

MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT SAU #37

COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

October 24, 2017

6:30 p.m.

Chair Langton called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Committee Members Langton, Avard, Girard, Freeman, Van Houten

Messrs: B. Vargas, W. Perron, C. Swenson, L. Kirwan, T. Proulx, L. McIntire Willis,
D. Florio, F. Ransdell, S. DeVincent, K. Pelletier

Chair Langton advised that the purpose of the public forum is to give the residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the committee on items of concerns affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair. Any resident wishing to speak will come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized and give their comments.

Mr. Brendan McCafferty, Manchester Road, Auburn, stated:

I would like to thank the board and the C&I Committee for all your commitment and dedication to our kids. Several board members said last night, they cited the need to narrow and return our focus to our kids, primarily student learning and achievement. Much has been said in the last 15 years about our district. Many say we aren't investing enough. Some say we are not investing wisely. Some say we are doing well. Some say we are failing. At times those who said we are failing have pointed to school programs, testing, data evaluations and more. What do all these things have in common? Curriculum, instruction and assessment. In my estimation we have never truly committed to this as a district. The Pareto principal, or the 80/20 rule, is a theory that says 80% of a system's outcomes are generated by 20% of the input. In other words, big bang

for the buck. An intelligent, committed and ongoing investment in curriculum, instruction and assessment will provide just that for our district and our city. How many things have we discussed over the years that are related to curriculum, instruction and assessment, but when you talk about the “they” who are overseeing the work, who exactly are the “they”? For example, an assistant superintendent for curriculum. Please consider whatever has traditionally been on their plates in Manchester and those individuals, have they truly been in a position to drive that work. I think the answer has been no so far. In the fall of 2010 as a district we learned that in the spring of 2015 we would be measured against the new Common Core standards by using Smarter Balanced. What followed included zero preparation for the Common Core as a district, a rejection of the Common Core by the board, implementation and creation of the Manchester Academic Standards, little preparation as a district for Smarter Balanced and a concession just weeks prior to testing that we would participate as well as allowing students to opt out. We have had a variety of consultants over the years, but without a plan for capacity, understanding and communication various initiatives have been started across all schools, but due to inconsistencies and lack of oversight many have not been sustained including curriculum mapping, common assessments, digital portfolios, writing and technology across the curriculum, RTI, the DOE’s numeracy and literacy plans, SMART goals, SLOs, focused monitoring and more. We have had various curriculum committees and assessment committees at all levels. As a district I think we would all agree that we are in control of our own success, a success that is very much tied to the health and success of our city. We are in dire need of a k-12 team dedicated to all district matters related to curriculum, instruction and assessment so nothing falls through the cracks. We can’t say our schools are failing but ignore the traditional systemic lack of coordination and ownership in this area. Pardon the sports analogy, but it is timely, especially after their big this week, as talented as Tom Brady is he wasn’t even playing when he first arrived here. Coach Belichick was a failure in Cleveland, but in the mid 1990s something special happened with the arrival of what has been truly dynamic leadership. Bob Kraft identified his 80/20 principles. Though very careful with his money and far from an overspending he has provided his organization with the resources needed to be a true champion. Now as we know Brady and Belichick are considered the greatest of all time. The Patriots organization is in the same realm and so can our district be. We have the talented players, we have the talented coaches, but our leadership, the policy makers and the decision makers, as you know, they have come and gone

every few years. The science committee's work here tonight has been in draft form for two years. Maybe that is because we haven't truly committed to it, including the personnel to own it and drive it. I would like to thank this committee and all the science teachers and EL personnel here tonight and the work they have done and the work being done by everyone in Manchester relative to curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Dr. Bolgen Vargas, Superintendent of Schools, stated I think that the principal from Hillside is right on point and has very important insight that he is bringing to us and that is to have a k-12 effort rather than a fragmented effort as we are used to. I appreciate your input. I think we took a very small step in terms of our assessment. We have a kindergarten through eighth grade assessment that at least for our elementary and middle schools teachers or an administrator could work in a coordinated effort around our assessment, but now it comes the most important part of our work, which is our curriculum. I think it would be an enormous effort, but one that needs to be initiated and taken on and I take responsibility to make sure that at the beginning of the school year next year we would have that in place. There are finances associated with it. I don't want to deceive this board. I don't want to tell the board that we are going to do something unless it is sustainable. I have been thinking about how do we do this? I would not advance any recommendation until I can tell this board here is how you are going to pay for it, not just in the following year, but for years to come. I count on each one of you to help me with that. I take ultimate responsibility for the recommendation that I would put to the board and how to pay for it, but the insight around curriculum, that needs to come from our teachers and our administrators and staff. Part of that element is to put in infrastructure in place that can carry us from k-12. I thank you for your remarks. The other thing if I might, and I'm going to be very honest with you, I was going to do something that I normally don't do and I was going to pull out the presentation tonight about science. I won't do that. I'm going to ask the chair to keep it on, but one of the reasons why your observation that when we talk about science, when we talk about math we need to talk about k-12. My hope is that tonight or next year after your presentation tonight that next year we come in and talk about what does our science program look like or curriculum, k-5 and then 6-8 and therefore from 9-12. Or, better yet, like was articulated earlier, what is it that we are going to tell our parents or children that they are going to receive in the area of science during their 12 years here and their families. I'm going to ask to withdraw that

request. I was going to start this discussion with an apology to you, but instead of my apology I think that you have heard that I confirm with the remarks that were made around the need for k-12 coordination. I hope that you understand where I was coming from had I made that request, but I think that you made it easy for me to let you know that that is where we need to be. We need to look at our work as a continuum, not necessarily in a fragmented way.

Mr. William Krantz, 50 Constant Street, Bedford, stated:

I don't have any prepared remarks, but just know, Dr. Vargas, that the folks behind us, behind you all, I think I can speak for most of them, we are going to continue the good work and they have done tremendous work. A lot of it has been volunteer work. We have people who stay up until two or three in the morning sending emails to try to make sure that the fifth draft of whatever is worthy or presentation, etc. That would be Tina Proulx and any number of other people back there. We have people who are trying to do everything we can on behalf of the children in our care. To Mr. McCafferty's point, we are going to hold you to it, but you have to know that we are with you. We are going to work our tails off because it is the right thing to do, like the banner in my school says. I was fortunate enough to be working with the group, the science folks. I'm not going to make pretend that I have as much knowledge as they do. I was smart enough to let the people who know do the work. I get to sit here and maybe answer some questions, but I hope you truly respect the amount of effort that goes into these things. These folks have been working on these committees for years. Often times they weren't even given an honorarium. They didn't require it. However, I think it is right thing to do given the levity of the work. I would have you please ask your questions and whatnot, but please appreciate the good effort of these folks behind us. They have been working their tails off and it is always with kids in mind. I was kind of joking which side of the aisle I was going to sit on. I like to say that I'm an independent. I'm apolitical at these things. I just think that it is the kids. That's what it all comes down to. If the good idea comes from the left or the right or the middle, let's use it. If we can take the best from all sides when we need to use it. That's leadership. It is wise. We appreciate your good efforts. We really do. We know that what you do is very challenging. I won't make pretend that I understand the complexities of the political arena. To be honest, I have no desire to participate in that particular arena.

Chair Langton stated just notes from the chair, Mr. Krantz, Mr. McCafferty, I agree that leadership paramount. I would say that Dr. Vargas, as the leader of our district, has done a phenomenal job. He has done more in the one year that he has been here, which it has been a year in October, than I have seen with past superintendents. The most important thing I think he did for our students was reduce the number of unnecessary assessments done across the district and that increased the number of hours of learning and that is absolutely remarkable because that is what we are here for, to teach children. They can't be taught and they can't be learning when they are sitting taking a test or waiting for other students to finish tests. Thank you, Dr. Vargas and thank you, gentlemen, for coming tonight. Also, all of these initiatives do cost money and funding is a question. Where do we get that? I know that this hasn't been positive, but I do look that there is money there for healthcare for School Board members and if that could be funneled toward the children I think that would be a great thing, but that is not for me to decide on my own.

*There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of **Committee Member Girard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Van Houten**, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.*

Chair Langton addressed item 5 of the agenda:

5. Approval of the minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting.

Chair Langton stated I was not at the meeting, although I read the minutes.

*On motion of **Committee Member Avard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Van Houten**, it was voted to approve the minutes. The motion carried with **Committee Member Girard** abstaining.*

Committee Member Girard stated Madame Chair, I abstain. I have not had a chance to look at them.

Chair Langton addressed item 6 of the agenda:

6. Reading Instructional Goals for Older Readers (RIGOR) reading program for high school English learners.

Dr. Vargas stated Wendy is going to come in with her team. I have reviewed the work that she with her team has done and it is extraordinary. You mentioned funding and they have done an incredible job with the limited resources that you have available. I thank you for that. It is a growing number of students that we have that are English language learners and we are very proud of that. However, it does require for the district to put every effort to make sure that every child is served. I can't wait to hear your presentation.

Ms. Wendy Perron, Director of English Learner Instruction, stated I'm joined at the table and in this work today by EL colleagues of mine who I would like to introduce. To my left we have Connie Swenson who is an EL teacher at Central High School, to my right is Liz Kirwan who is an EL teacher at West High School and on her right, Tina Proulx who, speaking to Dr. Vargas's and Principal McCafferty's point, we brought on board not only because she is a veteran EL teacher in our district, but also because she has been part of other curriculum work throughout the district. In an effort to try to make sure we are in alignment with the other curriculum work happening, she has been offering a lot of advice to our team so we are following district protocols and the same structure and process for developing some of this curriculum. Before I can speak specifically to the request I have submitted for the RIGOR materials, I'd like to offer an update on some of that curriculum work our team has been doing at the high school level, work that has led us to the request you are considering tonight. Over the last three years, we have established and implemented a curriculum renewal cycle that has enabled us to identify both strengths and weaknesses in our program and address them in an ongoing effort to continuously improve instruction for the students we serve. I have prepared some handouts for you to reference and I will begin on page four of your agenda packet. If you are looking at the PDF it is page six. In our department, we've used the goals of the strategic plan to guide our work. These goals were handed to me in 2014 when I began in this newly created position as the director of English learner instruction. These from the strategic plan came out of areas of

improvement identified during the curriculum audit in 2013. We use these goals to guide our work and we recognize the goals and plan priorities as best practice. Broadly, our goal has been to “develop and implement a consistent curriculum across all four high schools, as part of a continuous curriculum cycle”. More specifically, and I am on the next page now, we’ve really focused on the MSD strategic plan priority area one: student learning. 1.1 sets the goal to “implement the Manchester Academic Standards and align, revise, develop curriculum to these standards. The first part of our work addressed this priority. A committee with representation from all four high schools convened to go through the English language arts standards and aligned them with the EL courses. This work began in 2014 and it was timely as the Manchester Academic Standards had been recently adopted. The next priority area 1.2, “enhance instructional practices of teachers to meet the varied learning styles of all students”, is also part of the committee’s continued work as they revise units of instruction and intentionally incorporate instructional practices pulled from research that ensure effective instruction of our English learners. For example, we use a common lesson plan framework that ensures the major aspects of effective instruction for are addressed, things like content and language objectives, use of visuals support materials, strategies that focus on instructional conversation, inclusion of relevant multicultural texts and experiences. The next goal 1.3 focuses on providing teachers opportunities to collaborate to improve instruction that focuses on student achievement. We have made this work a priority in our department and those priorities always drive the development of our Title III budget. For the last three years, our Title III budget, has included some stipends for our teachers working on curriculum revisions. Finally, goal 1.8, focuses on ensuring that the curriculum is consistent across the district to ensure equal access, but our team also feels consistency will help us in this continuous improvement loop, as come together on PD days and review student work to identify areas of improvement. For instance, on November 7th our team will come together to share challenges, ideas, resources and student work. In our most recent monitoring visit, and I’m on the next page now, the visit from the Department of Education, which was also in 2014, similar goals were noticed and became part of a corrective action plan. The DOE encouraged our department to work toward consistency in programming and to expand time for EL faculty to meet. I’d like to call your attention to the last paragraph of this slide and use this as an opportunity to acknowledge the incredible efforts of the high school teachers over the last three years. The team has worked after school, during the summer break

