

Northshore School District
Curriculum Materials Adoption Committee Minutes
February 1, 2021
3:30 PM
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the CMAC, Curriculum Materials Adoption Committee, was held remotely on Monday, February 1, 2021 via Zoom, and simultaneously broadcast publicly. Chairperson Obadiah Dunham called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Obadiah Dunham (Chair), Rebecca Nielsen (Co-Chair), Tracy Patterson, Adra Davy, Niki Smith, Shelby Reynolds, Ayva Thomas, Anne Nielsen, Greg Cox, Ashley Andrews, Shannon Colley, Nancy Dodson, Kim Osgood, Carolyn Urrutia, Jacqueline Probst, and Eli Yim

Absent: Janine Schmoll

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

Obadiah asked committee members to review the minutes from the November 30, 2020 CMAC meeting.

It was MOVED by Rebecca Nielsen and SECONDED by Adra Davy to approve the November 30, 2020 CMAC minutes as written.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

CMAC Purpose and Roles

Obadiah reminded members that the responsibility of the committee is to recommend materials to the School Board for approval. Obadiah shared the roles and expectations of CMAC members, highlighting the CMAC liaison role information.

Review Curriculum Materials Adoption Cycle

One of CMAC's roles is to review the Curriculum Adoption Cycle each year. Obadiah shared the current document, noting that there is currently a K-5 English/LA pilot in progress that should enter into the implementation phase next year. That will have a significant impact on the budget. Most other content areas are currently in a "maintenance" phase, primarily due to staff capacity and budget impacts as a result of COVID. This document is always subject to change.

Is Fountas and Pinnell, the K-5 ELA pilot curriculum due to come to CMAC for approval this year? Yes, that is the plan, but that is subject to change. Ideally, the Curriculum department typically plans for a deep curriculum review in a content area about every seven years. This process is very budget-dependent, so the actual review period can fluctuate. The Curriculum

department does a four year budget review for the State, so it may be that in the near future the curriculum review cycle could be based on that time period.

It was also noted that there are no reviewers needed for materials on the agenda for the next meeting, as the only submission received is a consent agenda item requiring only the chairperson's review. The bulk of the March CMAC meeting will be centered around review of the draft revised bias evaluation form for CMAC sponsors and reviewers.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentations For Approval

Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults)

Request for approval as District Supplemental Curriculum for English/LA, grades 9 and/or 11
Sponsor: Nicole Byrne, Teacher / Bothell High School

The young adult version of this book is a little less detailed than the original, and more geared toward high school students. Nicole feels there is a need for more black authors and texts that are more representative of the culture and social justice issues we are living with now. This is a nonfiction book that tells the story of the author's quest to end mass incarceration and excessive punishment, and his fight for racial justice. Nicole surveyed her students regarding their interests, and found that students are interested in learning about the criminal justice system and especially as it relates to racial inequalities. Nicole is recommending that the book would be a good supplement to the 11th grade Civil Rights curriculum. She also sees that it could pair well with the 9th grade required text *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Several students have read the book on their own as a selection for choice reading, and many students have expressed an interest in the book. Nicole attended a training on teaching this book, though she is not recommending it be required for teachers who wish to use the book in their class. There are many resources to support teachers who want to teach this book, including a free course taught by "Facing History and Ourselves". The book would be funded at the building level, but Nicole also has used "Donors Choose" and believes that the author will match any donations through that source.

Alternate texts could be offered for students who may find the content difficult to read.

Questions/Comments from CMAC members:

- Have you taught this novel previously in other districts?
No, she has not.
- Would the young adult version be most appropriate for 9th grade and the unabridged version be good for 11th?
No, Nicole leans toward the book being most appropriate for 11th grade, and feels that the young adult version is best for high school students due to the sensitivity of the subject matter. She has talked to teachers who teach this at lower grade levels.
- CMAC reviewers have noted several topics of sensitivity in their reviews. There has also been concern noted that these topics could be triggering for some students, particularly students of color.
Nicole agrees, and thinks it is important to know her students well before teaching this book. She would not teach it at the beginning of the year, but later in the year when she has had an opportunity to have conversations with students on these topics. Knowing her students and having a chance to prepare ahead is important.
- Regarding the comment that Nicole surveyed students about their interests, did she disaggregate that data by student demographics?
No, she did not, but could certainly do that.

