# Curriculum/Instruction Subcommittee

Monday, April 24, 2023 7:00 PM
Meeting Access: Curriculum Subcommittee (4/24/23 at 7:00 p.m.) Web: https://zoom.us/j/99474244042 Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 994 742 44042, 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

II. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

II.A. March 27, 2023 – Regular

III. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

III.A. Content Area Philosophy Statements

III.B. Performance Index Scores in ELA, Math & Science

IV. **ACTION ITEMS**

IV.A. Textbook adoption: *EdGems*

V. **OTHER**

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**
**Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting**

Name of Subcommittee: Curriculum Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 3/27/23 Minutes submitted by: Greg Flanagan
Members present: Kathy Baker, Greg Flanagan (arrived 7:05), Stephanie Strazza
Members absent: Tim Blair
Other attendees: Julie Luby, Alyce Misuraca, Ken Craw (arrived 7:07), Cathy Hall, Amy Johnson
Meeting Access: Curriculum Subcommittee (3/27/23 at 7:00 p.m.) Web: https://zoom.us/j/92624671536
Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 926 2467 1536

Meeting called to order: at 7:02 p.m.
Stephanie Strazza made a motion to elevate Amy Johnson as a voting member, Kathy Baker seconded. All in favor.

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 27, 2023 – Regular Meeting

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of February 27, 2023, as presented
Made by: Stephanie Strazza Seconded by: Kathy Baker
**Recording of vote:** All in favor

## III. INFORMATION ITEMS

**A. iReady Mid-Year Data** – Mid-Year Data tells us where your students fall in the grade and identifies where they are ready to learn. The diagnostic is given in the spring and winter. It gives us a guide on if we are meeting the students' needs. The data shows that we are moving forward and that the students are growing as they should.

**B. Math Update** – Bridges implementation is ongoing. Training was held in August, November and February, and the focus has been on lesson structure and success criteria. Numeracy coaches are working with K-5 teachers. Coaches have been essential to do the training and to do the unpacking for them. Middle School will be based off of the CT standards. It is standards based, not reliant on resources. Cathy Hall will be the math coach 6-12. Lots of different resources were reviewed. EdGen will be the main resource, but other resources will be used as well. The High School will use a combination of resources - the same as in the Middle School. Instruction - all 6-12 teachers are working on it.

**C. Music Program Update** - Numbers are really growing. Seven and eight numbers are smaller due to COVID. Numbers will come back as we are back in session.

**Program Enrollment**

| | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | HS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strings 2022 - 2023** | **83** | **20** | **21** | **14** | **n/a** | **n/a** | **n/a** |
| Strings 2021 - 2022 | 48 | 38 | 17 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Band 2022 - 2023** | **n/a** | **60** | **73** | **56** | **21*** | **20*** | **58** |
| Band 2021 - 2022 | n/a | n/a | 64 | 24* | 21* | 28* | 56 |

*COVID numbers

**IV. ACTION ITEMS** - none

**V. OTHER –** Greg asked how we vetted books and Julie reviewed the procedures in place. Stephanie brought up having a regular cadence of topics to review.

**Motion to adjourn:** Made by: Stephanie Strazza Seconded by: Greg Flanagan
Recording of vote: All in favor **Meeting adjourned at**: 7:55 p.m.

For overall math, ELA and science proficiency, the best state metric is the Performance Index which is the average performance of students in a subject area. It includes the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) in grades 3-8 and the SAT in grade 11. Science is measured on the NGSS assessment in grades 5, 8, and 11.

The Performance Index ranges from 0-100 and includes all students. Connecticut's ultimate target for a Performance Index is 75.

We have significantly improved our ranking within the state in all three subject areas and have a Performance Index currently that is similar to our pre-Covid Performance Index.

| **Year** | **Subject** | **Performance Index** | **Ranking (Highest to Lowest)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 - 2022 | Math | 69.4 | 47/196 |
| 2016 - 2017 | Math | 69.6 | 64/194 |
| | | | |
| 2021 - 2022 | ELA | 72.7 | 53/196 |
| 2016 - 2017 | ELA | 73.6 | 67/194 |
| | | | |
| 2021 - 2022 | Science | 69.4 | 69/188 |
| 2016 - 2017 | Science | 68.6 | 80/185 |