and in the evenings to complete this work. Some of the work was stipened through Title III grants, but most of it was not. The commitment of our EL faculty motivates me every day and I want to express my gratitude to our team, not only for their efforts, but for their willingness to try something new, to embrace change. I have shared the motivation for our work and the beginning stages, but page seven of your handout is a timeline to summarize the work we have done. Again, we started with an analysis in 2014-15. As a new director at that point, I also did a lot of listening to the historic wisdom of my colleagues and we researched to prepare for the work ahead. This stage raised a lot of questions for all of us. You may remember me, if you were on the board at that time, presenting some of the questions that came up in this phase during my first presentation to the School Board. Our team discovered that there were different EL classes offered at each high school and for different credit, so an EL class at West might earn a student English credit whereas at Central it might be elective credit for the very same course. As we began to think about which approach made sense, we realized we needed to really analyze the standards we were using to anchor those courses. To do this, we began in language arts standards and matching them to our EL classes. After this analysis, it became clear to us that the ELA standards were being used successfully in our EL program and therefore, we recommend English credit be awarded to students successfully passing the classes. We also reached out to colleagues in several other districts locally, Concord and Nashua, but also in Portland, Maine, New York public schools and Boston public schools to see how other districts approached this and found that other districts are using this process and logic as well. From this alignment work, we began to revise the course progression and curriculum units as we moved forward in the curriculum cycle. The outcome of our work is summarized in our final slide, which I will get to in a minute. Before I talk more specifically about the courses, I want reiterate how intentional our team has been about developing a pedagogical framework that is grounded in research based best practices for English learners. We have taken a lot of time to review research from leaders in the field, materials and to talk with local and national colleagues. There have been times when we have come to that table and disagreed and we usually go to the research to help us inform the question and move forward. We have focused on creating a student centered approach to learning using sheltered instruction, which is an EL approach that uses content to teach language. Our new units also include engaging essential questions relevant to out English learners, questions like what does it mean to be part of two cultures; or a unit entitled, against the

odds, which focuses on individuals who overcome obstacles. And finally, a focus on integration. We've been intentional in our design of assignments, so that they might serve the dual purpose of developing language, but also engage or inform the broader school community about our culturally and linguistically diverse students. So, as they are comfortable, students might share a story, tradition or cultural aspect of their lives in a writing assignment, but with the ultimate goal to submit that to the school paper for publishing for the benefit of other students in the school community. In the final slide you will see our new course progressions. They are similar to the old progressions. We used to run an EL I and EL II course together, which students would take at the same time, so now we have combined the class into the new EL beginner class and made it an uninterrupted 90 minute block, allowing teachers to dive a little deeper and for a multi-tiered student support system to be integrated, which brings us back to the request in front of you tonight. We have built in time within the 90 minute block for direct literacy instruction. The literacy block allows teachers to divide students up into small groups for reading instruction. The small groups would rotate, so they may receive one on one time or time with a teacher in a small group and then they may move on to work on fluency and vocabulary building with a software program we have been using for years and then they may work on to work with a partner in a small group to reinforce some of the concepts they were working on with the teacher. During our curriculum work, our team agreed that we needed to establish a benchmark assessment for new English learners as they come in to determine literacy levels and a reading program to accelerate literacy development. We feel this is a critical priority as we have many English language learners who come in significantly below grade level or with interruptions in their formal education and who may be teenagers who are preliterate. Again, after careful research, conversations with colleagues and a webinars, we believe the RIGOR will help us to strengthen literacy instruction in our program. Now we will open it up to any questions you might have. Thanks for hearing our overview.

Committee Member Van Houten stated welcome and thank you all for your work. Wendy, just a question on that last slide. EL beginning class, which is the combined one and two now, says elective credit.

Ms. Perron stated great question. Careful eye, Connie. At this point we have done the alignment work as I said, matching the English language arts standards to each of our EL courses. The team was sort of divided as to whether or not we felt the students would be able to meet the standard in the EL beginning classes so we would like to reserve the right to keep it as an elective course this year and really see how the students perform in that class and maybe make a different recommendation a year from now. Seeing as though we had really kind of raised the rigor in those courses and the team is sort of divided about this so we just thought a year seeing how the students do with those new standards would be helpful.

Committee Member Van Houten stated and that sounds great. How does the youngster get four credits in English under this? Am I not in the right place here?

Ms. Perron replied that's a great question.

Ms. Connie Swenson, Central High School, state I teach at Central High School and the course requirement is that all students must graduate with at least four full English credits. For the EL students they could certainly be taking an EL class, so I might have students who are in EL intermediate or EL advanced, but at the same time for that year they are also in mainstream English. I might have a freshman who is in EL advanced or EL intermediate, but they are also taking English I which is freshman English. We do have support to help them if they need help, obviously either in the EL class or in the mainstream English class. That is how they can concurrently take them. They will take two classes, English classes and get credit, provided they meet all the requirements. Some students do so we have all parts of the spectrum. We do have some students who come with a transcript who have some credits. With the preliterate students, again, depending on their age they have the right to be there until the age of 21 so they might very well be, if they are not literate. Remember, some of them do not have a written language. Please, if you just try to put yourself in their shoes, which we see every day, they are coming in at the age of 15, 17 and they might not have a written language and here we are asking them to take all these courses, do the standardized test, get used to a new culture so it is quite a challenge. The RIGOR program, we have looked at it very carefully, we did the webinar and it would certainly give those students a boost who are preliterate.

Ms. Perron stated that's a great point to notice because it is another inconsistency we have discovered in our work. There is this requirement for four English credits for graduation, but even across the high schools there is a policy or a practice in place which says that only two of those credits can be EL English credits. The other have to come from the general education English menu of options. We have then started to speak to our colleagues in the English department to let them know about the standards work we are doing because we are starting to wonder does it make sense for a student to be enrolled in an EL advanced class and a gen ed English class? In the next phase of our work we really want to align our standards and do some work with the general education English department.

Committee Member Van Houten stated and I appreciate that explanation. As you know I'm a traditional English teacher as well as an EL English teacher. I do understand that. I have just one final question. That elective credit could not be used as an English credit toward graduation? It is just a general elective credit?

Ms. Perron asked EL beginner? That's right as it is now.

Committee Member Freeman stated Wendy, let me understand and you started to address some of what I was going to ask you, while they are taking this EL course, especially at the intermediate level, they are also taking a general English course in conjunction with that. Is that correct?

Ms. Perron replied some are, right. Again, this is one of the remaining inconsistencies. At one high school that is a regular practice. At another high school that might not be the practice. Some don't need the second class. There is a little inconsistency there.

Committee Member Freeman asked the second class being the general English class or the EL class?

Ms. Swenson replied if they are in need of EL services, let's just say it is a freshman, and they are in intermediate and we determine through teacher recommendation, through the annual Access test that they take in February, that they would best be served focusing on English and the EL class and not have to worry about more reading in English and books and all of that and all that work with the mainstream English class it might be appropriate for some students to just take EL intermediate that year. Provided they pass the class they would get their credits. They are still taking, of course, other classes in the main stream.

Committee Member Freeman stated I also heard you say that sometimes these children come in at 15, 16 years old. We keep them in the schools until 21. Is that correct?

Ms. Perron replied that's correct. There is an exception, similar to that for students with disabilities, if they are active English language learners there is a provision that allows them to stay if they are on track for graduation until they are 21.

Committee Member Freeman asked Dr. Vargas, is this under Title III?

Dr. Vargas replied yes, as you heard it is part of the same protection that you have for special education. I believe in the state of New Hampshire it is for any student for the age of 21. This is not just for English language learners or special education.

Committee Member Freeman stated that I did understand. Honestly, I beg you to forgive me for my ignorance around it, I did not know that we would keep English language learners in the district until they were 21 if they needed.

Dr. Vargas stated the word might not be that we keep them, but when it is appropriate. Take, for example, the youngster that comes here when he or she is 17.

Committee Member Freeman stated and I agree with that, I was just surprised by that. It was not something I was aware of.

Dr. Vargas stated a lot of our children when they come here at an early age or even at the middle school level they have less challenges finishing high school on time. We need to examine our practice and I would be against if you had this class year to year and the kids are not transitioning to the main stream, but this is a transitional type of program. However, different children, every child who comes here comes from a different part of the world with different educational backgrounds and we take that into consideration. For some students with one year they are ready to move on and then there are others that take a little longer. I think that what you are hearing from this presentation are other districtwide issues that have been discovered here and that is the inconsistency in courses. I would like to talk to the chair of this committee at some point. We need to have a more clear course offering book across the district for all families, not just for English language learners in which they would understand. I know that I have benefited from conversations with you about how much work you needed to do. I appreciate that, but that is work that are operational types of things that we can help you so that you can spend more time with our students. While I appreciate that and you heard me saying at the beginning of the school year that we need to strength the operation of the district and that is an operational thing, like putting a booklet that is friendly to families, staff and to everyone else. Of course we would need the assistance of teachers to give us the input, but to put the booklet together that is something that we can do on the operational side and we will be discussing that soon.

Committee Member Girard stated this might sound like an odd question so I'll ask for your forgiveness upfront, but what is the goal of this program? What is the goal of this curriculum?

Ms. Perron replied to really accelerate literacy development for students who are coming in significantly below grade level. That is really our goal.

Committee Member Girard stated my assumption is that it is to get kids functional in the English language.

Ms. Perron stated it is, but if you notice what is really exciting about this curriculum is that the books are nonfiction or expository texts so they are really using the content, grade level, age appropriate content in science and social studies to teach these basic reading skills. It is nice because there is this dual catchup of content, but also the structure of the program we really thought in our analysis integrated aspects of EL reading research. So it is structured, the beginning of the program, with phonemic awareness that quickly builds sight words and accelerates the instructional language development. We were pretty impressed with the pace of the program and again, the content. To be honest, these EL teachers have done an amazing job pulling together reading resources for these students. Imagine that high school groups, 16 and 17 year old students who are pre-literate. We have high school teacher who may not have had that specific training in reading instruction because that's typically part of an elementary certification. In my former role at UNH I used to teach the courses for EL certification and when I worked with secondary teachers they were always really frustrated with that reading piece. Our teachers have said we really do need the support of a kind of structured program that pulls in that research to accelerate literacy development.

Committee Member Girard stated and I appreciate that, but I'm not sure how to get to what I'm trying to find out so bear with me. One of the things that strikes me about your presentation is you could have kids in the advanced EL class who are also taking regular English classes. I guess what I'm wondering is at what point do they become non-English language learners and can go into the regular curriculum without needing these classes? If part of this structure is to have them enrolled in regular English classes and also in English language learner classes it seems to me a redundancy that is unnecessary.

Ms. Perron stated I think that is a great question. I'm going to hand it over to my colleague, Liz, next to me at West because she is an example of how we handle them at this level. The advanced level is a very individualized process between the teachers and the students to determine their placement so I will let her speak to that.

Committee Member Girard stated and it could be the intermediate because you actually mentioned intermediate kids being in an English I class. If they can function in a regular English class why are they still in EL classes, I guess becomes the question.

Ms. Liz Kirwan, West High School, stated I'm glad that you posed this question for us to allow clarity. Where we specifically focus on four domains of language learning, which includes reading, writing, listening and speaking, so within this we see that some students have strengths in certain areas and then weaknesses in others. Within this curriculum we are also able to allow direct instruction within these domains, specifically to student needs. Even though a student may be advanced within their composite score of their Access, they may not have passed a specific domain, which allows us to offer more focused instruction with reading or more focused instruction with writing to allow the student to progress and acquire more language skills to be successful across the board.

Ms. Perron stated without getting too detailed, for example in a high school English class the structures of language, the genre, the way they are writing and structuring written responses, for a student who has been in the US who has learned English this entire time, they know what the format of a lab report is, they know what the format of a five paragraph essay is. In our EL classes we focus on that structural level of language, making it explicit to students how these language functions work. It is a different approach to learning. We are very cognizant of that. We want to make sure students are getting what they need and these teachers do an excellent job individualizing that decision.

Committee Member Girard stated to be perfectly candid, I wish our high school English classes were a little more focused on structure of language and grammar because it might be easier for kids of all backgrounds to understand and use their language, but that is a discussion for another day. If that's the case and you are specializing the instruction, why are you conveying a full English credit if someone only needs help with a component? It would seem to me that it would be more appropriate for an elective credit there. I'm still having trouble wrapping my head around the idea that the entry level course, the basic one that someone who is

not functional in English at all, is not given an English credit, but is given an elective credit. If I may, it seems like we have this one backwards.

Ms. Tina Proulx, McLaughlin Middle School, responded at the moment that we are in this, you are exactly right. What you are reading is exactly how it is, but the goal, like Wendy said at the beginning of the presentation, is to have the beginner course also be for English credit. Our goal in going through this process is for, if an EL student comes in, they don't have to be enrolled in two English classes, that they will get their English credit through their EL class or through their mainstream class as they progress in their language development. As we build the courses and the kids have the competency... You can deliver English instruction, it is comprehension we are measuring, we are measuring how kids are writing. As they acquire more English... In a beginner class it is interesting because some kids acquire it quicker. I have had beginners who by three months later are writing essays. I have other beginners who need a year or two before they are able to independently write. That is the reason why there is a little bit of a difference in that. As they move on to intermediate and advanced eventually that could just be their English class.

Ms. Perron stated and I think we will move toward exactly what you said, but again, I didn't feel confident bringing that forward here because as we have done the standards work we wanted time to really make sure, again, students were going to be able to meet that challenge. I think what's unique about Manchester, unlike Concord and unlike Nashua, is we have a high number of refugee students with really varied experiences in education. Some have come from very strict, formalized education and they come in strong and others, again, were preliterate. It is such a range. We just need a little more time.

