



BOARD MEETING MEMORANDUM

Board Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

From: Anita Hernandez, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Re: K-8 Science Pilot Presentation

Agenda Location: Information and Discussion

Rationale:

The Department of Curriculum & Instruction recommends the re-adoption of Amplify Science for grades K-5 and the adoption of HMH Science Dimensions for grades 6-8. This dual-vendor approach is designed to meet the distinct developmental needs of elementary and middle school learners while ensuring a seamless, NGSS-aligned transition to high school.

Background & Process

Our current science adoption cycle concludes at the end of this academic year. Over the past eight months, the Science Review Committee—comprising classroom teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators—evaluated two major curriculum providers. The evaluation criteria included:

1. NGSS Alignment: Depth of Three-Dimensional Learning.
2. Equity & Accessibility: Support for ELL, Special Education, and diverse learners.
3. Instructional Shifts: Presence of phenomena-based inquiry and CER (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning).
4. Digital Integration: Ease of use within our district's 1:1 device environment.

Rationale for K-5: Amplify Science (Continuation)

The committee recommends maintaining our partnership with Amplify for the elementary level based on the following findings:

- Instructional Continuity: Teachers have developed significant pedagogical expertise in the "Read, Write, Observe, Do" model. Re-adoption prevents "implementation fatigue" and allows for advanced coaching rather than basic platform training.
- Literacy Synergy: Amplify's heavy integration of scientific texts supports our district's primary goal of improving K-5 literacy scores.
- Proven Engagement: Formative assessment data from our current cycle shows high levels of student participation and mastery of foundational scientific vocabulary.



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Rationale for 6-8: HMH Science Dimensions (New Adoption)

While Amplify and Twig was considered for middle school, the committee reached a consensus that HMH Science Dimensions is better suited for the secondary transition:

- Secondary Rigor: HMH provides a more explicit bridge to the High School Earth, Life, and Physical science pathways. The depth of content in the 6-8 modules aligns more closely with our high school biology and chemistry prerequisites.
- Developmental Appropriateness: Feedback from our middle school pilot showed that students found the HMH interface more intuitive and "grown-up." The platform offers greater student agency in navigating digital simulations.
- Differentiated Support: HMH offers superior embedded linguistic supports and leveled readers specifically tailored for the middle school reading range, ensuring our ELL and IEP populations can access complex scientific concepts.

Fiscal Impact

The total projected cost for this 5-year adoption cycle is approximately \$182,970.74. This includes:

- Digital Licenses: 5-year access for all students and staff.
- Physical Kits: Durable lab equipment and consumable refills.
- Professional Development.

Conclusion

This recommendation ensures that our elementary students continue to benefit from a familiar, high-quality inquiry foundation, while our middle school students receive the increased rigor and sophisticated tools necessary for success in the 21st-century scientific landscape.

Recommendation/Motion:

Presentation Only.