

**Somerset Public Schools  
Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
Professional Development/Educator Quality Plan**

The professional development/educator quality plan for Somerset Public Schools (SPS) and Somerset Berkley Regional School District (SBRSD) is aligned with the respective strategic plans for each district (SPS—2009-2014; SBRSD—2011-2016), the School Improvement plans of our six schools, *No Child Left Behind*, *Race to the Top* and *Educator Quality* programs. This plan is designed to accomplish the overarching goals of high academic achievement, excellence in teaching, safe and supportive schools, building school community relations, ensuring adequate funding for the schools, technology integration, and providing for structurally and programmatically correct facilities.

**District Professional Development Guiding Principles/Aims**

- To improve student learning and achievement by promoting high quality classroom instruction
- To support educator quality, including implementation of the Educator Evaluation Framework to improve student learning
- To promote collaborative site-based professional development
- To use professional development to expand staff capacity and provide staff with seed work that is actionable and directly impacts student learning
- To promote educational leadership among the administrative staff
- To provide opportunities and resources that support professional development activities initiated by an individual staff member or group of staff members
- To promote and support innovation, risk-taking, and experimentation which improves teaching and learning
- To provide professional development that is on going and sustained, that can be applied in the classroom and that ultimately becomes institutionalized as part of our formal educational programs
- To support an educator's professional responsibility to remain current in their field and assume a leadership role within their content area(s) and pedagogy.
- To assist staff in meeting recertification/highly qualified guidelines for professional licensure
- To incorporate technology as an integral part of the curriculum

To address these goals, the professional development/educator quality plan for Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District is presented within the framework suggested by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which includes the four priorities for Professional Development (PD) that are outlined below. Within these four priority areas, the professional development activities provide for collaborative, site-based opportunities that allow staff to plan, share and exchange ideas; that will allow staff to participate in on-going curriculum enhancement and development using a team-based approach; that will allow staff to examine data and student work in collaborative settings; and that will allow staff to participate in collaborative coaching, in-class modeling and demonstrations.

**1. Expand teacher's knowledge of the subject matter of the school curriculum:**

- Support programs for educator's study and further learning in the academic disciplines and subjects for which they are responsible
  - College and university courses (Tuition Reimbursement program)
  - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) Content-Institutes
  - School and departmental offerings (i.e. District Professional Development Day; PD proposals initiated by staff; on-site grade-level/grade-span/content-area PD; on-site curriculum development/mapping sessions)
  - Partnerships with local collaboratives and other professional development providers, research and development centers and higher education institutions

(i.e. South Coast Educational Collaborative; Research for Better Teaching [RBT]; East Bay [RI] Educational Collaborative; UMASS/Dartmouth; Bridgewater State College, Center for Collaborative Education)

- On-going support for new teachers through an induction program and mentors who are paired with new teachers based on academic disciplines whenever possible
- Review and support technology initiatives that are directly related to a particular academic discipline (developing technology lessons)
- Coordinating PD activities with the District Technology Plan (2009-2013) to develop and implement technological training and professional development opportunities to support teaching and learning

## **2. Extend teacher's familiarity with and use of, the Massachusetts learning standards and curriculum frameworks in planning classroom curricula:**