- Credit goes to Nicole for looking for non-fiction works by diverse authors. There are some concerns, particularly for students in the 9th grade. The difference between this novel and *To Kill a Mockingbird* is that the narrator in *TKAM* is a pre-teen and the sensitive content is described through her eyes. This book is much more explicit. Nicole said that even with *TKAM* there is a lot of pre-teaching to address things that students will encounter in the book. For instance, they discuss things present in the book such as the “n” word and why they won’t use it. Other topics include abuse and lynching, and while they are not explicit, it is important that teachers address those topics, as they don’t go unnoticed by students. That approach will also be very important with this novel. She does feel that the topics in *Just Mercy* are better suited to 11th graders.
- Have you thought about teaching this in excerpts, rather than have students read the whole book? It was noted by another CMAC member that as a supplemental text, teachers could choose to teach it that way, it would be at the teacher’s discretion. English teachers are well equipped to deal with sensitive subjects, and do so often. Teachers will choose this text if they are confident as a teacher approaching this material. It is also encouraging that there is professional development available for teaching this book.
- One member feels strongly that the entire text should not be used in the classroom, excerpts would be a better approach. There are concerns among students that Black history is taught with a focus on the negative, there is little to no representation of the positives of Black culture in our curriculum. While there is value in the overarching themes of the book, it feels like a re-circulation of Black trauma that could be damaging for Black students.
- This book is a step in the right direction of bringing in books that are more relevant for students. However, this is not just a work of non-fiction, but a work of advocacy on a wide range of political topics. This could cause concern among some members of the community, which in itself is not a reason to not approve the book, but alternative perspectives should be offered. For instance, the author argues against capital punishment, so the alternative point of view should also be addressed in the teaching of the book. Nicole suggested that there might be a few ways to approach that concern, such as exploring with the class the strategies the author uses to persuade his audience, or providing students with the opportunity to choose a topic in the book to research and write about.

CMAC members discussed approval recommendation options:

- If we choose to approve for excerpted use only, would CMAC then identify the specific passages that could be used? Yes, that would be a good idea.
- Another option might be to approve for BHS only and see how students respond to the unit. We want to honor this process and teacher growth as they work through teaching literature like this. There are many approaches that could be used for sensitively teaching this material. This should be limited to 11th grade only.
- One member noted that as a former English teacher he would not feel comfortable teaching the full text in his classroom. Teaching excerpts would be his preferred way of teaching the material. This would allow for the benefits of the content while mitigating the negative impacts.
- Another option might be a temporary approval just for Bothell HS and ask that the sponsor work with the Racial and Educational Justice department and/or the Assistant Director of Equity and Pedagogy on an effective way to teach the content while reducing the impact that might be triggering to some students. Once that is accomplished, extending the approval to other schools could be reconsidered.

It is important to look at the high school novel collection as a whole and consider the student experience. What else are they reading? Is every experience with Black literature like *To Kill a Mockingbird* or *Just Mercy*? Before the pandemic, middle and high school ELA teachers were reviewing the entire novel collection and evaluating it using the diversity flower developed by the Racial and Educational Justice department. In light of that, this may not fit those goals, it might not fit into the big picture.

A member asked about the district policy with regard to parents or students opting out of curriculum they might find objectionable. Parents/and or students can opt out of curriculum that they find objectionable and an alternate assignment would be assigned.

It was MOVED by Greg Cox to recommend for approval for one year *Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults)*, as School Supplemental Curriculum for English/Language Arts, grade 11, with the following conditions:

- The sponsor would be the only one approved to teach the book
- The sponsor must work with the Racial and Educational Justice Department and Assistant Director of Equity and Pedagogy to develop a scope and sequence for teaching the book to address the sensitive content.

The motion was SECONDED by Shannon Colley

Discussion continued:

- Working with REJ and the Assistant Director of Equity and Pedagogy would be beneficial
- Would that also include a mental health perspective? Yes, that would be a component that REJ would address. “Racial battle fatigue” is something that has been discussed in the department as an important element to be aware of when evaluating curriculum.
- When people collaborate together it is more effective. Would it be more helpful for Nicole to work with others in her department who are also teaching 11th grade? Even partnering with REJ and Equity and Pedagogy, this might be a large weight to carry for one person. Sharing this task might enable the creation of more in-depth materials.
- It would also be important to require the other teachers to attend the professional development, if approval is extended to the entire department.

It was MOVED by Rebecca Nielsen to amend the motion to expand the use of the book to all teachers in the Bothell High School ELA department who teach 11th grade students, and to limit the teaching of the book to second semester.

The amendment was SECONDED by Nancy Dodson.

Obadiah called for the question on the amendment. The motion to amend carried.