**New Fairfield Public Schools**
**Textbook Adoption Form**

*"Textbooks are defined as that resource which provides 50% or more of the information upon which the program of instruction is based." (policy 6161)*

**Date of Recommendation:** 4/5/2023
**Staff Members Making the Recommendation:** Catherine Hall (Instructional Coach/Math Department Head), Alyce Misuraca (Director of Curriculum)

**Course**: Math 6, Math 7, Pre-Algebra (7/8), Algebra 1 (7/8)
**Grade(s):** 6-8

**Title: EdGems** Core Math Courses 1, 2, 3, 2AC and Algebra 1
**Author(s):** Shannon McCaw
**Publisher:** EdGems
**Publication Date:** 2018
**Reading Level:** The Lexile level of the textbook is two grades below the Course grade - see question 7 for more details.

**Price per book and the number needed:** $54/textbook Purchasing 220 textbooks to provide a class set in each classroom. In addition, $16/student/year for digital access to the textbook and a full platform of resources. (pricing based on a 3 year contract)

**Support for the Recommended Textbook:**

New Fairfield Public Schools has been researching a new MS math resource to support effective delivery of content. After reviewing and piloting multiple resources, EdGems has proven to be a nice fit. The resource supports a problems-based instructional model that engages students in regular inquiry to draw upon prior knowledge and connect that knowledge to the lesson. The resource is user friendly and provides a balance of high-quality tasks and skills practice. EdGems partners with KHAN Academy and IXL math as well as DESMOS. These partnerships allow for flexible ways to address a variety of individual student needs.

EdGems was given a rating of "Meets Expectations" for Focus and Coherence, Rigor and Mathematical Practices and Usability by EdReports. Details are outlined in the link below.

**https://www.edreports.org/reports/detail/edgems-math-2018/seventh-grade**

**Content**

1. *Describe how the selected textbook is aligned with course curriculum and content standards.*

Each grade level textbook is aligned to the common core standards outlined in the front matter of each chapter in the Teacher's Guide including annotation for which standards are major versus supporting clusters. The Teacher's Guide includes both pacing and a unit overview. The unit overview includes prior learning across all grade levels that the unit is based on as well as future learning including high school standards. Each section includes a lesson guide with an explore, a mini-assessment as well as tiered practice exercises. There is also a teaching tips section for teachers to prepare for common

misconceptions and places to focus in the lesson. The Mathematical Practices are addressed in the lesson guide.

2. *Describe the accuracy and timeliness of the selected textbook.*

The textbook is accurate and includes all of the standards that NFPS is required to teach in middle school mathematics. Next year the district plan is to use curriculum based on the new state model, and the textbook will help teachers to plan lessons that are in alignment with those curriculum documents.

3. *Describe how the textbook handles varying perspectives and points of view and demonstrates an unbiased approach to the content.*

EdGems includes many ancillary materials in their online teacher guides. Many of these materials are pulled from open source platforms such as KHAN Academy, IXL, Desmos, Illustrative Mathematics and Open Middle. This way the content can be presented in multiple ways, students can view the textbook, students can watch videos about the content from the textbook and students can complete activities and rich tasks based on the material as well.

**Instructional Match**

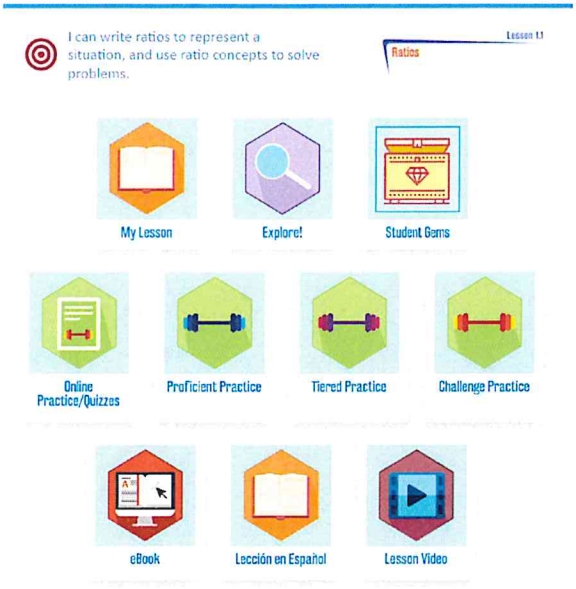
4. *Describe how the selected textbook supports our Vision of the Graduate and model of high-quality instruction.*

Each section of the book begins with an "Explore" activity to have students first think about how they might approach a problem or look for patterns that might lead to a solution in alignment with both the math practices and the definition of high quality instruction. These activities encourage students to collaborate and make meaning, and are always student-centered. The ***Teacher and Student Gem*** activities are also meant to be engaging and many are scaffolded to encourage students to question, collaborate, persevere and extend their thinking beyond what they were directly instructed. This approach is aligned with our vision of the graduate and high-quality instruction model.

