

Curriculum Corner

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Highlights of the Duxbury Public Schools September 2015

MCAS Results and Future?

The state recently released MCAS scores for all districts. District results are found on the Department of Elementary and Secondary web page by following this embedded link to [Duxbury MCAS scores](#). This fall brings many changes in the accountability structure as just over half of Massachusetts districts took the PARCC assessment in lieu of MCAS in grades 3-8. The Board of Education will meet in November to determine the assessment plan for this school year, meaning it is unclear as to whether the state will adopt PARCC or continue with MCAS or another state created test. The grade 10 test for graduation will remain MCAS through at least the class of 2019 as will the science test in grades 5, 8 and 9 since PARCC pertains only to Math and English Language Arts.

Elementary and Middle School Math

As an outcome of the math curriculum review process, new resources are in place across Kindergarten through grade 8. These texts are now fully aligned with the Massachusetts Common Core Framework in math where mathematical practices and higher order thinking are the priority. The envision 2.0 series in Kindergarten through grade 5 builds a strong foundation in these conceptual skills as well as establishing mastery in the more traditional computation skills. The text published by Glencoe in grades 6-8 continues these skills seamlessly into the algebraic concepts throughout middle school. Teachers received and continue to receive extensive professional development in the programs and math instructional strategies. A math curriculum night is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28. Please watch for further details from the elementary schools.

iConnect and Schoology

iConnect is successfully in place in grade 7, extending the program from grades 7 to 12. Simultaneously, the district adopted Schoology as its Learning Management System as a voluntary tool for teachers. As mentioned, the selection process last spring included teachers, students and parents in order to select a product that would both meet current needs and grow with the district's expansion of technology as an instructional tool. In its early days of implementation, the feedback from students is very positive since their assignments and course materials are now highly organized and easily found.

Time and Tides

In August, a pilot program offered students the opportunity to explore an alternate learning experience through the Time and Tides program. The program is an integrated approach to learning with multiple staff members from different content backgrounds. Students spend approximately half of their time in the classroom and the remaining time in the community. Thematic concepts drive the curriculum which empowers students to make decisions about their learning and become active in the process. Teachers serve as facilitators. A Duxbury Education Foundation grant funded the summer project. Plans for the future are under discussion as exploration begins into a semester "school within a school" opportunity for seniors. The program is modeled after Concord-Carlisle's highly successful Rivers and Revolutions program. Additional information is available on the web page through this embedded link to [Rivers and Revolutions](#).