Committee Member Girard asked how do you see this process moving forward? You say, for example, you have aligned what you have done to the Manchester Academic Standards, which is another conversation, but are you going to continue to refine these standards on your own or are you going to do them as the district takes a look at reviewing the English standards that the board has adopted? Moving forward, I would like to understand the process that you are going to go

through to get to from where you are to where you need to be. I'm gathering from your commentary that this is sort of an interim step.

Ms. Perron stated right, and it is part of a cycle that we have established so now we have developed some standards, we have rewritten the units within our courses so this year we are implementing. This summer we will really look at analyzing what the outcomes have been and we will start the cycle anew. I hope from our conversation tonight I have been given a dose of hope that actually we can hitch our wagon onto some greater efforts throughout the district. Like I said, we also have reached out to the English department so we really want to work closely with them. I think we will wait for the leadership from the district and from the board to drive some of the work. We will continue in this cycle, continuously improving the program.

Dr. Vargas stated before you go, if you can clarify for the committee the exiting criteria for kids. Just summarize that for a minute because I think there is sometimes misunderstanding, how do you exit the program.

Ms. Perron stated that's a great question and it has recently changed. You may remember from former presentations I have shared the exiting criteria, which is established at the state level by the Department of Education. The measure used is the annual English proficiency test we give our EL students, which is the Access test. Students must now earn a composite score, so in all four of those language domains, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, their composite score must now be a five in order to exit. Previously they had to have domain minimum scores of four and a composite of five, but this year as part of our ESSA plan with the Department of Ed it was approved to change that to a composite score of five.

Dr. Vargas stated so the bar has been raised a little bit. Thank you for your work. I went to a graduation ceremony at West and it was extraordinary to hear the progress that the students made in a very short period of time. I'm talking about a student that came from a very difficult part of the world in terms of conflict and they were striving due to the support. I think the district should be very and this city for providing this kind of opportunity and support for our students.

Committee Member Girard stated I'm glad Dr. Vargas brought that up because it was a question that I wanted to ask. I have a follow up to that because over my time on the board I have been approached by parents who are immigrants or refugees here whose kids were born here and who have been somewhat frustrated at how the exit process works because they say their kids do well in English, but because they as the parent aren't English speakers natively they believe they have been kept unnecessarily in the English language learner programs and it has held their kids back from things that they could otherwise accomplish. I would like you to address that.

Ms. Perron stated and I know the board has brought this up before as a concern. I will say that parents are always part of... I think what you are talking about now is the way they are identified, the entrance process. Parents are always part of that decision and they have the right to opt out of the program at any point. Even if in our initial screening, and it does sometimes happen that a student may have been born in the United States, but if a language other than English is all they hear at home or maybe there is a combination, they still may qualify for the program. A parent notification form is sent home so parents understand that the student has qualified via the initial English proficiency screener we administer and they are given a choice. We tell them about the range of services in our district and we ask their permission to enroll that student.

Committee Member Girard stated but once enrolled you are saying that a parent can decline to have their kids be in EL classes at any time?

Ms. Perron replied that's right.

Committee Member Girard stated the only other question I have, I would like to get your feedback on emersion. We hear a lot about emersion programs and how it is the best way to learn a different language, whether you are learning English or something else. I just wonder about our general approach versus one that is focused in that way.

Ms. Perron stated I think we all agree emersion is the best approach. We try to make that available to students as much as possible. Connie shared earlier what a typical schedule might look like for an English learner. They may spend some of their day with an EL teacher, but they are also in other content classes. They are out there in the cafeteria, they are part of the school community. We do have magnate programs in the district where students might spend a transition period of time in a magnate program until they get basic conversational level language and we know that they can access the content of a general education classroom. We try to move them back into the general education classroom as quickly as possible. I would like to point out that there is part of a civil rights recommendation that came out of joint guidance from the Office for Civil Rights and the Department of Justice which said that they acknowledge that for a limited time segregation of newcomers in these sheltered programs is okay because the benefits outweigh the cost. As long as we are really being thoughtful about how long they are spending inside these magnate programs and making sure we can get them into the general education curriculum as soon as possible I think that is really our goal.

Committee Member Avard moved to approve the purchase and implementation of Reading Instructional Goals for Older Readers (RIGOR) reading program for high school English learners and forward to the Subcommittee on Finance for approval. The motion was duly seconded by Committee Member Freeman.

Committee Member Girard stated I assume at Finance we are going to learn where the money is coming from?

Committee Member Avard replied it is actually in here.

Ms. Perron stated it is in there. If I may, I would also like to thank the Board of Mayor and Aldermen who generously gave us \$10,000 toward this effort. We are really thrilled and just want to say thank you to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for their support for this program. The rest of the money will come from our Title III federal funds.

Committee Member Girard asked that was Alderman Long, correct?

Ms. Perron replied it was Alderman Long, yes.

Chair Langton called for a vote on the motion to approve the purchase and implementation of Reading Instructional Goals for Older Readers (RIGOR) reading program for high school English learners and forward to the Subcommittee on Finance for approval. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chair Langton stated ladies, thank you so much for coming.

Chair Langton addressed item 7 of the agenda:

7. Manchester Academic Standards for Science, grades 5-8.

Dr. Vargas stated as I mentioned, hopefully as you do your presentation, in the spirit of what was said earlier, how does it fit in with the elementary and also taking a long range view of where students need to end in terms of science. I do know that some districts it is typical that a kid could take up to five courses in science in a high school course by the time they finish their graduation requirement.

Ms. Lori McIntire Willis, Parkside Middle School, stated I am a grade eight science teacher at Parkside and the facilitator for the middle school science curriculum Committee. This is Denise Florio. She is also a teacher at Parkside, grade seven, and is on the science curriculum committee with me and then Bill Krantz at the end, principal at McLaughlin. He is the principal that meets with our committee and assists. The packet that I gave to you is the most updated version because we were originally supposed to meet with the C&I Committee in May and had more time to work with this over the summer so we continued to work on it and revise it to where we are happy with it now. The revisions ended in June. When you received the first copy it was back in May and we did not want to be redundant and keep sending you copies via digital document so this is the most current one that will be uploaded if it is approved. Basically, the district has assembled a council for middle school curriculum. I'm not sure if you are quite

aware of that so I have asked Forrest Ransdell to explain to you what the curriculum council is. It is just going to take a moment.

Mr. Forrest Ransdell, Principal of Parkside Middle School, stated just very briefly, the middle school curriculum was actually singled out in the 2013 audit as the most complete part of our k-12 curriculum, looking at that lens. Because of that, we did not want to lose the momentum that existed with that development so last year we put together, in addition to the language arts and math committees which had existed for a number of years, we also then created a science committee and a social studies committee to address science standards and initially to address social studies and assessment that was taking place, but then the plan was to move into the standards as there has not been a re-adoption of the social studies curriculum. We are pushing 15 to 16 years since there has been a district social studies adoption. There was a k-12 curriculum developed in 2010. However, that was never actually presented and adopted by the board. I do want to acknowledge the leaders of our committees because they put in yeoman's work. Robin Galeaz has led the math committee for several years. Tina Proulx has led the language arts committee for many years and Lori McIntire Willis stepped up this past year as did Kerry Tripp in social studies. Their work was invaluable because they are that connection between what happens as we develop standards or a curriculum or assessments and the teachers that are actually doing the implementation along with the committee members that represent all four schools. Along with each of those committees one of the middle school administrators then took a liaison role with the committee. Mine happened to be social studies. Mr. Krantz in this case was science. As we move these committees forward, the council, if you will, met once a month and our real goal was to monitor the progress, assess the needs of the various committees and coordinate the work so that we were not developing things in isolation of each other because that is so very important, especially as we were looking at the concept of the numbers of assessments and the kinds of things that we were doing. Finally, just to reflect on what we do need to do to be part of that larger k-12 picture we know that that is the goal and it always had to be the goal, but nonetheless we continued moving forward because we couldn't see not continuing to make the progress that had begun. Tonight you have the science standards in front of your for review and I will leave these fine folks to share those with you.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated basically what you are looking at is very similar to what has already been approved by C&I in 2016. That draft never went before the board. What we worked on over the 2016-2017 year was to actually get teacher feedback that we are using the draft, find out what they felt were either too wordy, too complicated, not deep enough, how it really worked in the classroom and then make those revisions. Starting in March of 2017 we started working on revising the standards that were there. We have really only changed some wording. We refined the numbering. We eliminated one standard in the eighth grade and added a standard in the eighth grade. There hasn't been a great deal of change since June 2016. If you look in the eighth grade section we have added a standard in life science numbered 8.1.6. That particular standard was added to emphasize the importance of the discussion in life science distinguishing between living and non-living things and felt that this needed to be emphasized. We also added a standard to seventh and eighth grade that was already in the sixth grade. It is a measurement standard. We just felt that the skills of the students in the area of using measurement tools in science needed a lot of focus and work so we wanted to put that standard in all three grades. The only standard we eliminated from the original document of June 2016 was the standard that read, and it sounds too deep for the eighth grade, "students will gather and synthesize information that sensory receptors respond to stimuli by sending messages to the brain for immediate behavior or storage as memories, electromagnetic, mechanical and chemical" and that was beyond the scope of what we need to be doing so we eliminated that particular standard.

Committee Member Avard stated as a chiropractor that sounds great.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated what we did with the second run-through of the standards is we did look at the high school curriculum so we did look at what was being asked in the life science, in the biology classes to see if the depth was too far in eighth grade, could we come back a little bit so that we could go deeper into the areas we did teach or did we need to stretch a little bit further. The life science aligned very well except for that particular standard, which is something more high school driven in our curriculum. We also did the same thing, there is not a lot of earth space science in high school so we had a lot more flexibility in earth space science as to how deep we wanted to go in that. We divided into looking at the hydrosphere, the geosphere and the different parts of the earth as well as the relationship between astronomical bodies. The sixth

grade curriculum we took out a lot of things because they had to teach so much to kids that weren't getting a lot of science in elementary school that we felt that if we eased up a little bit on sixth grade and made them really focus on some fundamentals of physical science that would help get them into the science world a little bit better. That is generally what we have done for our work.

Committee Member Freeman stated I think you had my son.

Ms. McIntire Willis asked Cole? I did. I loved Cole.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you for the work that you did do with him at Parkside many moons ago. You spoke of us approving a science curriculum for middle schools in June of 2016. I am not remembering that.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated I'm going to ask Tina Proulx who was the curriculum facilitator for that particular time period to address that if that's alright because I started in March of 2017.

Committee Member Girard stated I don't believe we approved anything. I don't think we approved any standards. I think what Tina and the group did back then was come to us and give us an overview of what they were looking at as an update, but not an approval of anything.

Committee Member Freeman stated that's why Committee Member Girard and I are scratching our heads and not remembering.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated my understanding was that you had all already seen this and we had just revised what you had already seen.

Committee Member Freeman stated this is the first we are seeing of this. I have a BS myself. I'm an occupational therapist so science is my game. In any event there were a couple of things on here that I did have more specific questions on and I'm not sure this is the appropriate place to do it. I did have some questions on what you wanted to touch on with the students around the

human impact on environment, the recycling, cause of the rise of global temperatures. That is really a fluid subject at this point. I'm not sure which direction you would go with given the climate of science right now. One minute it is global warming, the next minute it is climate change. How are you addressing that? I know that is so specific, but I'm just curious to see how you would address that with the students.

Ms. Denise Florio, Parkside Middle School, replied that is something that the seventh grade science teachers at Parkside have been evaluating, how do we adjust this, how do we make it something that is valuable for the students to understand. The consensus among us says that we are going to make it an argumentative essay where they will do research on it and then make their statement into what they think of global warming or whether they are for it or against it at this point. It is very hard, as you said, to teach it because there is so much new data coming out and so much conflicting data against past data.

Committee Member Freeman stated that would be my only concern with this. Other than that it looks great. I would be curious to see how you would address that and if that is, in fact, a component that you need to have in this right now.

Ms. McIntire Willis asked are you referring to 7.3.5?

Committee Member Freeman replied I am.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated wording in it is just talking about global temperatures. It doesn't global warming. It opens it up for a conversation among the students to establish if they think that the evidence is valid or not and come up with an opinion. It is an opinion.

Committee Member Freeman stated "students will investigate the short and long term factors that have caused a rise in global temperatures". Maybe I'm misinterpreting that, but that sounds like global warming to me.

Chair Langton stated you would probably be using multiple texts and sources and asking students to provide textual evidence on either argument either way.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated whether they agree with that data or not, yes.

Committee Member Freeman stated no matter what my feeling on it is, the thing is that the science is ever-changing on it and every time you turn around there is a different scientific opinion on it. That would probably be my only concern.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated that one standard, alright.