5. *Describe elements of the textbook*

The physical textbook is broken into chapters with individual lessons and is available to all students online through their learner home page. Each lesson includes vocabulary, "I Can" statements to help focus learning and broken down examples with explanations. There is practice for each lesson. Each unit and lesson includes online student components such as videos for each lesson, online practice assignments and quizzes, and other "Gems" that teachers can assign. The format of the online component is very friendly to young learners by using "buttons" that students can select to complete their work.

Student View of EdGems:




**Accessibility**

*6. Describe the text features and supplemental materials that provide enhanced accessibility.*

The textbook and most of the ancillary materials are available in both English and Spanish. The online textbook has a reader which can read entire passages or individual words out loud, and there is a glossary of terms. The online textbook has settings where a page can be increased or decreased in size, and the contrast can be adjusted for ease of readability for different learners.

*7. What is the readability level of the textbook?*

From the publisher:

"The Lexile level of the textbook is two grades below the Course grade. Research has shown that students' ability to understand mathematical text and problems (i.e., what the problem is asking students to do) lead to increased proficiency in mathematical skills and thinking. It's important to say that the level of difficulty of the math doesn't change; rather, emphasis is placed on making the language as clear as possible."

*8. Describe how the textbook reflects diversity and inclusion regarding culture, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion.*

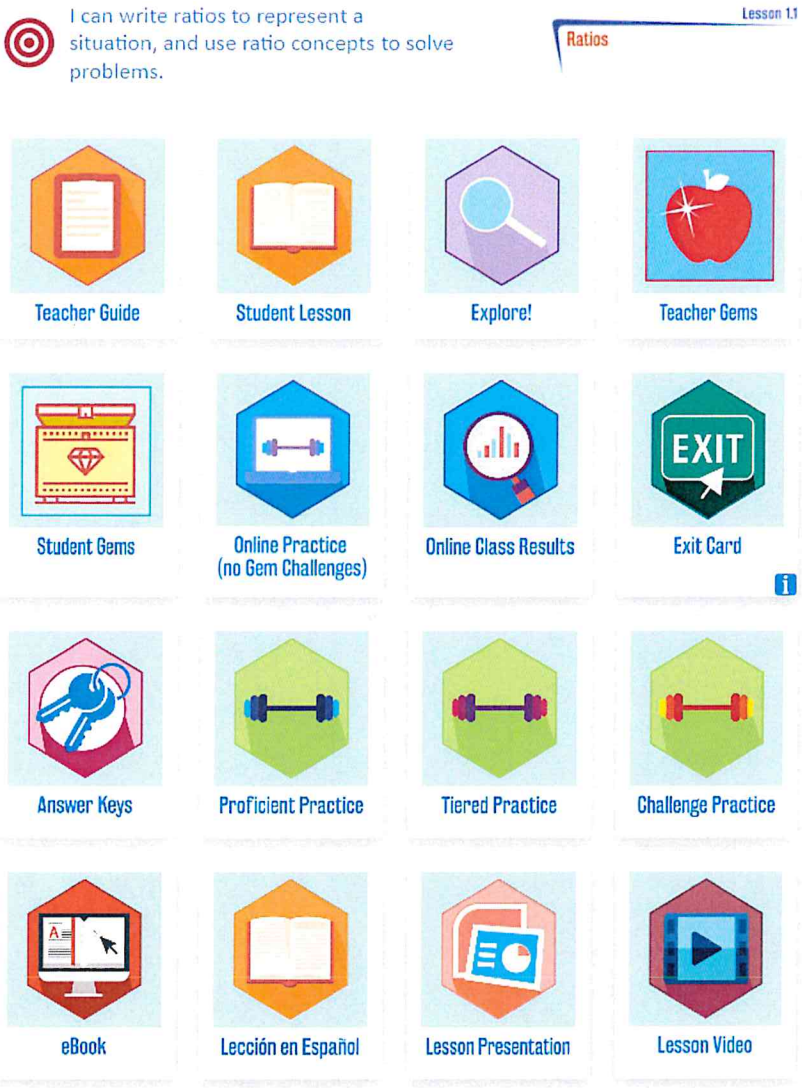
The text series is designed for learners of multiple ability levels and includes some built-in accommodations for students with disabilities. Many problems are real-world based and include scenarios from various cultures and places in the world.

