



Prospect Heights School District 23 Board Memorandum Action Items

Date: April 9, 2026

Subject: Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Adoption - Action Item

Prepared by: Dr. Craig Curtis, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

This memo summarizes the investigation and recommendations of the Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Committee for the kindergarten through eighth-grade curriculum adoption.

Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Committee

The Prospect Heights School District 23 Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Committee is responsible for recommending instructional materials to help our students learn in accordance with national, state, and local learning standards in each corresponding subject within our investigation, including Applied Tech, Art, Family and Consumer Science (F.A.C.S.), Health, Inquiry Discovery Exploration Awareness (I.D.E.A.s) class, Music, Physical Education (P.E.), and Spanish. The assistance of numerous people is critical in this recommendation. Without their generous support, this process would not be possible. For their knowledge, dedication, and passion, we thank the following individuals:

Applied Tech: Fil Dudic (Mac), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal-Mac), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal-Mac)

Art: Melinda Lyons (Ike), Rachel Matthews (Ross/Sullivan), Janet Tomenbang (Mac), Dr. Luke Lambatos (Principal-Ike), Stephanie Gage (Principal-Ross), Traci Meziere (Principal-Sullivan), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal-Mac), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal-Mac)

Family and Consumer Science (F.A.C.S.): Sam Alvaro (Mac), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal-Mac), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal-Mac)

Health/Physical Education (P.E.): Kelley Kraus (Ike), Bob Miller (Ross/Sullivan), Colleen Davies (Ross/Sullivan), Derin Mosak (Ike, Ross, Sullivan, Mac), Mike Becker (Mac), Shelly Kutcher (Mac), Dan Perillo (Mac), Dr. Luke Lambatos (Ike-Principal), Stephanie Gage (Ross-Principal), Traci Meziere (Sullivan-Principal), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal-Mac), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal)

Inquiry, Discovery, Exploration, Awareness (I.D.E.A.s) class: Laurie Travis (Ross/Sullivan), Stephanie Gage (Ross-Principal), Traci Meziere (Sullivan-Principal)

Music: Garth Anderson (Ike/Sullivan), Karen Luehr (Ross/Sullivan), Megan Murray (Mac), Izabella Gieron (Mac), Cam Severino (Mac), Luke Lambatos (Ike), Stephanie Gage (Ross), Traci Meziere (Sullivan), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal-Mac)

Spanish: Athena Kalaras (Mac), Mike Kaper (Asst. Principal-Mac), Dr. Camron Nystrom (Principal-Mac)

The Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Committee was developed in September of the 2025-26 school year to discuss the standards and decide on materials that are best aligned with the standards and fit our needs within the district.

Throughout this school year, we have conducted a needs assessment in each subject area to identify the strengths and challenges of our programs. In addition, we investigated several vendor offerings at the recommendation of our

staff specialists. Based on our program reviews and curriculum vendor visits, we are making the recommendations in the chart below.

The successful implementation of any program includes the proper amount of staff development and training. However, we have a head start with many of these programs, as they are either readoptions that most staff members have utilized in the past, or we have already spent targeted time with vendors reviewing the programs. Nonetheless, we will be developing plans to support the implementation of these materials. Professional development will be provided over the summer and throughout the next school year. Teachers will have access to the teacher guides and materials before they leave for the summer to ensure they are prepared and utilize their planning time effectively. This is made possible due to the availability of digital resources. We will be working with the committee to ensure we are intentional in planning professional development that is most beneficial to our staff's needs.

Instructional Materials Selection Process

During the 2025-2026 school year, the Specials/Exploratory Curriculum Committee used the following process to select instructional materials that address the national, state, and local standards in each of our specials/exploratory areas.

	In Progress	Upcoming	Completed	Notes
Review of the standards			x	
Conduct a needs assessment to evaluate the materials			x	
Request samples (if necessary)			x	
Narrow the selection			x	Our committee narrowed to 4 programs before selecting 2 finalists.
Vendors were invited to present materials and address questions with individual teams			x	Presentations took place from December through April.
Pilot some of the lessons			x	Our committee members and colleagues reviewed the digital materials and intervention lessons with their students.
Receive quotes from the recommended publisher(s)			x	
Determine the final recommendation			x	The recommendation is: Art: Deep Space Sparkle Health (2-5): HealthSmart Health (6-8): Glencoe Health Music (K-5): Quaver Music Music (6-8): Make Music Spanish: Descubré
Negotiate pricing of materials			x	

Present and recommend the final selection(s) to the Board of Education			x	The goal is to bring our committee's recommendation to the BOE for approval in April, so we receive digital access to the materials before summer.
Create outward-facing curriculum maps	x			Curriculum maps help teachers plan the scope and sequence of the unit of study. They also give parents a general timeline, standards, and themes taught throughout the school year.

Costs:

<p>ART</p> <p>Deep Space Sparkle (EC - 8th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 years of digital access to the Deep Space Sparkle Program for 3 teachers Access to The Sparklers' Club for 3 teachers through 06/30/3032 	\$6,033.60
<p>HEALTH</p> <p>Health Smart by Education Training Research (2nd - 5th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 years of digital access to the Health Smart Program for 2 educators and 10 students at the Grade 2 level 6 years of digital access to the Health Smart Program for 2 educators and 10 students at the Grade 3 level 6 years of digital access to the Health Smart Program for 2 educators and 10 students at the Grade 4 level 6 years of digital access to the Health Smart Program for 2 educators and 10 students at the Grade 5 level <p>Glencoe Teen Health by McGraw-Hill (6th - 8th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 years of digital access to the Glencoe Teen Health Program for 2 educators 	\$4,045.50 \$0
<p>MUSIC</p> <p>Quaver Music (K - 5th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade K - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) Grade 1 - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) Grade 2 - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) Grade 3 - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) Grade 4 - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) Grade 5 - General Music Curriculum (6-Year License) <p>Make Music (6th - 8th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2) Teacher Digital Subscriptions (6-Year License) (185) Student Digital Subscriptions (6-Year License) 	\$9,828 \$11,990.58

<p>SPANISH</p> <p>Descubré by Vista (6th - 8th)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (144) Descubré 2027 Supersite Plus (v) + WebSAM (6-year license) ● (1) Descubré 2027 Level 1 National TRB ● (30) Descubré 2027 Level 1 Student Edition (Hardcover) ● (1) WL PL Implementation - Refresher Workshop - Virtual Session 	<p>\$25,871.77</p>
<p>Total Cost of 6-Year Specials/Explor. Curricular Materials for K - 8th Grade</p>	<p>\$57,769.45</p>

Recommendation: The administration recommends the purchase of the following Specials/Exploratory curricular materials in the amount not to exceed \$57, 769.45.

- Art: Deep Space Sparkle (EC-8) - \$60,33.60
- Health: Health Smart by Education Training Research (2-5) - \$4,045.50
- Health: Glencoe Teen Health by McGraw-Hill (6-8) - \$0
- Music: Quaver Music (K-5) - \$9,828
- Music: Make Music (6-8) - \$11,990.58
- Spanish: Descubré (6-8) - \$25,871.77

Rationale: The above curricula are recommended because we believe they are the best material for District 23 students and teachers. The products were chosen because they provide extensive content and instructional strategies, while also providing the support the standards require. Because many of the programs are renewals, they are seen as easy to navigate for our staff members. Teachers are comfortable supporting these curricula in multiple ways that students understand.