Obadiah called for the question on the motion as amended:

It was MOVED by Greg Cox and amended by Rebecca Nielsen to recommend for approval *Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults)*, as School Supplemental Curriculum for English/Language Arts, grade 11, with the following conditions:

- The sponsor must work with the Racial and Educational Justice Department and Assistant Director of Equity and Pedagogy to develop a scope and sequence for teaching the materials to address the sensitive content.
- Use of the materials is limited to teachers in the Bothell High School English/Language Arts department who teach 11th grade students.
- The book should be taught only in second semester.
- The approval would be for one year only, with the sponsor invited back to CMAC after that time to present an update on the use of the materials and request an expansion of the approval.

The motion carried.

CK-12 Chemistry

Request for approval as District Supplemental Curriculum for Chemistry, grades 9-12
Sponsor: Christy Clausen, Assistant Director / Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Christy was joined by Missy Heeb, teacher at North Creek HS. The Curriculum and Instruction department did a review of current Chemistry resources and found that they were outdated and limited. A team was gathered to look for resources beyond just lecture and labs. The team focused on Open Education Resources (OER), which are reviewed and vetted but pose no cost to the district. Christy presented a brief timeline of the process:

2018-19:

- Developed a curriculum review team
- Identified CK-12 for pilot and developed a pilot team (12 teachers across 4 high schools)

2019-20:

- Pilot teacher training
- Distribution of devices
- Pilot from 10/2019 – 2/2020
- Studied feedback from teachers, parents, students
- Reached consensus on recommending CK-12 for adoption

They had planned to bring this to CMAC for approval in the spring of 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic changed those plans. This allowed teachers to continue piloting into the 2020-21 school year.

Christy noted that the feedback from the pilot was very valuable. They studied the positives, as well as the challenges and focused on solutions to those challenges.

- **Positives:** CK-12 Chemistry supports personalized learning, differentiation and extended learning. Provides adaptive practice for immediate feedback to students. Students found it more engaging and more accessible than traditional textbooks. Multiple languages are available, making it very accessible. Pdfs are available for students who want a hard copy. Living curriculum, always updating.
- **Challenges:** Parent perception was negative at first to some extent – that the teacher was somehow being removed from the instruction with the use of the online resources. Student navigation was difficult at first, but teachers have developed strategies to mitigate that. Because this is an online resource, devices are required.
- **Solutions:** Educate parents during curriculum nights; provide teachers PD on “best use” of CK-12; monitor student feedback to see where they might need support

Missy commented that CK-12 Chemistry is a very rich learning product that teachers can modify to fit their needs. There are simulations that have been invaluable during remote learning, as they mimic labs. There are interactives that allow students to explore and challenge concepts. CK-12 Chemistry is compatible with Google Classroom and Schoology.

A classroom set of computers is necessary to use this resource, those were provided to classrooms prior to the pandemic. Professional development is planned around best use, tips for getting started, the strengths and challenges of the resource. The PD would be through free CK-12 webinars and NSD pilot teachers. Funding would only be required for devices as needed (currently that need has been met) and PD for teachers new to teaching Chemistry.

Questions/comments from CMAC members:

- How deep do the accessibility features go for students, such as those with differing reading levels or physical abilities, those using adaptive devices?
The curriculum is deeply scaffolding from a differentiation perspective. Regarding the physical accessibility, whatever the district has in place for physical accessibility modifications would work with this curriculum. Because this is web-based, any extensions that students might

personally use would be available to them. The videos have closed-captioning options, and the curriculum also has a translation option. The benefit of being web-based is that any browser extensions students currently use, such as text-to-speech, screen contrast, font size, translation, etc. are all available to use with CK-12.

- Can you address the quality control aspect of using an Open Education Resource (OER)? Missy said that there are committees in place at CK-12 that are extremely responsive to any complaints or concerns about the material. If a complaint is received they freeze that content until a thorough review is performed. The district experienced this first hand with a concern about a specific video and it was dealt with immediately. They have also been very responsive around the technology piece.
- Are there any other supports that would be helpful to EL students that haven't already been mentioned? This CMAC member mentioned a positive experience working with EL students using this curriculum and noted that these students were much more successful than in other science classes.

Missy noted that having the translations readily available has proven to give students immediate support. She gave an example of a student who was having difficulty understanding the curriculum in either English or Spanish, and recognized that was partly due to the scientific language. She was able to give him printouts of both languages to compare side-by-side, which proved to be helpful.

- Christy noted that this program lends itself very well to collaboration among students.

It was MOVED by Niki Smith to recommend approval of CK-12 Chemistry as District Supplemental Curriculum for Chemistry, grades 9-12. The motion was SECONDED by Rebecca Nielsen.

