership:
- Amy Fishkin, Asst. Supt. for Curr. and Instruction
- Dr. Toni Ann Carey, Asst. Director of Sp. Education
- Adrienne Viscardi, Director of ESOL Programs

Elementary Admin & Teachers:
- Inas Morsi-Hogans, MKES Principal
- Dr. Stephanie Bell, PRES Principal
- Amy Unger, K-12 RTI Coordinator
- Michelle Scarpelli-Nigro, MKES Teacher
- Denise Connolly, WPES Elementary Coordinator

Curriculum Office Assistant: Ms. Stacy Ferraro

Secondary Admin:
- Ana Piquero, FLHS Asst. Principal
- Jason Spector, FLHS Asst. Principal
- Mary Harrison, FLMS Principal
- Kevin Hanlon, FLMS Asst. Principal

Secondary Coordinators & Teachers:
- Paul Cullagh, 6-12 English Coordinator
- Frank Hughes, FLMS Grade 7 Teacher
- Tricia Johnsmeyer, FLMS Grade 7 ELA Teacher
- Rhonda Doctor, FLMS Grade 8 ELA Teacher
- Heather Shaughnessy, FLMS Learning Specialist
- David Albano, FLHS English Teacher
- Paul Frisch, 6-12 Science Coordinator
- Jenny Olson, 6-12 Social Studies Coordinator
- Sarah Bazzano, 6-12 Math Coordinator
- Lorraine Minotti, 6-12 World Language Coordinator

Visit Schedule

January 25, 2023 (Day #1):

- Welcome Remarks
- Artifacts Review
- Visit Schools (PM)

January 26, 2023 (Day #2):

- Visit Schools (AM)
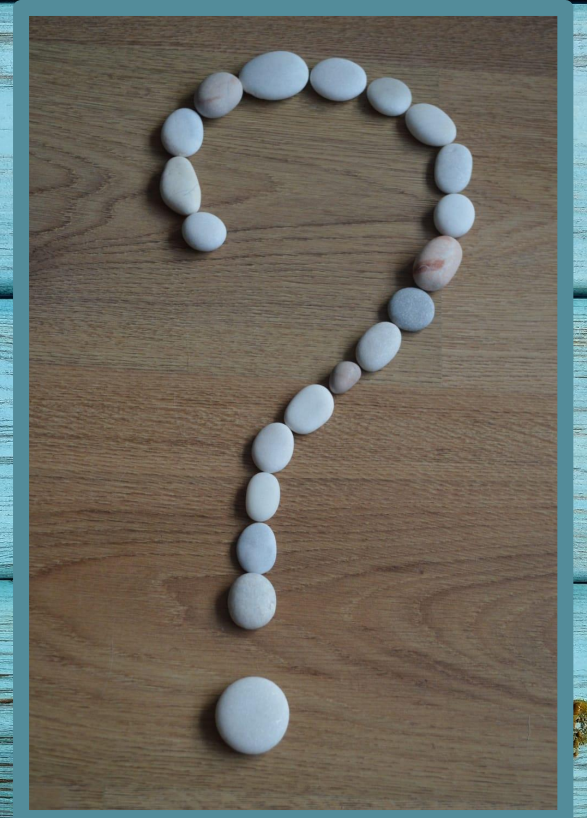- Visit Schools (PM)

January 27, 2023 (Day #3):

- Consultancy Protocol

Response to Essential Questions

Question #1:
To what extent does the BCSD **identify and support** a diverse range of readers and writers, particularly our struggling readers and writers in elementary, middle, and high schools?

EQ #1

Commendations

★ 1. "BCSD has developed **impressive, robust measures** to both identify and support its range or readers in elementary and middle school."

★ 2. "The District has been **proactive in gathering in-house data**... to more accurately target those in need of additional support."

★ 3. "There is a **great deal of staff** to provide instruction and therapeutic support to struggling readers and writers."

★ 4. "There is a **common rubric** across grades to look at **writing** achievement and to identify students who struggle."

★ 5. "Use of universal screeners at the elementary schools and at FLMS drive a **comprehensive Response to Intervention Process.**"

★ 6. "The **DLBE program** has made a strong and positive impact on its students and the community." Collaboration of FLMS **ESOL teachers** and FLHS **dually certified teachers** provides support for ELLs.

Key Findings & Recommendations

EQ #1

- "The District may want to **expand its definition of success** to include measures other than standardized data."

- "The relatively **short length of the school day** makes it difficult to embed structures where schools can analyze data across the grades."

- Benchmarks are designed for monolingual students. For our DLBE students who are learning in a **bilingual academic setting,** consider designing ways to gather data with clear expectations in both dominant and new language to more accurately and efficiently meet children's unique needs.

- "The District would benefit from putting in **place strategies for sharing data** on growth and performance **with families** and students while learning is happening, not just at the end of a unit or project."

- "The system would benefit from educating staff at every level in providing responsive, **differentiated instruction** to all students, with particular focus on those... just above the qualifying benchmark for Tier 1 intervention."