- Continuation of professional development on standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment:
  - Training on the Educator Evaluation Framework to improve student learning
  - Aligning curriculum with the Common Core Standards/2011 State Curriculum Frameworks (ELA and Mathematics)
  - Continue mapping of *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards* (K-8→extend to GR 9-12); developing content-area lessons
  - Designing and using scoring guides/rubrics linked to curriculum standards and school expectations
  - Linking curriculum learning standards to instruction and assessment
  - Developing and using varied means of assessment (literacy across the curriculum; performance tasks; academic support strategies; project-based/interdisciplinary learning; open response prompts/problem sets; portfolios; common/benchmark assessments in core content areas)
  - Continue ongoing and sustained PD on differentiated instruction—all levels; co-teaching/differentiated instruction model at Middle School (GR 6-8); math differentiation/workshop model/coaching (GR K-10); 6-Traits Writing/Literacy in the content areas to support differentiated reading/writing across the curriculum (K-12); English Language Learner (ELL) training on WIDA\*\* standards and assessments (K-12); PATHS\*\*\* social-emotional competencies implementation (PK-5)
- Continue implementation of multi-year PK-12 curriculum revision and renewal plan
- Continuation of PK-12 curriculum mapping across core content areas, focusing on standards alignment and grade-level articulation
- Continuation of district curriculum development/mapping model, integrating instructional units with learning standards, key/essential questions, instructional strategies/resources and assessment (utilizing grade-level, grade-span and content-area teams)
- Targeted curriculum enhancement and development (all content areas)
- Continue to align curriculum with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks; continue process of aligning curriculum to Common Core Standards/2011 State Frameworks (ELA and mathematics); to be coordinated with *Race to the Top* initiative
- On-going school and departmental offerings (PD Day; professional development proposals; study groups; on-site PD)
- Increase training at the elementary level to support Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Continuation of on-site PD/in-class coaching, demonstrations and modeling to support differentiation (ELA and math focus)

- Support from District Mentoring/Induction Program (continue to recruit, mentor, develop, evaluate, and retrain teachers to meet this goal)
  - \*\* WIDA—World-Class Instructional Design & Assessment
  - \*\*\* PATHS—Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies

**3. Provide educators with opportunities to evaluate a range of common pedagogical practices in their subject areas and to determine when different practices are most effective:**

- Provide opportunities which ensure the use of best practices that are scientifically researched-based to differentiate instruction to meet the needs and learning styles of all students, to include the following areas
  - Training on the Educator Evaluation Framework
  - PD on data-informed decision making (i.e. analysis of multiple data sources, including MCAS, to inform curriculum, instruction and assessment; using data to identify achievement gaps and how to reduce these gaps; assessing strengths and weaknesses of students performance, using a variety of student and school assessment data; expanding school-based data teams)
  - Differentiated reading/writing across the curriculum (focusing on differentiated instruction/diverse instructional and assessment approaches)
  - Mathematics differentiation/problem solving and reasoning, across all math strands (i.e. focusing on differentiated/workshop model and classroom-based coaching; open response mathematics problem solving tasks; integration of math literacy strategies; implementation of advanced math curricula (grades 3-5) and Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) math training (grades 6-10)
  - 6-Traits Writing/Literacy across the curriculum (i.e. 6-Traits Writing/literacy strategies in the content areas; differentiated reading instruction; articulation of reading support services/strategies, K-12)
  - On-going curriculum development, review and revision (grade-span and grade-level teams)
  - Effective use of technology to support instruction (technology lessons linked to *Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards*; expand use of Test Wiz and Education Data Warehouse)
  - Continue K-12 health/wellness programming/curriculum mapping; PATHS social-emotional competencies curriculum, PK-5; continue focus on violence/bullying prevention curriculum, using research-based programs (*PATHS* and *Michigan Model for Health*); continue bullying prevention training through MARC Center at Bridgewater State University, Bristol County Sheriff's Office, and district staff)
  - Student Services/Guidance professional development (student emotional/behavioral/ethical issues, including social skills development and bullying prevention training; continue Crisis Prevention/Restraint training through South Coast Educational Collaborative; strategies for increasing academic achievement, retention and reducing drop-out rate (implementing *MassCore* requirements at High School); implementing strategies and services to enhance grade-level transitions and articulation (i.e. 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade; 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - On-going support from district mentoring/induction program (continue to recruit, mentor, develop, evaluate, and retrain teachers to address this goal)
  - Off-site PD to support district and school goals/priorities (multiple providers)

