



HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON UFSD

JANUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

OFFICE OF
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION
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Dear Hastings Community,

The month of January has passed quickly, yet certainly not quietly. While we continue to reel from the effects of the twin pandemics in our nation, COVID-19 and racism, the vaccine has brought with it a renewed sense of hope, a spirit of optimism, and the understanding that change will always be an inevitable part of our journey.

In our quiet moments of reflection, we can explore how we have responded to the rapid changes and strong emotions that we have personally encountered. What skills have we needed to learn and emphasize throughout the pandemic? What skills would still be beneficial for us to strengthen in order to achieve success? How are we measuring our success?

As we move forward together as a learning community, it will be essential for us to consider these questions in service to the path we will help to pave for our learners through our curriculum and instructional practices. Through our curiosity and intention, we will ensure that our learners are prepared to navigate the ambiguity and challenges they will most certainly face as they move beyond the school system and ultimately out into the world of work.

Thank you to our faculty, staff, and parent community for your continued partnership in service to our shared goal of supporting students.

Following is some yellow jacket "buzz" from the office of Curriculum and Instruction.

Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Pedagogies

Dr. Detra Price-Dennis has joined us at Chair Council as we continue professional learning around culturally responsive pedagogies. Council members shared questions they have about the Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education (CR/SE) Framework, synthesized the key ideas outlined in the document, and revisited the grounding principles. Dr. Price-Dennis has emphasized the critical nature of considering sociopolitical context, sociocultural context, and asset-based perspectives when selecting resources. She posed reflection questions for the group to consider around curriculum and resources that will inform the group's next steps.

At each of the three buildings, faculties have been engaging with the Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Framework. At Hillside, Elementary Department Coordinators (EDC) explored portions of the Framework during a monthly meeting. Members of the EDC will assume leadership as facilitators and partners with their colleagues as they unpack and discuss various portions of the Framework. Follow up work will also take place during team meetings. At Farragut Middle School and Hastings High School, the building principals and assistant principals took the lead on facilitating the Framework with their faculties during January Faculty Meetings. Teachers and service providers engaged in a jigsaw and discussed key points of the Framework.

Curriculum Hour

We have been hosting monthly Curriculum Hours, a voluntary collegial professional learning forum for faculty members. Our most recent session centered around the Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Framework. Together, members of the session explored what it means to be sociopolitically conscious and socioculturally responsive, along with potential roadblocks. Discussion themes included restorative practices, building relationships, ensuring access for all students, and strategies for sustaining our culturally responsive efforts.

New Curriculum and Instruction Website Links

The Diversity and Inclusion section of our website has been recently updated. Please click [here](#) to access the new resources and information.

Racial Equity Learning Day

A Hastings High School Racial Equity Learning Day was designed to provide an opportunity for students to consider how racial equity affects our world. Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Associate Professor of English at Teachers College, Columbia University, led a workshop on a process of digging deep and “peeling back layers” of our life experiences. Participants were encouraged to engage in personal reflection about their own racial beliefs and practices to support the development of racial literacy. Dr. Detra Price-Dennis, led a workshop focused on media, equity, and social change. The day culminated with a keynote speaker, Kevin Richardson, one of the Exonerated Five, who focused on the themes of knowing and making use of your rights, and the importance of perseverance. Hastings learning community members involved in the design and/or facilitation of this day include Lou Adipietro, HHS Principal, Melissa Hardesty, HHS Assistant Principal, Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Tesfa Stewart, Assistant Director of Special Education, Jennifer Spirelli, FMS Principal, Raquel Reid-McFarlane, Teaching Assistant, Jada Dickens, Math Interventionist, Ross Abrams, English Teacher, Josh Blum, English Department Chairperson, Diana Pan, Parent, Kalani Martial, Sabine Paz-Le Draoulec, Cai Snell, Victoria Pereira, Eesha Chen, and Aya Hinawi, Students, Yakira Sameth, Alumnus, and Melissa Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. A Racial Equity Learning Day for the middle school is in the process of being designed for March.

K-12 Mathematics Committee

The work of our K-12 Mathematics Committee continues to be ongoing. Our January session focused on a data inquiry of artifacts provided by teachers and leaders within cross-building breakout groups. The purpose of the work was to deepen understanding of the Standards for Mathematical Practice and how they look vertically as students are moving through the system, examine how they are brought to life through our leadership and teaching practices, and consider opportunities to enhance student learning. Members of the committee used a protocol as they engaged in the analysis and discussion of artifacts.

Faculty Book Study

Educators from across the system are engaged in a book study of 30 Days to the Co-taught Classroom. Thank you to Kristen Kumar, Inclusion Facilitator, for leading our important discussions around creating inclusive learning environments through strong partnerships.

Keyboarding Without Tears

As a reminder, Keyboarding Without Tears has been introduced to our 3rd and 4th Grade students. For more information about using this learning resource at home, please click [here](#).

Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Thought Group

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Thought Group met this month to continue to establish the connection between what children learn in school and what they will need for life, work, and the future of learning in an ever-changing world. Tom Hatch, community member, professor at Columbia University, and author, facilitated a portion of the session. Under his guidance, the group explored what it takes to develop common purposes for learning. The work of our Curriculum Thought Group will lead into work around creating a portrait of a graduate and a strategic planning process.

WE CONTINUE TO REMAIN INTERESTED IN YOUR FEEDBACK IN SUPPORT OF OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AS WE NAVIGATE THE PANDEMIC TOGETHER.

BEST REGARDS,

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