- There are **issues with access** to the curriculum for some students. At MS and HS, ELLs and students with IEPs cannot take electives due to ESOL and Special Ed. services.

REPORT

PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD:

Identify & Support

- Focus on analyzing data to inform tier 1 (core) instruction to support all learners, including those "hovering" in the middle

- Continue to strengthen structures in place for deeper data dives to inform instruction at middle school

- Focus on identifying and supporting range of readers & writers at high school

- Determine more ways to provide families with assessment data during learning

- Examination of schedule and structures to ensure data analysis beyond standardized data and access to courses for all students

- Examination of assessment data to ensure the appropriate lens is applied to each individual student

Response to Essential Questions

Question #2:
To what extent do our current instructional practices (curriculum/instruction/assessment) and programs provide **explicit and systematic instruction** in reading and writing that is aligned and cohesive?

EQ #2
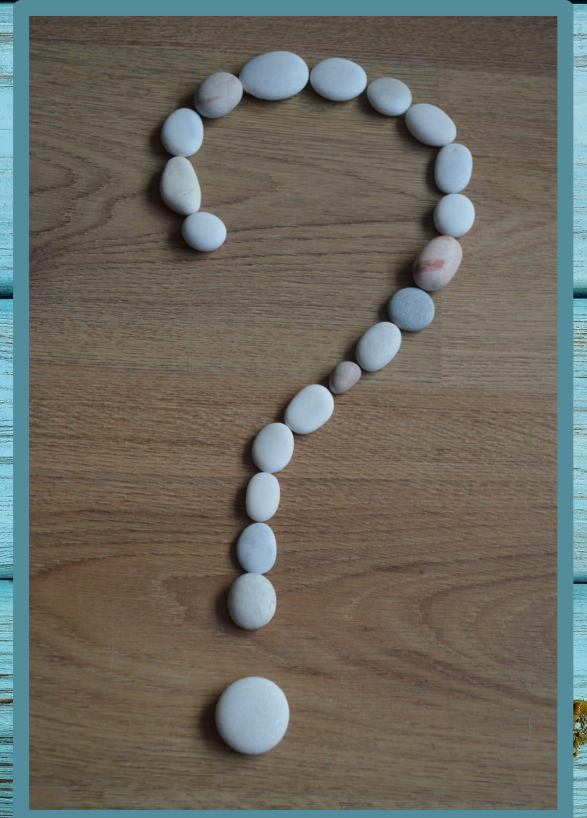
Commendations

1. "BCSD has made a **significant investment** in programs to ensure students are receiving **challenging, expansive curriculum**."

2. "There is **dedicated time** in the elementary master schedules for daily instruction in reading and writing."

3. "There is a **common writing rubric** at different levels."

4. "Heggerty was implemented in response to a need to **develop phonological and phonemic awareness** in grades K-2."

5. "At the secondary level, reading and writing occur daily." In middle school, teachers use a variety of **methodologies** to help students **make sense of challenging texts**."

6. "In high school, there is an **instructional scope and sequence.** With the new DLBE cohort in 9th grade, teachers have found a strength in literacy they have not seen before."

- "Most of the investment has been in **reading**, where programs have been brought in to ensure there is explicit instruction in comprehension, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension."

- "A full, best-practice launch of these curricula was very **negatively impacted by the need to move to online schooling**. It was difficult to collect important student data to inform next instructional steps."

- **Heggerty** was added to grade K and as an intervention tool for grades 1-5

- **Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)** training has been introduced. Tiered support, ESOL, and some elementary teachers have received LETRS training.

- Some staff shared the need for a **word study program** in **grades 4-5**

- **Resources for writing** are inconsistent at elementary level. Many teachers indicated they would like a writing curriculum.

- Parents believe there is an **overreliance on Chromebooks** for writing, although they understand the necessity during the pandemic. There is concern around spelling, teaching of mechanics, and grammar.