Committee Member Girard stated first a question for you, Madame Chair. What are we doing with this, if anything, tonight?

Ms. McIntire Willis replied the request is to approve it so that we can move forward to the board approval of this curriculum so that we can move on to having the teachers all teach it unified in the city.

Chair Langton asked is this currently the way our middle schools are teaching? This is the breakdown for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade in our district, correct?

Ms. McIntire Willis replied yes.

Committee Member Girard stated I respect the work that you have done. I'm not going to go standard by standard. I remember in June having the discussion about the basis of these standards with Ms. Proulx and at the time it was said they were the next generation science standards. These are standards that are not uniformly, throughout the scientific world or the educational world, embraced or seen as valid. I think the process, with all due respect to people who have been involved, I have a theory of organizational management that says you can take good people with the best intentions and put them into a bad process and not get a good result. One of the things that this committee has struggled with this year, maybe struggle is not the

correct word, but I think has most prominently been brought forward under discussions on the math curriculum and what we are doing, particularly in the elementary schools, secondary to that what we are doing in English, the standards that we have adopted and have, in my personal opinion, have found have come up short are cut from the same cloth that you have taken the standards and incorporated as the basis of this. We talk about the Manchester Academic Standards, but really what Manchester did was it rewrote the Common Core. We are now living with that. Personally, I don't like the results. It seems to me that we should probably work with what we are already familiar with and know until we fix the issues we have in other areas. The other thing that I personally would like to see is the curriculum management study that this committee tabled almost two years ago now and through all the changes in management that we have had here in the district over the last year and a half have not been able to complete. During those discussions I think almost every member of this committee raised serious concerns about the district's proposed process to review and develop curriculum. Perhaps this won't be lost on science teachers, but the environment in which something develops is very important. If it is a closed environment, if it is a closed system, you are going to get a different outcome than if the system is open and has additional inputs. One of the things that I think has been a flaw in the district for years is a closed process of developing or recommending curricular programs. I don't think we have seen a whole lot of examples of very good outcomes with that. I mean no disrespect in any way to the work that you have done. I can't sit with you and discuss the specifics of one standard versus another, but I think the basis of these standards is questionable. I think the process does not allow for enough different perspectives to have input and understanding and I think as a result we are likely to see with the implementation of these standards something along what we have seen and are now trying to change with the English and the math, particularly the math which has been an emphasis of this committee since April, and I think I would rather get my house cleaned up and things fixed and a better process where all of your input and knowledge can be exposed to different inputs and ideas to come up with perhaps what is likely to be a different set of recommendations. If you are looking for approval of this tonight I would respectfully say no because I would like to see a different process and I would like to see a different basis for the standards because whether we like them or not, agree with them or not, the Common Core across the country, whether it is English, math or now next gen, is under heavy challenge and likely to give way, especially here in the state of New Hampshire

with the changes that are taking place in the Board of Education, the commissioner's office and the reviews that they have said they are going to have. I think I would rather put this on the table until we get some other things straightened out and in place than move forward with something... I don't want to be here a year from now or two years from now or three years from now reliving the problems that we have had with math and English. Again, no commentary on your work.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated it is not my own, it is all the middle schools have put together this so I don't take it personally so don't worry. The way that it is structured right now in the curriculum package is the revision process over the three years so we had been working on that three year assumption that things can change over time. Nothing is set in concrete as we worked on it. That was also delivered to all the science teachers that this was something for them to work with, revise, find where the glitches are because it has to be a live document. It can't be something that is totally solid steel.

Chair Langton asked can I ask a question of you? Where specifically did you get the data? Right after engineering practices, MAS.S.ETS1.1. That is information that came from the state.

Ms. McIntire Willis asked the numbers? No, those numbers are Manchester Academic Standard numbers. Is that what you are talking about?

Chair Langton asked that is what the MAS is?

Ms. McIntire Willis replied yes.

Chair Langton asked does it follow closely with what our state recommend with the next gen standards?

Ms. McIntire Willis asked the wording or the numbering?

Chair Langton stated I'm a science teacher. It is fairly close to the content, not those numbers, that we have in our middle school. However, what is taught at what grade level is different.

Ms. McIntire Willis stated the original approach on it was two years ago and that particular committee did look at next gen science, obviously, but they also started with what was the present curriculum for science. The whole process started with the old curriculum. Basically we looked at what was being taught at each grade level, divided by grade level. They looked at the standards that were currently in place and we tried to revise and update them, but we used other states' curricula as well.

Chair Langton stated those specific branches of science, earth, life, and physical, always at the same grade levels they currently are?

Ms. McIntire Willis replied no, they were not. We did have earth space science at seventh grade, eighth grade was life science and sixth grade was a combination of things, not all physical science. There was some physical science in the old curriculum in seventh grade.

Committee Member Avard stated I think you already started down the path where I was going to go. I was going to ask you your response, how closely does this match the next generation standards?

Ms. McIntire Willis replied there are several of them that match very closely. You can read the documents for yourself and compare them side by side so that would be silly for me to not say that. I do know that there was a lot of changing in wording because we didn't like how those were worded at all. We also wanted to stay back closer to the original curriculum.

Committee Member Avard stated I am a scientist. That is my livelihood. That is my wellbeing. That's my whole goal in life. I was thrilled to watch my daughter give her presentation on the synthesis of bilateral macrocycles using biomimetic methods and I said oh, you out-geeked your daddy, this is wonderful. Now she is studying science to get her Ph.D. and that's her life. I couldn't begin to tell you how to put together a curriculum. No matter how

much I understand science I wouldn't know how to present it to a seventh grader. I wouldn't even begin to be able to go there. I don't know, when I look at this, whether the standard is appropriate for a seventh grader or not so I have to rely on educators. I guess I'm looking at you, Dr. Vargas, how do you feel about these standards? How do you feel about the work that has been done and do you feel that these are where we need to be right now? Should we be accepting these? Should we be moving forward with these or do we need more work on this in order to align with k-5 and 9-12?

Dr. Vargas replied like what you heard, I concur that this is a live document. The role of this committee, if I were in it, but also as your superintendent, I would say to you that in our work, particularly when it comes to science, there is never a complete document or complete curriculum because things keep changing. Take for example in light of the earlier discussion I can think about 30 things I learned in science that are no longer true today that my teachers swore by. In the 21st century knowledge is changing. Every two years it double. Take the planets, for example, I grew up knowing that there were only nine planets just like most of you. That has changed. I'm going to stop lecturing or keep going. To answer your question, I think that I would move forward. I definitely would with this recommendation. I think that you heard a commitment from me that we need to look at an integrated approach, long term. By the way, the best time to learn science is when you are a kid. If you want to teach about gravity, when they spill the milk, there are many opportunities that we can teach them. What I'm saying to you here, what I started saying earlier, which is why as I reflected is that there is a danger in this an opportunity here. The danger is that we can continue this work like we have done in the past that would come through this committee for your approval or disapproval and we all go home one way or the other or you can direct me and hold me accountable to follow what the principal from Hillside so clearly articulated, that you need a k-12 system. I think that I tried to articulate that this takes resources. Also, it takes a discussion with this community. If I was a parent I want to hear what my child will be learning when they come into this district for 12 or 13 years. That is a significant part of a child's life. As educators I would tell you that we have that obligation. To answer your question, yes, I am advancing this as it is with the caveat that I just articulated.

Committee Member Avard stated I too have been very disappointed with how the Manchester Academic Standards have shaken out and I don't think they have been as fluid, I don't think they have been as alive as they were supposed to have been. I don't think we have seen the results in the city that we were hoping to see. I have been very disappointed, especially with math and with language arts. Hopefully we can do some work on those, we can change the way that we have approached those and bring this city up to where it needs to be. I will go with the recommendation of the superintendent. I think the team here has done a tremendous amount of work. I have respect for the educators that are involved. I have respect for the administrators who have stepped up and backed you on this. With everything that has been said I will support moving this forward. I believe that we have learned from the past. I think we have learned from the Manchester Academic Standards that we do need to be a little bit more active on these things. These do need to be live documents. I think you have been doing that since last June. You even said that as you sat here in front of us that you have been changing it. That is what I want to see. That's the news I want to hear. I want to hear that you keep on changing it. I would like to hear next June that you come in and say we found something else that just didn't work and we needed to fix it. I will support this going forward. I think this is a starting point. I don't know that this is anywhere near an end point. I think this is a beginning and it is a good place to start.

Committee Member Girard stated I appreciate the input of the superintendent and what Dr. Avard has just said. I have been going through, in case you are wondering what I'm looking at here, I have been looking at the agendas of this committee to try to find when Ms. Proulx and her gang came here. I haven't been able to find it. I wanted to go through the minutes so I could brush up on that conversation. It wasn't all that long ago that another group came before this committee asking us to approve a pilot program in an undisclosed number of schools that they weren't even sure wanted it for an elementary science program from k-5 I believe it was. I have those books at my house and I have to admit that I'm somewhat horrified by what I have read because I consider it more political science than I consider it science. Why am I bringing that up? That brings me back to the next generation standards. I got some complaints from parents out of Southside not too long ago about a teacher who showed Al Gore's movie, Earth in the Balance, as proof of global warming. You can take whatever you want on the question of global warming, but that movie has been widely discredited because not a word of it was true. If I were

a science teacher the basic question I would be asking about global warming is why where we are today, why was it under a mile of ice a million years ago and how did it melt? It did it without our SUVs, our power plants or anything else that we have as modern conveniences. I bring it back to the process. This has been a closed loop and every time this district has used a closed loop to bring forward curricular recommendations it hasn't ended well because you do the best you can in the environment that you have, but you do differently in a different environment. I think it is a mistake for us to go forward with these because this essentially came out of the same process that the math and English curricula we are now looking at as problematic have come out of. Again, I mean no disrespect to the people who have been involved, but if you were in and a different environment and went through a different process you would come up with a different result. I don't really feel like experimenting again with another set of standards that have at their core something that is invalidated, unsubstantiated and untested and that is the next generation. If this does go forward, not that it will break anybody's heart or stop anybody else, it will go forward without my vote and a sincere hope that two or three years from now we won't be facing what we are now facing demonstrably in math and English. I just think if you are cut from the same cloth you are going to get the same suit.

Mr. Krantz asked can I respond to that? We have a great opportunity. We have a superintendent who has gotten more done in one year than we have had in my entire career here. I would trust that if the man says that he is going to get something done, he is going to get it done. We can only get it done if we can come together. He has been preaching that. You can read it in books. We have to start living it. We are trying to live it. The middle school people have been here trying to lead the way to get people to come together and work. I absolutely respect your point of view on the next gen. We have to start somewhere. I absolutely agree that we need to go k-12. We must, but these guys have been working on this for a long time. If things need to be changed they will be changed. I wouldn't just out of hand dismiss the entire body of work that has been done here. I don't think that is the right thing to do in the spirit of getting things done and moving forward and being transparent.

Committee Member Girard stated Mr. Krantz, I don't think my purpose is to dismiss the body of work that has been done. I would be much more comfortable if this body of work, if we go back to the discussions that this committee had over the curriculum management document and the types of people that should be involved. Funny, we talk about college and career readiness in this district. We wear it like a hat. It is a mantra yet when we go take a look at the curriculum that we want to teach our kids and when we should be teaching kids we don't talk to the trades, we don't talk to businesses, we don't talk to colleges—we have plenty of them, we don't bring in their freshman and sophomore teachers and say what do our kids need to be able to do when they graduate from high school. We don't have them particular in the process that reviews our curriculum and comes up with the standards and the curricular approaches to meet those standards. That's what I mean when I say it is a closed loop. If we wanted to take what the teachers had developed and we wanted to present them before a broader body of expertise and vantage points that would say well, gee, if you want kids on track to go into STEM careers this is what they need to be doing and when they need to be doing it so when they go on to whatever it is they go on to that they are ready when they leave. It is a like a circular firing squad when you don't have anybody that is helping you aim where you are going. Am I saying we should take this and toss it out? No. I guess what I'm saying is we should take it and we should expose it to a broader pool of expertise and a broader pool of vantage points that can say this is really good, this not too much. If your goal is this then you need to do that. There is an old saying, you don't know what you don't know until you find out you don't know. We have run into that buzz saw here. Again, it is no disrespect. I guess the other question I have is, what is wrong with the standards that we currently have? I realize I graduated from school a long time ago, but to me, the basics of science are the basics of science. Dr. Vargas was talking about planets. I know there is a big argument over Pluto and what it is, but has the elemental chart doubled since I graduated from high school?

Committee Member Avard stated it has significantly changed.

Chair Langton stated it has changed significantly.

Mr. Krantz stated there is a larger planet out in the Oort cloud that is a supersized planet.