See this document from the publisher for additional information.

*9. Describe the supplementary materials that accompany the textbook and explain how they support student learning. Describe any errors or glitches that were encountered.*

The textbook comes with supplementary materials online for both students and teachers. The student materials have been described above. The teacher materials include unit assessments, lesson quizzes, Performance Tasks, Rich tasks, student gems and teacher gems. The teacher gems are various tiered activities such as stations, card sorts where students work collaboratively to solve problems and are given regular feedback either by peers or by the teacher. Each lesson has tiered practice problems at 3 levels for students who may need scaffolding, students who are proficient, and students who are ready to learn more.

Teacher dashboard from EdGems:



**Other Textbooks Reviewed**: (if less than 2 others, explain)

1. Saavas Envision Math 6-8
2. Desmos Illustrative Math Curriculum

Catherine Hall — **Teachers** — 4/14/23 — **Date**

Catherine Hall — **Department Chair (if applicable)** — 4/14/23 — **Date**

Karen Gruntzner — **Principal** — 4/14/23 — **Date**

Alyse Attell — **Director of Curriculum or Assistant Superintendent** — 4/14/23 — **Date**

**New Fairfield Public Schools**
**Textbook Evaluation Form**

*"Textbooks are defined as that resource which provides 50% or more of the information upon which the program of instruction is based." (policy 6161)*

**Participating Staff Members:** Cathy Hall, Tracy Kielkucki, Sarah Lynch, Ken Seder, Pam Bruno, Sarah Devine, Kim Moran, Colin Usher, Treva King
**Course**: 6th and 7th grade Math, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1 **Grade(s): 6-8**

| *(Use Rubric Below)* | **Textbook 1 Title:** | **Textbook 2 Title:** | **Textbook 3 Title:** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Publisher** | Saavas Envision | Desmos Illustrative Mathematics | EdGems |
| **Year Published** | 2021 | still releasing content | 2018 |
| **Price** | n/a | $25 digital per student | $54 textbook & $16 digital platform |
| **Content** | | | |
| Alignment | **3** | **4** | **4** |
| Accuracy | **2** | **4** | **4** |
| **Instructional Match** | | | |
| Alignment with NF's Vision of the Graduate | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| Design | **2** | **2** | **4** |
| **Accessibility** | | | |
| Clarity | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| Inclusivity | **3** | **3** | **3** |
| Add-ons | **3** | **2** | **4** |
| | | | |
| **Total Team Rating** | **17** | **21** | **27** |
| **Notes** | Text had several errors, missing some key content, online platform is buggy | Too much computer work, not enough thinking through problems collaboratively | Multitude of ancillary materials from different resources/platforms including Desmos, IXL and KHAN, includes rich tasks, has both paper and online components |
| **External Rating** (informational only) | | | |
| Which rating organization was consulted and what rating did the textbook receive? (EdReports or other) | Edreports - meets expectations | Edreports - meets expectations | Edreports - meets expectations |

| | RATING<br>1 - not at all 2 - somewhat 3 - generally 4 - mostly |
|---|---|
| **Content** | |
| Alignment | Content is aligned with course curriculum and content standards. |
| Accuracy | Content is free from errors, up to date, and unbiased. |
| **Instructional Match** | |
| Alignment with NF's Vision of the Graduate | Content is presented in an engaging manner and leads students to make meaning, think critically, and ask questions. The text promotes independence. |
| Design | Textbook contains a variety of instructional materials, including reflective questions, learning activities, and other features which promote learner engagement and active learning. Textbook contains a structured, clear, and logical progression of topics. |
| **Accessibility** | |
| Clarity | The textbook provides accessible and structured text and images to meet the needs of diverse learners. Readability is age/grade/setting appropriate. |
| Inclusivity | The textbook reflects diversity and inclusion regarding culture, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion. |
| Add-ons | Textbook has high-quality, supplementary materials which support student learning and are free of errors and glitches. |