Does that include the training? Yes, that was part of the proposal and is the standard practice when new curriculum is adopted. How do we ensure that new teachers receive training on curriculum that they need? The induction TOSAs work to ensure that new teachers are trained in the curriculum they will teach.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

Edgenuity

Request for approval as Alternative Core Curriculum for Mathematics for Highly Capable-identified students in grades 4 and 5

Sponsor: Katie Bjornstad, District Online/Remote Learning Lead

Katie was joined by Amity Butler, Director of Accelerated Models and Programs. Edgenuity is an online software curriculum program currently being used with students in grades 4 and 5 who have qualified for Highly Capable Program services in math only. They are serving students in schools where there is either no EAP program, or due to class size limits there is no room in an existing EAP classroom.

Pilot Information:

- Currently 154 students in grades 4 and 5 are enrolled in 6th and 7th grade math courses, respectively.
- The curriculum is customizable for student and course needs for personalized education
- Edgenuity teachers can utilize Schoology to support students and families, to maintain consistency with Schoology use within the district
- The program has guided notes – all families were provided with a printed version to support their learning.
- Due dates can be adjusted for students to allow more time on specific lessons/units. This was helpful this year because students started in Edgenuity in October, rather than September.

- One of the things learned from the pilot is to start the year with easier content, which will allow time to teach students/families about the software and online learning expectations. They can align Edgenuity with Core Focus in that way due to the customizable features.

Student/family feedback:

- Some students struggled with the challenges of the math acceleration, though not with the online program
- Parents appreciate having a program that meets their students' needs
- Parents like the parent portal to see weekly progress reports and also see how much time students are spending in the program.

The HiCap department cannot serve 13 schools with single qualifying students with in person instruction without an asynchronous offering. Classroom teachers were being pressured by families to not just differentiate for their students, but to accelerate students to content in a higher grade level, which is not possible for teachers in a general classroom.

Professional Development Needs:

- Edgenuity provides 2 in-person personalized trainings per year, typically 4 hours each. The district Edgenuity teachers received their first training in October.
- The Edgenuity team is very responsive: Katie experienced in a previous district that they quickly responded to a complaint about a particular piece of content.
- Asynchronous webinars are available, as well as 24/7 online support to teachers and staff
- NSD has a local assigned support person who answers questions in a timely manner

The district Edgenuity teachers team together and hold class sessions with different schools and groups of students. They don't just leave the students on their own to work through the curriculum.

The funding for the Highly Capable students is coming through the Accelerated Models and Programs department, and training is included.

Implementation Timeline:

2020-21

- 154 HiCap students in 4th/5th grades began using Edgenuity 6th and 7th grade math curriculum
- Four teachers (1.4 total FTE) were hired in October to support this program

2021-22

- Family notification for the program will be prior to the start of the school year
- Students will begin in Edgenuity in September
- Guided notes, student/family orientation and teacher meet and greet in late August, early September

Assessing Effectiveness:

- iReady progress monitoring year to year
- First semester grades: There were very few "2s", the majority of these kids received 3s and 4s under EAP standards
- Personal growth of students – independent learning and self-advocacy
- Edgenuity data – they can pull data at many different levels to assess the effectiveness of the program and how it is being used with students.

Questions:

- How will this look when we are back in the physical classrooms? Will the classroom teachers or the Edgenuity teachers support these students?

The *Edgenuity* teachers will be responsible for the students' math content. The HiCap department will work with schools to come up with schedules and models to accommodate the students within the classroom, school space, and schedule.

- Funding for the HiCap students is provided by the HiCap department, but *Edgenuity* is planned for other purposes too. Additional funding would then come from budgets appropriate to those uses.

- Did these students completely skip the 4th and 5th grade math curriculum, is that why they struggled when beginning *Edgenuity*?

Yes, there were gaps in the students' math skills because they skipped math content. The HiCap department has a better understanding of that now and worked to adapt this year. They have learned a lot and will have a different start next year.

- What does the transition to middle school look like for these students?

This is an ongoing conversation that they will have with teachers, evaluating the appropriate placement for students.

It was MOVED by Rebecca Nielsen to recommend approval of *Edgenuity* as Alternative Core Curriculum for Mathematics for Highly Capable-identified students in grades 4 and 5. The motion was SECONDED by Greg Cox.

One member expressed concern regarding math acceleration creating gaps, noting that can be harmful later in the math curriculum, and would prefer to see that addressed before approving the curriculum. Obadiah noted the concern, but said that it is not within the scope of the CMAC role.

A member noted that she didn't see much diversity in the videos in the 6th grade curriculum – mostly white males are represented in the videos. It is encouraging to know that *Edgenuity* is responsive and might address that concern when brought to their attention.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

Obadiah shared with Katie the concern regarding lack of diversity present in the videos. She will pass that feedback on to the company, and mentioned that she has heard that concern from others, too.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 PM.