Committee Member Girard stated that's fine, but that doesn't necessitate a rewrite of an entire set of standards. Entropy is entropy, right? That was the first lesson I learned from Ms. Gray's chemistry class. As the world grows old the beer gets cold or something like that. It caught my attention as a catchy little phrase. The basics of science are the basics of science. I'm looking at this and asking are we revising the standards because we feel like we have to or is there some great deficiency in what we are doing in science that is desperate for an overhaul of the curriculum? To me, English is English, where you put a comma, where you put a period it is standard stuff, but we keep coming up with new ways to do something that is generations old. A comedian once said smart people study things that other people do naturally. I guess I'm trying to understand what the big push on this is in the first place other than to say gee, we have updated 21st century standards. What has that gotten us everywhere else we have tried it? I would just like to see this exposed to a broader pool of expertise, different vantage points, different eyeballs that can look at it and say yes, you are on the right track. Why are we teaching in something in grade six, but in Ms. Langton's district they are teaching that in grade eight? That gets me to the overall appropriateness because one of the knocks on anything Common Core is they have far too much being done too young and not enough being done too late, when the kids get older. Is that what is happening here? I don't know, but the fact that its foundation is a Common Core one makes me extremely uneasy. I think it just needs more input from more vantage points and more areas of expertise than the closed loop that produced it.

Chair Langton stated a couple of questions for the committee. Could you tell me what resources or texts you currently use or do our science teachers use in our district? I think they have been there for quite a while

Ms. McIntire Wills replied the texts that we have, I have taught in this district for 13 years and they were two or three years old when I got here. That is our resource at this point. The sixth grade does have newer texts, but not much newer. They are very old. There are things in them, being a science teacher, you will read through them and you know that has been disproved already.

Chair Langton stated so most teachers are creating their own resources.

Ms. McIntire Wills responded yes. We are working with all kinds of resources, getting them from all over.

Chair Langton stated from what I can see through your document, the information, the points that you are getting across, the curriculum is very similar to my district. It is true that it is not at the same grade levels. I do wonder how that is decided. However, the idea of this is that it is going to be continually worked on and fluid and you say that you meet monthly. Is that something that will continue?

Ms. McIntire Wills replied we have been meeting monthly, but now it is on a volunteer basis.

Chair Langton stated that makes sense. We don't have stipends for teachers, one per school?

Ms. McIntire Wills replied no.

Dr. Vargas stated correct. If I might, Madame Chair, that's the type of thing that I would be examining because you cannot leave some of this work up to chance. I have seen great things in this district that all of us should be proud of, but I have also seen some things that all of us should act with a sense of urgency. For example, you can graduate from this district and still get through high school and never experience a science lab. The reason I was going to stop this tonight because I have been reflecting on this and this is why I want to take that discussion and I can't thank you enough for bringing that perspective of the k-12, but let me repeat that the 21st century, 2018, and I appreciate what Mr. Girard said because our work needs to be subject to scrutiny. There is no question. We are professionals and I have no problem with someone scrutinizing our work. At the end of the day I would say to you that we have certain things in here, practices that while we have great things going on we have to make sure that we stay moving forward. For example, I like to see every kid in this district having the opportunity to be exposed to be more clear, to at least have the experience to participate in a science lab. I don't know, when we are talking about active learning and experiential learning, and yet you have a

body of students who don't have an experience with science labs. I don't know if that brings some clarity, but I agree with you. What you have before you in here is something that you would find across any other district. However, in our case, what I'm suggesting is that we need to do more given what is going on in k-5 and also 9-12. Just to be as transparent as possible, there has been a lot of debate and a lot of our schools did concentrate too much on testing so science was put aside in so many districts. This is not my making this up. This is the truth of what has happened in the past 15 years, which is when many of our schools became more concerned on getting the kids to pass a test than what we want to do for kids, what we wanted them to learn.

Chair Langton stated a question to the teachers. I can't imagine teaching a science class without a lab. I would say that happens in all three grade levels at the middle schools.

Ms. McIntire Wills stated at the middle school we are very active with hands on, yes.

Chair Langton stated at the very beginning of the document it talks about scientific inquiry, which is something that all three focus on and build upon.

Ms. McIntire Wills stated yes, we do. We actually have a system in place to be able to share that among the schools and everything. It is very hands on.

Committee Member Van Houten stated I kind of got involved in something here for a moment, but let me just refocus quickly. You have done research with this, right? It is not as though this came out of a vacuum.

Ms. McIntire Wills responded right.

Committee Member Van Houten stated so there is that weighing in of other resources and other experts. I do agree with you that everything is dynamic, particularly in science. Things are changing on a daily basis. However, the point that I would like to make that predisposes me to want to pass this tonight is that your standards are more process than content. There are things

like “will be able to”, “will demonstrate”, “will investigate” and those are things that I think transcend next gen for instance because they are learning processes rather than content. I will support this tonight if the motion goes forward.

*On motion of **Committee Member Avard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Van Houten**, it was voted to approve the Manchester Academic Standards for Science in grades five through eight. The motion carried with Committee Members Freeman and Girard voting in opposition.*

Chair Langton stated thank you again for all your work and coming in this evening.

Chair Langton addressed item 8 of the agenda:

8. Curriculum Associates Data Sharing Agreement.

Ms. Sharon DeVincent, Executive Director of the Innovation Zone, stated as you know, we are now using the iReady as the district assessment for grades k-8. As such we do have the iReady platform that we can go into to see the student scores, but what we would like to do is be able to link that data back to Performance Plus. This is the consent agreement for that, to link it back to Performance Plus. We did talk with Curriculum Associates and Demonstrated Success who housed Performance Plus for us because when we received the agreement we say that it was to the State of New Hampshire as the vendor and I did get clarification on that. It is because of how the data is stored in iReady the state has the ability to convert it to send it on to Performance Plus to that it syncs properly with the database since they were the original designers of the database.

Chair Langton stated they oversee Performance Plus.

Ms. DeVincent stated not the state, not any longer, but they still have that. I don't know all the technical terms, but they still have that capability to convert the data to the format that is needed for Performance Plus and Demonstrated Success doesn't have that because they don't have

access to all that specific student data that is needed for the conversion. That's about as technical as I get on that. That's what this is.

Committee Member Girard stated in reading the document it seems that we almost don't have a choice, but to approve this. Am I reading that correctly?

Ms. DeVincent replied we could just simply use iReady and not have it go into Performance Plus. The benefit of having it into Performance Plus is that's where all of our other data is at and it will allow us to run more thorough reports and more comparable reporting and that sort of thing. It would be beneficial for us to be able to have all of our data in one place. We could do without it if we had to.

Committee Member Avard stated no cost to this.

Chair Langton asked no cost to this, Ms. DeVincent?

Ms. DeVincent replied no cost.

On motion of Committee Member Avard, duly seconded by Committee Member Van Houten, it was voted to approve the Curriculum Associates data sharing agreement.

Chair Langton addressed item 9 of the agenda:

9. Update on Parental Notification of Lessons and Materials.
(*Note: provided for informational purposes only; no action required.*)

Ms. DeVincent stated I wanted to give a quick update tonight. I want to keep this on the agenda, but our meeting with the elementary principals is tomorrow morning. What I have done since our last meeting is gathering data from them on what is happening in their schools. All the schools to varying degrees are sending home information. Some teachers do it weekly, some do it monthly, some do different levels of data so I want to get them all together and say what could

we agree on as an elementary team that we would like all of our grade levels sending home to families and what data do we want to include with that? Then we can bring it back and then we can dissect it decide what we might want to add, take away, that sort of thing.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you, Ms. DeVincent. I think that is a great idea. I think if we can implement something districtwide, k-5, middle schools and the high schools that all of the teachers can follow a rubric of sorts I think that is a great idea. They can develop it and let us know what is going to work best for them. The parents can review it and let us know if that is going to work for them. I think it is long overdue actually. I think that is another way we are going to establish some real continuity across the district. Thank you for the work on that.

Chair Langton asked will you be coming forward with some more information from your meeting with the principals at our next C&I meeting?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes.

Committee Member Girard stated I'm disappointed to see this as an informational item. I'm hoping I'm going to get some feedback from the administration because at the last meeting we were pretty clear that at this meeting we were going to be provided with proposals by the administration on notifying parents of what was coming into the classroom. So far it seems to me the progress that we have made is setting up a meeting with the elementary school principals after learning what they are doing. There has been no mention of middle school. There has been no mention of high school. To me, the high school in particular is a low hanging fruit in terms of sending home a syllabus or otherwise informing parents of what is coming into the classroom beforehand. If you would be so kind as to advise why, and I realize, Dr. Vargas, you weren't here and Ms. DeVincent, you weren't in your current capacity and you are not the ones who made the representations about what was going to happen, I understand that, but it is somewhat disappointing to come to this meeting with one expectation and get something that falls entirely short of that.

Dr. Vargas stated I take responsibility for that. I don't like to provide any excuses. Perhaps I underestimated what it would take to provide you with the quality and clarity that I think you are looking for and that you deserve. We are going to have to gather the data and come here to you with the confidence that what we present before you is what is taking place, but also that our recommendation is grounded. I think what you are saying is in that reality that you want feedback from the people on the front line. I would submit to you that I'm more than happy to hold a hearing or a meeting with parents with this board to get their input as well. What I'm trying to say just briefly if I might is that I could advance you a recommendation tonight, but it won't be grounded on the reality that I think I need to be in touch and in contact with. I take responsibility for not bringing to you the recommendation that you expect.

Committee Member Girard stated I won't ask you whether or not you were aware of what Dr. Martin presented to this committee in terms of a timeline, but I'm just going to say this for what it is worth. I understand there are some challenges in notifying parents of what's happening in an elementary school classroom before it happens. I get that. However, I don't think this needs to be turned into a great big project. To me, if a high school teacher in this district can't send home a syllabus with kids, a quarterly syllabus, there is a problem. I would dare say the same for most of the classes in middle school. If those teachers don't know what their lessons are, the materials are, what they are going to be bringing into the classroom, and I'll go back to that Southside example I gave earlier. A teacher didn't wake up one morning and say I think I'll show Al Gore's video on destroying the planet today. They know what materials they are using and parents should be aware of that in advance. I don't see this as a great big complicated project and to the degree you want to figure out how best to do it at the elementary school, fine, but I don't think we need to convene parent councils and have public hearings and what not to find out from parents what information they want coming home. It is pretty simple. If it is going into a classroom a parent should know about it beforehand so that if a parent has objections they can exercise the rights they have under the policies of this board, the laws of this state to find a substitute lesson or otherwise question the teacher.

Dr. Vargas stated I would just like to remind you, I remember being around during one of the most tragic moments in history for this country and that was September 11th when we needed to do things and say things to kids that I couldn't the next day and the following week, being in New York, influenced my perspective. The last thing that I needed, just to be quite honest with you, at that moment as I recall I couldn't think of even calling into parents to begin them to have a conversation with them about a very troubling subject, even for high school kids, never mind elementary. Like I said, I take responsibility. I'm thinking about, and perhaps that is the kind of clarity that you would need to communicate to our teachers and the practitioner. There would be times, and we need to be clear when that time would be when they would be delivering or adding something to a lesson just to adopt it to the moment. I just did something recently, I asked for a moment of silence throughout the school system for the tragedy of Las Vegas and what happened there. One of the things I was telling our elementary principal not to do it because you have kids that are more vulnerable and also at the middle school and high school level to be very careful because there are kids that have experienced violence directly. If you say we are going to have a moment of silence it could trigger certain things and it should concern every parent. I mentioned that because that is part of the complexity that I think we are dealing with here.

Committee Member Girard stated with due respect I don't see notifying parents of curriculum as altogether that complicated. With that, Madame Chair, I have nothing further to add.

Dr. Vargas stated I totally understand. I'm not adverse for parents to get the information, by the way. I will say that we are struggling to bring that clarity to you.

Committee Member Girard stated and I understand you have had your back office challenges, if I can put it that way, but I hope this doesn't linger.

Committee Member Van Houten stated when I saw this marked as for information it didn't concern me in the least because this never went to the board. I recall that we had a fairly contentious meeting. There were three of us. I refused to second the motion that came from Mr. Girard I believe. This never went to the board. This is action that we are taking internally and therefore should be informational.

Chair Langton stated they were supposed to come forward with more information or something a little more definitive.

Committee Member Girard stated with proposals that we could review and discuss and recommend to the board. We don't need the permission of the board to go and ask the administration to provide us with options or proposals.

Committee Member Van Houten stated I think the board does need to make the decision that this is the areas that we want to go in.

Committee Member Girard stated the board referred it here. That's why it is here.

Committee Member Van Houten stated they referred it here because they couldn't come to any consensus.

Committee Member Girard stated no, they referred it because this was the proper place for it to be dealt with.

Committee Member Van Houten stated I agree, but nonetheless, I think we are jumping the gun to take anything further.

Chair Langton stated this is a committee item. It will be coming back. The administration will be bringing it back. There have been changes in the administration office so that has created more of a problem I'm sure.

