

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT 96

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To: Dr. Martha Ryan-Toye, Superintendent
From: Angela Dolezal, Director of Teaching and Learning
Date: April 3, 2024
Re: Elementary Science Curricular Resource Recommendation

Riverside School District 96 began using Defined Learning as its elementary science curricular resource in August 2019. During the past five years, teachers have used this program to provide science instruction to kindergarten through fifth-grade students while supplementing with other science-related resources. Throughout these past five years, the elementary teachers in District 96 determined that the District needed a new resource to ensure consistency in science instruction. As a result, a science curricular review team was formed to determine if professional learning would help the staff better use the Defined Learning platform or if a new science resource was needed to meet the District's curricular needs better.

The Science Curricular Review Team, consisting of 12 teachers and the Director of Teaching and Learning, met from September 2022 through March 2024. The team reviewed the Next Generation Science Standards and determined the non-negotiables for a District science curricular resource. In October, the team received professional learning from Defined Learning. Then, they began a pilot of the Defined Learning resource at each grade level, with a mid-point check-in with the company. Following the three-month pilot at each grade level, the team determined that the District needed a new resource.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the team piloted two resources, Science Studies Weekly and Mystery Science. Following each pilot, the team met to discuss and rate each resource against the non-negotiables. As a result of this review process, I recommend adopting Mystery Science as the new Kindergarten through Grade 5 Riverside District 96 science curricular resource.