- The High School teachers noted that students **need support with writing**.
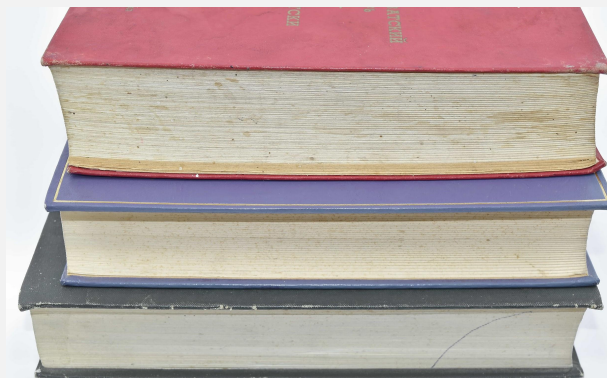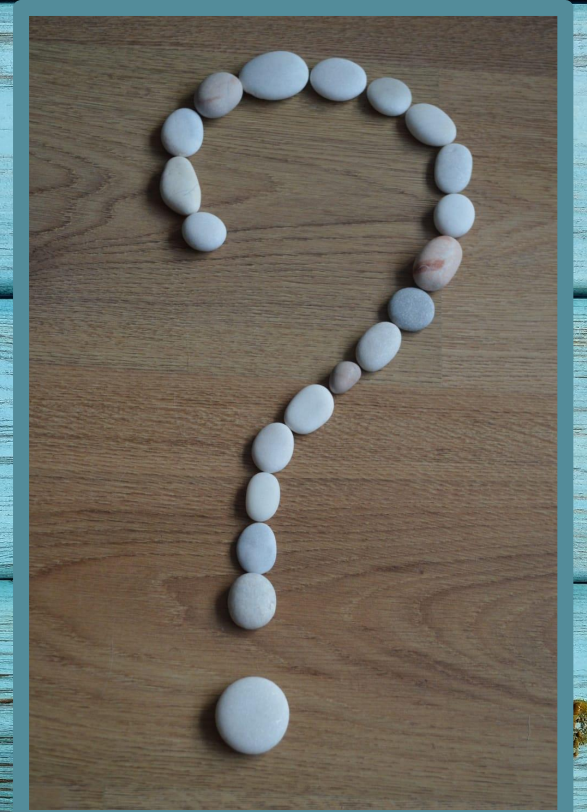
Key Findings & Recommendations

EQ #2

- Creation of a **shared vision, common language** and **consistent instructional practices** for reading and writing instruction

- "We recommend that the [District's literacy] committee include a **curriculum audit,** establish instructional through-lines, identify redundancies and gaps in instructional practices, and to analyze the impact of curriculum on student learning."

- Teachers are asking for increased **professional development** and time to **collaborate** to share best practices and analyze a wide range of student data

- "In the DLBE at MKES, questions were raised about the efficacy of some of the Teachers' College Reading Units of Study, and Fundations, for Dual Language Learners. Both staff and families expressed the need… to gain a better understanding about the **research related to literacy development for Dual Language Learners."**

- Need for **comprehensive, consistent writing curriculum**. Variability in curricular resources and methodologies throughout the schools.

- "Creation of **Portrait of a Bedford Learner** could be a powerful way to identify the outcomes the district considers most worthy…"
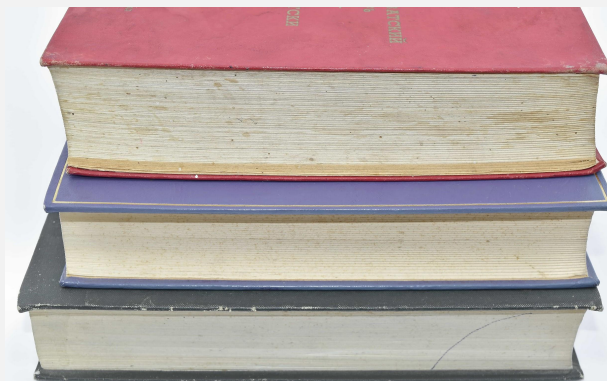
Response to Essential Questions

Question #3:
To what extent does the BCSD provide reading and writing opportunities and experiences **in all content areas**?

EQ #3

Key Findings

Commendations:

"There is evidence of content area writing across the district, particularly at the secondary level."

Recommendations:

In addition to the curriculum audit, a comprehensive analysis of student work to align expectations, assignments, and projects in content area reading and writing.

Final Thoughts

- Staff expressed a desire to have the District establish priorities and stick with them over time. The district needs to provide "focus, support, and time."

- "Bedford is a happy, productive place. Students love coming to school. They feel comfortable and safe. They are very well supported."

- "Bedford is fortunate to have a very talented staff and leveraging their professional capital is key to ongoing success of District initiatives."

- "While there is 'initiative fatigue,' staff are ready to support the new central office team."

- "There is a great deal of hope…if reading and writing are prioritized, and if the community is committed to the work, transformative, meaningful change can happen."

PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD:

Curriculum & Instruction

- Continue Literacy Committee, including curriculum audit, develop consistent vision & common language around literacy instruction, and determine curriculum resources for both monolinguistic and bilingual academic settings.

- Examination of core writing curriculum alongside reading, word study for grades 4-5, and supports for literacy instruction and intervention in grades 6-12

- Examine schedules to ensure time for collaboration, analysis of student data, K-12 vertical alignment, and access to courses for secondary students

- Determine literacy professional development needs and structures

- Consider Portrait of a Bedford Learner to define K-12 "north star" to guide decision-making

- Create articulated & aligned plan using backwards design based on what we want reading and writing to look like in 5 years

Thank you! Questions?

Presentation Template: <u>SlidesMania</u>

Fonts used: Questrial and **Abril fatface**

SLIDESMANIA

Free themes and templates for **Google Slides** or **PowerPoint**

Read FAQ on slidesmania.com

Sharing is caring!