Committee Member Van Houten stated as I said, I do recall on the full board having issues and I believe even you had voted against having this done at the full board.

Chair Langton stated nothing definitive until I had seen what we were speaking of specifically. I think as Dr. Vargas pointed out, if we are going to send something home it needs to be a quality document that is extremely clear on what is being done. Anyone who is a teacher knows that as Dr. Vargas said, teachable moments come up every day. I drive to school some days changing what my plan was.

Committee Member Van Houten stated I actually agree. I taught as well.

Chair Langton stated I think we want to get the information from his staff and our educators.

Committee Member Van Houten stated I just think we are pre-assuming that the board wants to send something home and we are to go through the proposals to do that.

Committee Member Girard stated that's why the board will have a chance to vote on the committee's recommendations. That's the whole purpose of the whole structure we have of this government.

Chair Langton addressed item 10 of the agenda:

10. Discussion regarding changes to the preschool program.
(Note: provided for informational purposes only; no action required.)

Chair Langton stated I would like to get this information because we have had a number of parents inquire about the changes that occurred this year.

Dr. Vargas stated Ms. DeVincent has a report for you.

Ms. DeVincent stated most of it is outlined in the letter that was drafted. At this point in time, it is the third bullet on the letter, all the three year olds are in the morning program three days a week. All four year olds are in the afternoon program four days a week as it has been in previous years. The parent concerns I think had a lot to do with students that the parents felt or

thought they were going to be in the afternoon program and were in the morning program and that sort of thing. We did get an update on that. All the three year olds are in the morning program three days a week this year. The four year olds are in the afternoon program four days a week.

Chair Langton asked was that the way it was last year?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes.

Chair Langton stated we changed it, but we reverted back. Do we know the reason for the change?

Ms. DeVincent replied it was to provide flexibility anticipating what the student needs were coming in to this school year and making sure that we had available spaces for all the students who were going to be identified coming into the programs. Our preschool coordinator has done an amazing job of reworking things and relooking at things and making the changes that were needed.

Chair Langton stated but the changes that were made originally for the start of this school year, had the parents been notified of those changes? That was probably the problem.

Ms. DeVincent stated yes.

Chair Langton stated so we have gone back to the way we were doing it. Have you had any complaints since then?

Ms. DeVincent replied no. What we have done, the last page in the document is an updated brochure going forward that they have started giving out to parents which allows a spot. Instead of listing specifically that three year olds will be in this program, four year olds will be in this program, they will actually mark what that particular child will be in and which program so there is clarify for the parent that way and it is not just this generalization.

Chair Langton stated thank you for taking care of that.

Committee Member Girard asked can you explain... I don't even know where to start. As a member of the Redistricting Committee and I'm sure Dr. Avard will confirm or challenge by recollection, we have been told very specific things about preschool, not the least of which is we had to operate side by side programs, we had to have non-special ed kids in with special ed kids and there was a formula that required something like one more regular education kid than special education kid and it was this great big disaster that the city was facing. Now we are getting information about the preschool program that shows that that information, given consistently to the Redistricting Committee, was incorrect to be charitable about it. I have a number of questions if you could just address preschool in general. In reading the stuff about the Bishop O'Neil Center, okay, that's the Title I center and you are not taking as many.

Ms. DeVincent stated Bishop O'Neil is funded solely through Title I for Title I eligible students.

Committee Member Girard asked so can it only be Title I?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes. It could be a student... It is in a separate location.

Committee Member Girard stated I know where it is.

Ms. DeVincent stated you know the logistics of the location so yes, it is for Title I students. We have had in the past students with...

Committee Member Girard stated we have had identified students there.

Ms. DeVincent stated we have had identified students there. There was a pull back. Part of it was of how services were provided. We were having to send somebody over there to provide services and that sort of thing. Logistically at the time it made sense. Given how things change

and move forward we may go back to having some more in there. That was just the decision that was made last year at that time for this year.

Committee Member Girard asked how has that changed though impacted the rest of the program for identified students in the schools that they are at? We have them at Jewett, we have them Weston, we have them at Parker Varney and we have specialized kids at Smyth, Highland and Green Acres.

Ms. DeVincent stated we would have had students in those places regardless.

Committee Member Girard stated right, but I'm more concerned about Weston, Parker Varney and Jewett Street because while they are serving an identified population they are not autistic, they are deaf and hard of hearing where the other schools have those particular specialties of identified kids, these seem to be more generally identified kids.

Ms. DeVincent stated yes, and there are Title I students in those programs as well at those schools.

Committee Member Girard asked do we have to have Title I kids or regular education kids in with the identified kids?

Ms. DeVincent replied let me put my special ed hat on. When you are writing an IEP for a student with an identification, depending on the severity of the identification or the complexity of it, some students are placed in what is considered a self-contained classroom. The basic example of that would be the autism programs at Smyth or the EBD programs at other schools in the district. Those are self-contained. And preschool has some self-contained programs. There are also programs, they are not calling them side by side anymore, they are calling them regular early childhood classrooms. Those are classrooms that can be a combination of students with identification and non-identified students. That's what that is.

Committee Member Girard stated TMI. Do you have to have non-identified students in a preschool class with identified students? Yes or no?

Ms. DeVincent replied it would be a least restrictive environment. If a student has an identification but it is not complex they yes, you would want to offer them an environment that had some regular education, typical peers.

Dr. Vargas stated the answer is no for all students. You don't have to. I will say to you that I'm trying to work to bring some information because we are looking at redistricting and you mentioned earlier that some information had been provided to you in that context, but the answer to your question is, if you heard that you must do that it is not necessarily the case. The district could design programs to meet the needs of the range of the population in various ways.

Committee Member Girard stated I want Committee Member Freeman to ask a question, but before I do that, we were told, and again I'm sure Dr. Avarad will correct me if I'm wrong, but we were told at one point because when we were reviewing the growth in the preschool program there was one year that had a 50 student jump and we were told that that jump was a result of the district having to recruit regular education kids to come into the preschool program because we had so many identified students.

Dr. Vargas stated it could have been a local design. I don't want to go back. The only thing I could say to you is that I will bring you as much information. As I said earlier, you should scrutinize whatever I give you because sometimes I don't get it right.

Committee Member Girard stated I'll defer to Committee Member Freeman because she is going to help me understand this issue. She is whispering in my ear here and then I have some questions about some of the documents that are here if I could come back to it, Madame Chair.

Committee Member Freeman stated Sharon, under IDEA for preschoolers, early identification, early intervention, under the IDEA, even with ESSA coming down the pike, is it necessary to mainstream these children? Do you have to have these identified children in with non-identified children under the IDEA as a law?

Dr. Vargas replied again, it depends on the severity of the situation. This district could decide, for example, that it is in the best interest for both populations to keep them in two separate programs. There is a list of activity that we have to provide to children who are identified and they have a various range. For example, we have a program here that is from nine to two o'clock. Those children have more specific needs. Then we have others that are only two hours.

Committee Member Freeman stated and I understand that and I'll give you an example. My son was mainstreamed because the severity of his diagnosis was such that it was more positive for him to be with, I hate to say this word, normal children to integrate with them as it would have been to integrate him with a group of similar children because of where he fell on the spectrum. However, there are some children who cannot tolerate that type of stimulation on the spectrum, lower functioning autism, etc., who have to be in a self-contained classroom for their own benefit.

Dr. Vargas stated correct.

Committee Member Freeman stated what you are saying is that it is completely contingent on where they are with their diagnosis and what exactly their needs are. That's what I'm hearing you say.

Dr. Vargas stated that is exactly what you are hearing.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you for that clarification. We have the same number of teachers this year that we had last year, but we have an additional classroom and a half, correct?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes, because they were doubling up in a classroom. This happened once when I was Jewett. Because the programs are three or four days a week those other days the classrooms aren't being used so what would happen, and what happened last year, is during those times another teacher would go into those rooms with a class.

Committee Member Girard asked do we have classrooms that are not being used because at time during the day or the week, the three year old program in the morning and that classroom is used three times a week so there are two times a week where that classroom isn't used, but that same classroom will be used four times a week?

Ms. DeVincent replied I'll give you an example from when I was at Jewett. Our morning program at that time the students would be three days a week. Two days a week that classroom may not have that preschool class in there. What happened was we would have another teacher that would come in and would have a different preschool classroom in there. The schools also get creative with space and they will use those classrooms that are available to provide services for students in the rooms that do have that day. I hope I explained that right.

Committee Member Girard stated in terms of the numbers of kids, am I reading page 41 of the agenda, where you have classroom capacity, identified students, tuition students, Title I students, available identified and available non-id. If I add up everything to the right of classroom capacity, are you telling me that I have that many kids in that classroom? What is classroom capacity and how do I know how many kids are in a classroom?

Ms. DeVincent replied classroom capacity is what that particular classroom has been set at. There are caps on some of the classroom depending on the self-contained and the type of program that is in the classroom. The column next to it, identified students, are the number of current identified students in the classroom.

Committee Member Girard asked identified meaning special ed?

Ms. DeVincent replied special education, yes. Then you have the number of tuition students in the classroom and then the number of Title I students in the classroom. The other two columns are what is available. That speaks to what you said about having the identified and non-identified in the same classroom, having a balance there.

Committee Member Girard asked so what does it mean, available non-id, meaning that you can put, the first one is at Jewett, four? Does it mean there can be four non-identified kids put into that classroom?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes. That means that there are enough seats. We talk about seat space. The class size is capped at 15. There are currently 11 students in the classroom so there are four available seats. Because that is considered one of the early childhood classrooms you want to have a balance of identified and non-identified so there are four non-identified seats available.

Committee Member Girard stated that's great because that leads me to the next question that I have because I'm taking a look at the numbers at Parker Varney and I think in the whole of Parker Varney there is space for two kids in one class and five kids in another. At Weston you have seven kids available in one, five in another, one in one, eight in one, five in one. Why is there such a disparity in the number of kids in the classrooms at Parker Varney and Weston and Jewett is the same thing. There is a little capacity at Jewett, but Parker Varney seems to be bearing the brunt of this with availability at Jewett and Weston.

Ms. DeVincent stated it looks like that. This was a snapshot in time. These numbers have actually changed since then. The Weston program was new so they were still placing students into the program that were coming in through Child Find. They hadn't all been filled up yet, but there were students in the pipeline to be placed. Whereas Parker Varney and Jewett had students already ready to come in because the classrooms had been there for years and they have a nice flow going and then the three year olds went into the four year old program and such. Weston was opened up. That's why it shows more open there because they weren't filled yet.

Committee Member Girard stated I want to see an update on that.

Ms. DeVincent stated okay.

Committee Member Girard asked doesn't the district decide where they go?

Ms. DeVincent replied yes.

Committee Member Girard stated okay, which leads me to another question because if you go to page 42 and I'm taking a look at... How is it that you have kids at Green Acres and McDonough, for example, or at Smyth and Webster going to Jewett when, to me, they should be going to Weston. You have kids at Northwest and Parker Varney and Highland going to... Who came up with this?

Ms. DeVincent replied we don't disagree. It is based on when they come into the program. It depends on where a spot is available at the time the student becomes eligible for the preschool program and gets placed. We try to keep them as close to home as possible. It is just how it works out over time.

Committee Member Girard stated you have Parker Varney kids going to schools other than Parker Varney. You have Weston kids going to schools other than Weston. You have Jewett kids going to schools other than Jewett. I look at this... Help me understand this idea of... Does it make sense that you place kids on a first come first serve basis like that or does it make sense that you, how do I put this, you take orders and as of a certain date in time you say okay, you are going... I understand it is a little different once school starts, but we are talking about this is what it looks like going into school. I have to believe there has to be a way that the district can say as of date x we are going to have all these kids signed up for preschool as of date x these kids are going to go to this preschool because, a registration date let's say, and then after that as kids become of age or available or whatever the case is because of the way this crazy system works, not our fault, then they will get placed where we have space. This has to be a transportation nightmare. This is beyond crazy. This really is stupid.

Dr. Vargas stated we are looking into that. Actually, last year was an ah-ha moment for me because it was May or April and we still were placing kids. We are looking into that situation that I think you described. The interpretation at this moment is that we must provide them with the services at the school.

Committee Member Girard stated we have kids from Northwest going to Weston. It doesn't make any sense.

Dr. Vargas stated what I'm saying is that there is policy that is driving and sometimes it changes. I'm not prepared tonight to tell you, because I have to examine this whole notion that I have an obligation and therefore you as a board have an obligation to place a child, let's say that comes to us in May. We need to bring more clarity.

Committee Member Girard stated so you are saying you don't believe that.

Dr. Vargas stated I'm not saying that.

Committee Member Girard stated you're not sure.

Dr. Vargas stated when I'm presented with a situation I look for multiple reasons. If that is the case, we live in a democratic society so you could say it is not in the interest of the kids or the district to place them for five weeks in May only to send them home for the summer. One can make a case one way or the other. I'm not looking at this with any particular preconceived notion. I'm just looking at what I have learned about the program. I'm not prepared to tell you tonight what adjustment, if any, needs to be made to address the concerns that you are raising.

