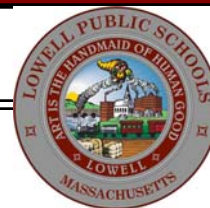


SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Colleagues,

As I visit all of our schools, discuss school progress and planning with Principals, walk through classrooms, talk to middle and high school students, meet with parents and staff after school, I am reminded why I so rapidly invented the name of this newsletter. The Power of Teaching in the Lowell Public Schools is the cornerstone of our work and powerful teaching is observed all around town. Just the past two weeks alone, as I walked through buildings, I saw many examples of differentiated teaching and learning occurring all around town.

In my Superintendent's Advisory Board meeting, a group of middle school students taught me about the importance of higher order thinking at the **Stoklosa School**, where an 8th grade student told me about "stretching his thinking" far beyond remembering and understanding, to analyzing, evaluating, and creating. I was instructed by a first grader at the **Lincoln School** on how I should focus on his learning, as I was looking around the room to see what was going on during Independent Reading in his very differentiated classroom. As he focused on the computer-based activity that he was involved in, he reached over to me, held my hand and told me to pay attention—he was right, I was not directly focused on his work!

I was taught about the details involved in the writing process and writing about "small moments" by fourth graders at **Murkland**. There is a story about learning from every school and these are just a few examples.

Beyond the powerful instruction I observed all over the city I remain impressed by the systems of support in the front offices, cafeterias and our clean facilities. I also am grateful for the focused work at Central Office. We are a powerful team and I thank each of you for your work.

RELEASE DAY

On Wednesday, October 26, 2011 Lowell Public Schools will conduct this school year's first **Early Release Day** for professional development of all staff. The opening segment of the day will include an "interactive" video produced at the Lowell Educational Television's Colleen Creegan Studio. The video is entitled, [The Power of Teaching: An Untapped Resource](#).

The video and activities that will be facilitated at the school will be the vehicles for communicating and reinforcing Lowell Public Schools' vision of excellence in teaching and learning through:

- Reviewing Lowell Public Schools vision, core values, and core issues
- Sharing the Lowell Public Schools framework for lesson planning
- Introducing the District Foundation for Professional Learning
- Reinforcing the district value of its teachers
- Gathering data from staff around their areas of expertise as well as their needs

The remaining time of the Early Release Day will be dedicated to curriculum work and data study as determined by the schools.

COMMON CORE PROGRESS REPORT

The **Common Core Curriculum Committee for Mathematics** met as a group again on Monday, October 17th to continue the work of aligning our curriculum to the new Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks. Grade level teams from pre-K to grade 8 have been meeting on a regular basis to continue working on the development of our curriculum guides and common assessments, with corresponding rubrics, aligned to the new curriculum. We are also in the process of updating the elementary report cards to reflect the content and language of the 2011 Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks. The kindergarten, first, and second grade report cards will be completely aligned to the 2011 Frameworks, while third and fourth grade report cards will reflect a combination of current and former standards, as this year's MCAS will be assessing the former standards.

The **District Common Core Writing Committee** is delving into the writing of arguments across the curriculum. Over the course of the year, the team will engage in professional reading on the topic of teaching adolescent writers, unpack the standards for writing arguments, choose exemplars across content areas and grade levels, and develop common assessments and rubrics for writing arguments. The team will also develop a design for a Lowell Public School writing folder to reflect expectations for writing according the new MA Curriculum Frameworks which incorporate the Common Core.

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Coordinated Program Review

We are scheduled to participate in a Coordinated Program Review (CPR) during the 2011-2012 school year in the areas of Special Education (SE), Civil Rights Requirements (CR), English Learner Education (ELE), Career Vocational Technical Education (CVTE) and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act. We began this arduous task last spring with the electronic submission of special education and civil rights compliance records. ELE, CVTE, and McKinney-Vento records and compliance documents have been compiled since the start of the school year. Selected student files from special education and English language education were reviewed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Quality Assurance on October 13th -14th. The onsite portion of the CPR will be held from October 31st through November 4th and will include school visits, classroom observations, and staff and parent interviews.

Schools selected for the CPR include: ***Greenhalge, McAuliffe, Moody, Pawtucketville Memorial, and Shaughnessy Elementary Schools; the Daley, Pyne, Robinson, Stoklosa and Sullivan Middle Schools; the Laura Lee, Leblanc, Cardinal O'Connell, and Molloy Alternative Schools and Lowell High School.***

NOVEMBER IS FAMILY LITERACY MONTH

I am pleased to announce that Governor Patrick has proclaimed November 2011 to be Family Literacy Month. This marks the 15th year that the Commonwealth is acknowledging and celebrating the important role that families play in their children's literacy development. Family Literacy Month is an opportunity to engage parents, schools, and community partners to support children in out-of-school time learning.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD RECEPTION

The Distinguished Alumni is a tradition where renown Lowell High School graduates are honored and welcomed back to Lowell High School to be honored for their accomplishments. This year, former Superintendent of Schools ***George Tsapatsaris***, along with four other recipients - ***William Henry O'Connell, John Stack, Robert Goldberg*** and ***Pattie Fleming Quigley*** are being recognized.

The Distinguished Alumni Ceremony is a wonderful tribute to the power of teaching.

Please contact Gail Green @ggreen@lowell.k12.ma.us for tickets

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Schoolhouse Meetings: [check your school for the date and time]

School Committee [1st & 3rd Wednesday @7pm in the City Hall Council Chambers]

LHS Distinguished Alumni Award Reception: Thursday, November 3rd 6PM to 9PM [Cyrus W. Irish Auditorium @ Lowell High School]

STAFF SHIFTS

Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations: ***Jay Lang***

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction: ***Claire Abrams***

LHS Fine Arts Chair: ***Sharon Clark***

Science Lead Teachers: Elementary/***Susan Wallace***; Middle/***Martha Cohn***

Butler Interim Assistant: ***Sue Crawford-Fraser***