#### 4. Raise expectations for student achievement:

- Through on-going PD on PK-12 curriculum development and articulation, the district will establish clear criteria for each grade level for advancement to the next grade level
- Through on-going PD on curriculum enhancement and development, and implementation of PK-12 curriculum design model, we will integrate system-wide guidelines, consistent with state curriculum requirements, into all classes at all grade levels
- Through on-going PD on curriculum development/mapping, differentiated reading/writing across the curriculum, literacy strategies in the content areas, mathematics differentiation/workshop model, technology integration, prevention/wellness programming, mentoring/induction support, and curriculum development and revision, we will work towards narrowing proficiency gaps and increasing student growth (through 2017)
- Through expanded PD on effective use of instructional technology, we will implement a comprehensive technology strategy to support the improvement of student learning and achievement (continue *Technology Literacy Standards* mapping; incorporate technology lessons/activities in the content areas)

#### Structural Features:

- Gather feedback/comments through professional development surveys, and other school and district data sources, which will serve as the foundation for an on-going needs assessment for continuous and sustained PD
- Continue on-going needs assessment at the school and district level (i.e. Title II-A/Educator Quality Needs Assessment; teacher surveys, PD feedback; District PD Day, District and School improvement/acceleration plans; MCAS and other data sources; ESE Coordinated Program Reviews; various Accreditation reports)
- Emphasize on-site collaborative professional development (teachers work together, not in isolation)
- Continue to partner with higher education institutions and educational collaboratives (Bridgewater State College; UMASS/Dartmouth; South Coast Educational Collaborative and East Bay (RI) Educational Collaborative)
- Coordinate and integrate PD activities with District Technology Plan (2009-13)
- Continue to provide opportunities for beginning and veteran teachers to implement best practices and guide others toward continued progress
- Conduct annual review of school systems performance through analysis of multiple data sources (i.e. annual review of school improvement plans; building-level and content/subject matter area feedback; PD surveys and evaluations; review of curriculum products, MCAS/Accountability and other data reports (Massachusetts ESE, Education Data Warehouse, Test Wiz); various needs assessments, monitoring implementation of recommendations from ESE Coordinated Program Reviews; accreditation reports (NEASC); district and school improvement/acceleration plans)
- Review the current district *Professional Development Plan* (described herein) on a regular basis, and make appropriate recommendations and revisions to the plan, as needed

#### Budgetary Features:

- Continue to access the following funding sources for Professional Development
  - District Resources (Professional Development Contracted Services and Expenses; Professional Development Teachers Salaries; Tuition Reimbursement Program; *refer to current district budget for specific amounts*)
  - Federal grant funds (Title I, Title II-A Educator Quality; Special Education and Special Education Program Improvement, Race to the Top)
  - State grant funds (Quality Full-Day Kindergarten; MCAS Academic Support)
  - Private fund sources (varies)

## Appendix

### Somerset Public Schools District Strategic Plan Goals (2009-14)

- Goal 1:** Review and maintain criteria to ensure that all students qualify to advance to the next grade level. Continue to work towards all children being at the proficient or advanced levels in regards to MCAS performance.
- Goal 2:** Integrate system-wide guidelines as established by the Massachusetts state curriculum frameworks for each grade level(s), while continuing to recruit and retain high quality teaching staff that will be provided professional development in the area of differentiated instruction and using research-based practices.
- Goal 3:** Support student education by addressing social emotional needs, celebrating diversity and focusing on citizenship.
- Goal 4:** Maintain a high level of fiscal support and credibility in our community and address the significant infrastructure and organizational issues that require immediate attention with appropriate funding.
- Goal 5:** Implement and provide training that is consistent with the district technology plan to support student learning and prepare students to live in a technological world.

### Somerset Berkley Regional School District Strategic Plan Goals (2011-2016)

- Goal 1:** Provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff.
- Goal 2:** Integrate district-wide guidelines as established by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- Goal 3;** Create a culture that continuously reflects upon best instructional practices.
- Goal 4:** Create, implement and maintain partnerships with student, parent and community groups.
- Goal 5:** Implement and provide training that is consistent with the district technology plan to support student learning and prepare students to live in a technological world.
- Goal 6:** To create, formalize and establish a cyclical evaluation system for all events that contribute to the culture of Somerset Berkley Regional High School.