Committee Member Girard stated okay. Thank you, Doctor. The final comment that I'll make on this, Madame Chair, I'm very happy that the administration has come forward. We were told at the full board that no changes were made this program and I knew that was not true at the time it was said because I had been shown materials that it was. I want to commend the administration for coming forward and saying the changes that were made have been reversed,

the program is operating as parents expected it to be operating and that the system has been stabilized. There were a lot of parents upset, but there were also a lot of people in the buildings that were upset by what was going on before the year started and right after it did. How many kids did you have to actually move to get back to the normal paradigm?

Ms. DeVincent replied I don't have that number.

Dr. Vargas stated we can get you that information.

Ms. DeVincent stated I will commend our preschool coordinator, Marissa, she really did a great job of taking the parents' concerns and advisement and making the changes that she needed to to the program and then developing a system working with our Title I social worker as well on better ways to communicate or more effective ways to communicate with families moving forward so that we don't run into situations like this again. They have been very proactive.

Dr. Vargas stated she did an excellent job. As you can see it is not an easy task.

Committee Member Girard stated no. I wanted to make sure to commend the administration for righting the ship, so to speak.

Chair Langton addressed item 11 of the agenda:

11. Information regarding the Lesley University Literacy Collaborative multi-year data and cost breakdown.

(Note: provided for informational purposes only; no action required.)

Ms. DeVincent stated I just brought her in case there were general questions about the literacy collaborative program. We had a request for data and a cost breakdown so I wanted to present that. I'm sure it is going to some questions and I would like to do a Q&A and go from there and see where the conversation leads us.

Committee Member Girard stated I think the first thing someone needs to help me with is deciphering the scores on page 49. I don't understand how the term "grouping" is being used. The only thing that seems to be universal, and I can't even call it that, but there are significant numbers of schools when they moved from year one to year two in grouping one in particular, it seems that going from year one to year two there is almost a universal dip in the scores and then there seems to be a rebound in three. This is the data that we asked for to try to compare the Lesley schools to the non-Lesley schools, correct?

Ms. DeVincent replied what the groups are, trying to show that same cohort of students over time, that same group of students over time. I was trying to use group instead of cohort.

Committee Member Girard asked what's the difference between grouping one, grouping two, grouping three, grouping four?

Ms. DeVincent replied the first group is students that actually were in all three years. I had data on them from 2014. They were in kindergarten the first year. Group two is the group of students that were in kindergarten the second year, they came in year two of the literacy collaborative work and professional development. They have only had two years in the program, kindergarten and first grade. We have just completed three years. The students who came in in kindergarten have only had one year working with the teachers that have had the training through the literacy collaborative.

Committee Member Girard stated just to make sure that I'm following here, grouping one are kids that were tracked in kindergarten, first and second grade.

Ms. DeVincent stated yes.

Committee Member Girard stated the second grouping were kids who started...

Ms. DeVincent stated it was still kindergarten and first grade. They came into kindergarten year two of the literacy collaborative.

Committee Member Girard stated so they came into kindergarten in year two and then the single year is they came into kindergarten in year three. What is grouping three?

Ms. DeVincent replied that's your first grade students and then grouping four is your second grade students. We have some students who were in all three years so they are now in third grade.

Committee Member Girard stated in grouping three they started in the program in first grade, then they went to second grade and then they went to third grade and in group four they started in the program in second grade and went to third grade.

Ms. DeVincent stated yes. I know it is very challenging to try to group things over time.

Committee Member Freeman asked can I make a request? If in fact I am reelected and we get information like this can we get it in English?

Ms. DeVincent replied if you guys can help me figure out the best way to present the data I am all for suggestions.

Committee Member Freeman stated I'm really not ashamed to say that this left me scratching my head a few times. I'm really not embarrassed.

Dr. Vargas stated part of the challenge is what we had for assessments before. You have two different types of test, one which is more for instructional purpose, one that perhaps you can take a look at a program. There are a lot of caveats. What we could do if you don't mind, we could take it with us and give you some narrative with you that we could expand it a little bit.

Committee Member Freeman stated my motto in life is KISS, keep it simple silly. You might call me a simple person, whatever.

Dr. Vargas stated no, you're not.

Committee Member Freeman stated I want to be able to understand this. I want to because when I can't understand something like this I have a tendency to think that someone is trying to hide something. I think that is a natural human response. I want to understand this.

Ms. DeVincent stated I agree. When we went back to get this data the recommendations were we wanted to see the students over time. Honestly I was doing my best to make it show over time. I would love the opportunity when I draft the chart to run it by somebody for feedback before we finalize it. Maybe we can do that.

Committee Member Girard stated now that you have explained it I can actually read it. We have almost no data for grouping two.

Ms. DeVincent stated right. This was one of the things that we talked about, why we need to go districtwide with a common assessment across the district, the fact that there are these discrepancies in the data and what has been actually inputted into Performance Plus. This was teachers doing the Fountas and Pinnel running records, but not all the data was inputted into Performance Plus so when we go to pull out the data we are not seeing everything. Moving forward with iReady we are going to see everything because the data is automatically collected.

Chair Langton stated Sharon, as far as the groupings, you are saying this is following the same group of children over time. A lot of times with state assessment tests they show you the data for one year and the data the next year, but it is not the same students unless the data is expressed kind of in a step fashion so you can follow it as they move ahead into the next grade level. It can be difficult to read and understand whether you are talking about the same groupings of children or completely different children. If it is completely different children you really can't compare so that data becomes irrelevant. This is data on the same children. With the new program that we have instilled we may not get the three years of data right away, but three years from now we definitely should.

Ms. DeVincent stated yes.

Chair Langton stated and going forward we should be able to have almost 12 years of data if a child was in our system that long.

Ms. DeVincent stated absolutely and we won't have the data entry concerns because it is automatically collected data.

Committee Member Girard stated one of the reasons why I asked for this at the last meeting was to be able to compare how the schools in the Lesley collaborative were doing versus the other schools. Am I reading this correctly? I don't see, with the exception of Bakersville, there is nothing that stands out about these schools' scores that leads me to conclude that this Lesley program is having any more of an impact than anything that any of the other schools are doing. In fact I look at Weston in grouping one, they go from 70.2 to 41.3 to 48.9.

Ms. DeVincent stated and there are a lot of variables in there.

Committee Member Girard stated Northwest is basically level.

Chair Langton stated Highland looks good, but others are up and down.

Committee Member Girard stated Bakersville is the only one where I see consistent progress. Then I have Parker Varney which is doing its own thing at 41, 47, 64.

Ms. Kristine Pelletier, District Elementary Literacy Curriculum Coordinator, stated when we came and met with you at the last meeting we also talked about how the first year of this training is just specifically for the literacy coordinator, the LLI teacher and the reading recovery teacher. The second year the teacher does begin the 60 hours of training for the teachers. The third year is really when they have implemented it. We are in the fourth year. This, to me, is the year we are going to start seeing some shifts. We talked about it being baseline in the beginning, Mr. Girard.

Committee Member Girard stated I appreciate that, Ms. Pelletier, but I'm looking at the schools that aren't participating in the program and I'm seeing Beech with a small uptick. I'm looking at grouping one from year one to year two. I'm looking at Highland with a pretty noticeable uptick. I'm looking at Jewett with a noticeable uptick. I'm looking at Parker Varney with a modest uptick. I'm looking at Smyth Road with a solid uptick. I'm looking at Webster with a really big uptick going from year one to year two and these aren't schools that are participating in the program. I look at Northwest and I see a downtick and I look at Weston and I see a fall off the cliff kind of thing. I understand what you are saying about the training and the baseline, so my question to you is going to be this, quite simply, is anybody looking at what those schools that aren't seeing a decrease in their proficiency scores from year one to year two in this to find out what they are doing and maybe consider replicating that? That is the question. This is the basic data that allows us to look at things.

Ms. Pelletier stated I understand and I also know demographics have a point in this also. I think that is what we are going to look at. Like I said in the last meeting, you often, and there has been research done on this, see a dip in scores in the first part of implementation. Northwest in particular, they didn't have their full team of teachers trained that second year. She started a second cohort of teachers, meaning a group of teachers. She did her training year one, she trained half of a group of teachers the second year and then the third year trained a second cohort.

Committee Member Girard stated but if there is a dip once you start to implement the program as you go from year one to year two and you are telling me that they haven't really implemented the program because they are just starting to do it this year, which is the fourth year of the program when they really start using the methods with the kids, it is almost like you are saying there is going to be a dip when you implement, but you are telling me that you aren't implementing because you are still training.

Ms. Pelletier stated she is trained year one. The 60 hours are spread out over the year so that first year they don't fully have it under their belt. They are teaching, but they still don't have the deep understandings, along with the coaching piece of it. With Northwest they had one group of teachers trained year two and then a second, just because their staff is so big.

Committee Member Girard stated that's one school, but you had a particular problem at Weston where you went from 70.2% of the kids being proficient in year one to 41.3% being proficiency in year two to only 48.9% being proficient in year three.

Ms. Pelletier stated that was also the year that we talked about the standard for first grade and kindergarten shifting. That could also play into it. The other thing is those teachers received a lot of training on benchmark running records. Their data, I think, could be more accurate.

Committee Member Girard stated but they are all using the benchmark running records.

Ms. Pelletier stated they are.

Committee Member Girard asked why did Smyth Road drop out of the program?

Ms. Pelletier asked drop out?

Committee Member Girard stated if I go to page 51, in year two, school year 15-16, it says pay out for Smyth Road dropping out of study \$22,500. That tells me Smyth Road dropped out.

Ms. Pelletier asked Sharon, do you want to address that?

Ms. DeVincent replied I'm not sure of the full background story. I know that Smyth had originally signed on to be part of this literacy collaborative with the other three schools and after the first year a decision was made, and I could find out the specifics on it, for them to no longer continue. I guess there was a decision not to continue with the program. However, they had already committed and had already received some of the professional development so the district

was required to pay back those funds. My understanding was that it had been brought to the board.

Committee Member Girard stated here's the thing, I've already made my thoughts on that utterly ridiculous contract know so it doesn't surprise me that we paid a penalty to get out, but I take a look at Smyth Road's scores, year one, 14-15, 56.8% of their kids were proficient; year two 68.6% of their kids were proficiency; year three 77.4% of their kids were proficient. That tells me that maybe I want to figure out what Smyth Road School is doing. You see what I'm saying? They have outperformed every school that is participating in this co-op and I would like to know why Principal Briggs decided to say this isn't for us.

Ms. DeVincent stated I could get the information for you for that. Kris, could you speak to what the schools do for their reading? They all do similar things with their students as far as reading. This is just the additional PD that is happening in these literacy collaborative schools, but I know that they share that information when they meet monthly with one another. Different schools take back different pieces of that.

Ms. Pelletier stated a lot of what we talked about before was the complexity of reading instruction and writing instruction. We have adopted reading/writing workshop and word study in order to provide authentic opportunities for children to engage in reading and writing. What this has offered is some deeper training in that because originally we he brought America's choice, again, we talked about that last time that provided that framework, but I think provided minimal foundation just because of the way it was presented and because of funding and whatnot. Dr. Avard you talked to that, you spoke to that. This piece does a lot more and it provides coaching for teachers.

Committee Member Girard stated I appreciate that.

Ms. Pelletier stated I think with iReady we will also have a more consistent look at data across the schools. I also know that there are schools that demographically will do better on some of these assessments.

Committee Member Girard stated we hear this discussion about demographics, but I can go into Webster School and I can find a significant number, a significant demographic there that is impoverished. I can do the same at Gossler. I can do the same at Hallsville. I can do the same with just about every school on this list except Green Acres.

Ms. Pelletier stated I think, again, I need you to sit back and watch and see. Based on what I have seen in these schools, the collaboration, the instruction has changed. I'm working on an invitation actually to invite the School Board in to see some of the instructional shifts that we are talking about because I think it is going to happen. These scores are going to shift. We talked about the fact that scores will dip at the beginning of implementation because teachers are trying to try out things that they were trained in a little bit before, but now they are getting in more depth.

Committee Member Girard stated they are going through all this training without trying it out as they go. Is there a magic point that says now that you have had x number of hours or now that you have done a, b and c you may go into your classroom and try the method or are they trying to wait until they are trained?

Ms. Pelletier replied the approach is basically, and I think Beth and the literacy coordinators that were here last time explained it pretty specifically, they will present something professionally to the teachers in a workshop model and then within that next two week period or three weeks the teachers are coached and provided with feedback.

Committee Member Girard stated when you say they are coached you mean that they are using this in the classroom.

Ms. Pelletier stated they are using it in the classroom. They have a meeting with the teacher beforehand to discuss what is going to be observed. The coach then observes the lesson and then they have a debrief.

