

Date: September 18, 2023

To: LPSD School Board Members

From: Nicole Metzgar and Kate Cornell

Re: August/September Curriculum Report

Professional Development

New Hire Induction August 16-22: Bill Cornell, Kacy Leyba, and Nicole Metzgar met with new teachers in Anchorage from August 16th-19th. New teachers then flew out to sites on the 19th and had a couple days to tour their new homes and begin to settle in. On August 21st-22nd, new teachers met virtually for online training. Here is a link to New Hire Induction Schedule:

[Link](#)

Back to School All Staff Virtual In-Service August 23-26: LPSD welcomed all staff to the start of a new school year with district wide, on-line professional development training. Staff logged in from their different working sites to share resources and learn about the AK Reads Act. Based on feedback received from staff, we would like to encourage the board to consider spreading the August In-service days out a bit more through September. The way it was this year, teachers felt overwhelmed with information and crunched for time in their classrooms at the start of the year. Here is a link to the Back to School Virtual In-Service Schedule: [Link](#)

September 29th: Planning for virtual, on-line training is in progress.

October Inservice: Planning for virtual, on-line training is in progress.

Curriculum News

Spring 2024 Language Virtual Courses: Through the Illiaman Communities Teaching Culture through Native Language (CTC-NL) project, ANE has offered to lead virtual Yupik and Dena'ina language courses for 4th-12th grade students for 40 min, 2 times a week. LPSD principals have been asked to work with sites and each other to come up with a good time that works best for students who are interested in participating.

Monthly Meetings with Principals: New this year is monthly time for the Curriculum Department to collaborate with principals. This month's focus is around ways for virtual, online Professional Development to be successful. Also, Public Health Nurse, Kumi Rattenbury, will join to give principals a preview of materials and lessons she has available to teach, with written parent permission, about reproductive health and sex education when she visits sites.

Leveling Transfer Students: So for this year, LPSD has had 16 students from other districts transfer into our SBS system. Curriculum helped place these students in appropriate levels.

Advanced Online Classes: So far this year, 8 students from 2 sites have enrolled into 9 advanced online courses. Courses include Chemistry, Pre Calc, Introduction to Drawing, Medical Terminology, and Numbers and Society.

Assessment Committee Summer Updates: Competency and mastery based learning does not work without assessments. The Assessment Committee updated LPSD's End of Level Assessments for reading, writing and math. These assessments are used for students to show they know the material and are ready for the next level. Mastery learning is not tied to time. Students working in a mastery based system of learning will move through the levels at their own pace. This pace may or may not be the same as other students in their grade level.

LPSD now has practice tests for reading, writing and math levels 6-10 (the final reading ones will be available soon). Teachers are encouraged to use the practice test throughout the year with students before students take their end of level assessments. The goal is to ease test anxiety and increase student confidence before taking the final exams. These practice tests look and feel exactly like the end of level assessments. If a student is successful in a practice test, it is highly likely that they will be successful in the end of level assessment. The practice test also shows transparency to students about what they are expected to master. What is on the end of level assessment should not be a mystery.

End of Level Assessments & Focus Standards. The updated End of Level Assessments no longer test all of the standards in a level. They now only test the focus standards in the level. The Focus Standards were identified by teachers as the essential standards students need to master in order to be successful in the next level. This change makes the assessments shorter, so students are spending less time testing.

Paper copies of all assessments continue to be made.

LV 0-8 Writing is now assessed with a skills based test and a writing portfolio.

LPSD LV0-8 Writing Curriculum Guides have been created to support writing instruction

LV 0-2 Curriculum Guide: [Link](#) (Previously created)

LV 3-5 Curriculum Guide: [Link](#) (Previously created)

LV 6-8 Curriculum Guide: [Link](#) (New this year)

Distance Classes:

There are approximately 60 LPSD students enrolled in distance classes this year. Marli Nikolaus and Christian Meneskie continue to provide our level 6-10 students in our small schools with a stellar core class education. They worked over the summer to streamline some things for their classes and their hard work is much appreciated. It continues to be challenging to coordinate site vacation days with distance days and we appreciate all of the onsite teacher's support throughout the year. I (Kate) am happy to answer any questions about the distance program should they arise.

As always, feel free to contact Nicole Metzgar at nmetzgar@lpsd.com (907.781.3201), or Kate Cornell at kcornell@lpsd.com (907.571.7020). Thanks for all you do!