Committee Member Girard stated if they are doing it in the classroom and they are doing it right along, why would I expect to see dips in scores? Why wouldn't I see consistent rises as these methods that are supposed to be improving things are being used?

Ms. Pelletier replied all I'm going to tell you is...

Ms. DeVincent stated I just want to speak as an educator. You guys can back me up, all the educators in the room. It is when you are learning something new, you are trying something that is maybe out of your comfort zone, something you are not used to doing. The first time you do it, even with coaching, even with somebody there mentoring you along and they do a lot of job embedded coaching where these people are in the rooms with the teachers helping them along, you mess up a little bit. I wouldn't say you mess up, but you are out of your comfort zone. I don't know the best way to describe it. The first couple of times you do something it takes a little while to get into that groove and that rhythm to perfect your delivery of that instruction.

Committee Member Girard stated and I wouldn't argue that at all. I think before you can be good you have to be bad, before you can be bad you have to try and before you try to have to start. I get that. You said we need to sit back and watch. I have to tell you that gives me anxiety because I think that sometimes, I understand what you are saying, but we sometimes forget that a kid is only going to be in kindergarten once or in the first grade once. While we are sitting back and watching and waiting for results I see years slipping by. I have pulled my kids out of schools where the amount of time it was going to take to correct something meant that was a period of time where my kids were going to be suffering in their instruction. I have brought this up before and I'm just going to say it again for the sake of saying it. It seems to me that before we jump into something that we ought to take a look at what's happening in the schools and look to... There are several schools that I would look at here. I would want to know what they are doing at Smyth Road School that they have seen these consistent jumps year after year in the performance of their students. What are they doing at Parker Varney? What are they doing in these other places that are outside of this pilot program that are getting results that aren't cost us a quarter of a million dollars to get?

Ms. Pelletier responded this was an opportunity to provide teachers with an incredible amount of training. We have talked about the lack of professional development time in our district. this provided that. I want what is best for kids. The schools looked... At the time, I went to every principal because we actually could have had the opportunity to have more schools involved, but it had to have certain personnel in place in order for it to happen. This is, by far, the best training in terms of elementary. I would never present that. I have been in this School District for 30 years. I would never present something that I didn't know was instructionally sounds. If you looked at the teacher surveys that we provided last time...

Committee Member Girard stated I looked at them.

Ms. Pelletier stated there was a large percentage, a very high percentage, of people who are very pleased with what is going on.

Committee Member Girard stated and I understand the training opportunity. I guess the point I'm not putting across and I'll end it with this for my part, Madame Chair, I have something going on at Smyth Road School that if I were in a position of authority I would be making inquiries about. Meanwhile, the marquis school of this, or I view it as the marquis school because the principal has been the most upfront, Weston, has seen their scores crater in the pilot program. I think crater is an appropriate term when you fall 40 points. It just seems to me we often overlook what's happening in our own district that is good that we can maybe transfer in favor of something that is happening somewhere else. I would just like to know what's happening in some of these other schools that are leading to increases in scores versus these wonderful opportunities that cost us a lot of money and tie us into bad contracts for five year period of time and hope that in year five we are actually going to see the promised result.

Ms. Pelletier stated but that's any innovation, any different project you take on. It is just like Sharon was talking about. Pearson has done research on that.

Committee Member Girard stated Pearson is the largest seller of books in the world that like to reinvent things so they can keep selling books.

Ms. Pelletier stated not the publishing company, the man.

Committee Member Girard stated every time there is a new innovation they get to public something new. It feeds their bottom line.

Ms. Pelletier stated this isn't a new innovation. This is solid training in workshop model and in reading and writing process that is going to provide the teachers in our district...

Committee Member Girard stated I guess what I would wonder out loud is, whatever happened to teaching kids... If we taught kids English the way we teach them how to speak a foreign language where they learn how to say the letters, what the sounds are, how to put them together, they learn the mechanics of words and sentences and we still did grammar and diagrams, all that stuff that taught kids the mechanics of words and the mechanics of the language and the sentences and how to use it and how to structure it, I think, frankly, we wouldn't have as many of the problems that we have. We are coming up with all of these innovations to solve the problems we create when we move away from the things that are time tested and true. I don't care if you are a poor kid or a rich kid, a is still a, b is still b, a noun is still a noun, a verb is still a verb. We got away from teaching what worked and we are trying to find ways to solve problems that we have created rather than recognizing that what we were doing 30 years ago worked. That's my opinion.

Dr. Vargas stated I don't think we are going to solve this tonight. You made an observation and I would like to at least bring it to the attention of the committee. When you do a study and the data that we presented to you, one thing that you established is data collection. I do know that our staff had a difficult time even collecting the data, which is the most important thing as you know because how you collect data could determine all kinds of things. There is liability or whatever terminology we want to use, but we just needed to be up front and tell you that. I think Ms. Freeman brought that question to us, what am I seeing here? I heard you say that the data is not accurate. I'm very harsh with the university that is behind this study because you have to make sure that the design is appropriate. I cannot go to a parent if a parent were to ask me about

this, I can't just say to the parent it is not accurate. I just want to be clear about that. I know you heard the word demographic. When you deal with our students' population, some of which have the most vulnerable, you cannot leave the data collection up to chance. I would like to move forward. Perhaps we can talk about how we can bring some clarity to this and see where is the shortcoming in the data collection and what you are seeing. I think that would be appropriate to begin there. If the data is not accurate then both of you are perhaps, respectfully, and I'm not...

Committee Member Girard stated if there is a problem with the data...

Dr. Vargas stated you cannot draw the appropriate conclusion if the data is not accurate, one way or the other.

Chair Langton stated Dr. Vargas and Ms. DeVincent, as far as the data that we were provided here, there is a meeting with the elementary principals so if you could get their take on this data. As Mr. Girard pointed out Smyth Road seems to be doing a phenomenal job or their children seem to be moving up in the proficiency levels. If they could just have a discussion on why that is.

Committee Member Girard stated I would like to make a quick point though. The reason why we got this specific data was because every elementary school was using the running records. It should have been data that is comparable because it is the same system.

Chair Langton stated as long as they are doing it the same way.

Committee Member Girard stated back to my point about the tried and true versus all these innovations.

Committee Member Freeman stated I don't disagree with Committee Member Girard on a lot of things about being back to basics. Beyond that at this point, and thank you for bringing this up, Dr. Vargas. It is not that I don't believe the test scores or the results or the scores that you gave us, I don't understand them. If I can't understand them then I'm automatically suspect that

there is something being hidden. Again, if it is simplified to the point where anybody can pick it up and read it and understand what it is saying then people are more inclined to come to an understanding around it instead of getting their haunches up and say something is not right here, someone is trying to hide something from me. I'll always agree about getting back to basics, but that doesn't seem to be the way education is going. In the meantime, have to live with what you have.

Dr. Vargas stated let me just say that, for example, at Smyth Road when you conduct a study you have to know what else is going on in that particular school. Each one of our 14 elementary schools have multiple strategies to improve instruction.

Committee Member Girard stated but that's what I'm saying.

Dr. Vargas stated to do that and it takes a lot of work. It is not an easy thing. I don't mind having a partner to help us do that work. For example at Smyth Road, at least by observation, they are challenging every child regardless of their demographics, by the way. They have high expectations that are off the chart. One million words: I was there at one event and their vocabulary was incredible. What we need to do as an organization, as a district, is learn from one another as well. Also, when we introduce any effort to make sure that we also take into account what else is going on.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you, Ms. Pelletier, for being here at five past nine at night. We appreciate you being here. We appreciate you answering our questions.

TABLED ITEMS

A motion is in order to remove any item from the table.

12. Update on the PACE Program.
(*Note: Additional information is attached. Tabled 2/10/2016.*)

This item remained on the table.

- 13.** Discussion regarding the elementary health curriculum.
(*Note: Tabled 11/22/2016.*)

Chair Langton stated a question on our health program. That has been on the agenda at some point. It might be an oversight on my part, but I haven't seen it on there.

Committee Member Freeman asked may I address that? In the board updates, Dr. Vargas, that you supply us with every week you supplied us with a listing of all the districtwide professional development that is going to be happening on November 7th, election day. One of the offerings was a health curriculum alignment and design professional development. I don't remember and I had asked other committee members if we had seen exactly what this health curriculum is. Could you shed any light on that for us?

Ms. DeVincent replied there hasn't been a new health curriculum presented since the last update that you all had way back then. What it is, the health teachers are meeting again to talk about that because there has been so much change in the staff. WE have added on the health teachers at middle school, that sort of stuff. That is what the title is and it is going back to those discussions that we had last year about the same time and seeing where we left off there and what we need to do moving forward with the new staff that we have in place and that sort of thing.

Committee Member Freeman stated Ms. DeVincent, may I point out that we tabled that health curriculum a year ago.

Ms. DeVincent stated we are not using that. We are not doing anything with that. They are doing whatever is in place. They are just starting up that conversation again. We have so many new staff members on the health team now. I'm actually looking forward to where they come from with that discussion. They will take what they have presented to you here and they will talk about it again, no changes, no implementations or anything at this point.

Committee Member Freeman stated this is where my confusion will come in. If that is a health curriculum that we have not approved, why would they be discussing it?

Ms. DeVincent replied they are not. They are going from where they are at now with their health curriculum that they are using and they are talking about... We have many new health teachers, middle school level. We talked about alignment. Nothing is getting approved. They are going back to that same discussion I had with them last year or a couple of years ago when I came aboard and they are just meeting again and starting fresh. They are going to look at their current curriculums that they are using and that's where they are going to go from.

Committee Member Freeman stated I misunderstood then. What I heard you say is that they were going to talk about what we left off at and my understanding of that was that it would be the material that we had tabled.

Ms. DeVincent stated they are not going to teach it or anything, they just need to go back and have that discussion with all the new voices and perspectives that they have at this point. Hopefully we will start getting some momentum under that curriculum work because it has been tabled for so long and start looking at it and revisiting it and deciding how we will move forward with it. That would be with the guidance of Dr. Vargas.

Committee Member Girard stated I thought what was on the table was what the district's curriculum for health was. The reason why we put it on the agenda, and I forget specifically, I can go back and look, but we were getting some parent complaints about the health curriculum and certain things that were happening in certain schools so we asked Dr. Martin, I believe at the time, to put the health curriculum on the agenda. The night it was supposed to be discussed she was not here, if I'm not mistaken, and it got put on the table and we have never been able to return to it. My understanding is this is the health curriculum.

Ms. DeVincent stated I would have to look at it. I haven't looked back at it.

Committee Member Girard asked is my recollection on that right?

Chair Langton replied that's pretty much my understanding. Perhaps we should take it off the table.

Committee Member Avard stated and receive and file and let them start from scratch.

Chair Langton stated the middle school health curriculum is brand new.

Dr. Vargas stated actually, they are making it as they go. They are borrowing from each other and that is something that we can bring back to you.

Chair Langton asked do we want to remove it from the table, receive and file and have them come forward at the next meeting on exactly what they are doing moving forward, especially in the middle school.

Committee Member Avard stated remove it from the table and refer it back to them for work.

Ms. DeVincent asked can we have until the December meeting just simply because they are meeting on the 7th and we might not have time to get it ready for you.

*On motion of **Committee Member Avard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Freeman**, it was voted to remove this item from the table.*

***Committee Member Avard** moved to refer this item back to the administration for updating and work and report back at the December meeting. The motion was duly seconded by **Committee Member Freeman**.*

Committee Member Girard asked can we please, before we start reviewing and doing any more work to any curriculum items, again, this wasn't for us to work on or approve, it was for us to understand and dialogue, I would like to get the curriculum management plan done. These circular firing squads...

Chair Langton stated perhaps that could be a goal of the committee to get that through. It was started under another administration that wasn't quite...

Committee Member Girard stated wasn't quite willing to play ball.

Chair Langton called for a vote on the motion to refer this item back to the administration for updating and work and report back at the December meeting. The motion carried with Committee Member Girard voting in opposition.

Committee Member Girard stated I don't want anything coming back until the curriculum management plan is done. I want a process for that.

Chair Langton stated Dr. Vargas or Ms. DeVincent and anyone else who might be in the administration office soon, what Mr. Girard just mentioned, the curriculum plan, that has been on the wayside for a couple of years. I had had some great concerns. They wanted to move it every four or five years and I said that wasn't a reality. That is what we would all like, but that isn't exactly what happens. One of my concerns was that I know the science curriculum in the city hadn't moved forward that fast. I started teaching here 25 years ago for science and they really haven't moved a lot with that. As was pointed out tonight some of them still have the same textbooks so that's a concern.

14. Heinemann Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.

(Note: Tabled 9/26/2017 in order for legal to review the document.)

This item remained on the table.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Committee Member Avard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Girard**, it was voted to adjourn at 9:14 p.m.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ms. J. Wellington".

Clerk of Committee