

APPROVED



Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

Minutes

Academic Excellence Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday February 7, 2024 at 9:00 AM

Location

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 86778071837

Passcode: 095287

MISSION

The mission of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is to nurture and develop academic, social and emotional competence while building confidence, character and citizenship among its students.

Committee Members Present

A. Buckmire, D. Morris, M. Gardner

Committee Members Absent

S. Dibinga

Guests Present

C. Beckhusen, David Conrady, K. O'keeffe

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Gardner called a meeting of the Academic Excellence Committee of Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to order on Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 at 9:02 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

A. Buckmire made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Excellence Committee Meeting on 12-13-23.

D. Morris seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Buckmire Aye

M. Gardner Aye

D. Morris Aye

S. Dibinga Absent

II. Winter Benchmark Data

A. Upper School Data

Ms. Beckhusen presented upper school winter benchmarking data for Reading and Math. When looking at 3rd grade data she explained that this is their 2nd year using the Bridges math curriculum.

A board member asked if the Bridges Math curriculum was vocabulary rich. Looking at the SWD and ML subgroups and seeing their data, could they be struggling with math because of this?

Dr. Conrady explained that some modules do have more vocabulary than others and some vocabulary may loop with grade levels. There are ways to implement some strategies to help the students with integrating the vocabulary to help these students.

Ms. Beckhusen shared that there are a lot of ideas included within the curriculum of ways to scaffold, differentiate and understand how to fill gaps but that comes with teachers having the time to dig into all of the resources, internalize and recognize what their students are going to need ahead of time while they're planning.

Looking at 4th grade data, in general what you see in data Trends the SGPs for Tier 3 students are the highest because they're receiving the most interventions and additional resources and we're not seeing this in our data.

Ms. Beckhusen shared that one of the priorities for us over the last few years has been the new curriculum and restructuring the Tier 1 instruction. We need to make the shift at looking at the interventions that are being used and are available while looking at the teachers and their skill level with those resources and making sure that they are happening.

A board member shared that Math in 4th grade is very concerning.

The 5th grade data shows some strong SGPs. They are stronger than they were last year. Reading in particular shows some really nice growth for this group of students this year.

The 6th grade data shows some concern for ML's winter data.

When looking at i-ready data, the grades that show low growth are K2, 1st and 4th, who are not progressing the learning and mastery of those students as fast. We have 30% of our students that have met their end of year target already. Our accountability plan is written as 50% of all students will meet that target. Our accountability plan is written on the typical growth.

A board member shared that they would like to hear what the state of affairs amongst leadership, grade level leadership, faculty and staff related to the response to the data and looking at the data themselves. For the next meeting, sharing out top areas of pride and top areas of concern and then as a committee we aren't just looking at the data and seeing where we are, but we are hearing about how the interventions are going and what is and isn't working.

B. Lower School Data

Ms. O'Keeffe presented Aimsweb Data for all students in grades K-6 comparing data from

winter 22-23 to winter 23-24. The data was broken down into 3 groups, all students, students with disabilities and multilingual learners.

When looking at the reading data, a board member shared that when looking at fall and winter data the multilingual data is concerning. Fall 2023 the percentage of Tier 3 was 14% and Winter 2024 the percentage is 27%.

Disaggregated Aimsweb Reading data was further broken down by grade level allowing a deeper dive to look at the subgroups by grade level. This is helpful to identify grade levels that may be struggling a bit more than others. For example, we can see that 1st grade and 4th grade have quite a few students in Tier 3.

A board member shared that 4th grade students with disabilities is a subgroup that is extremely concerning.

Another board member shared that 3rd grade students with disabilities is a subgroup that is extremely concerning.

Disaggregated Aimsweb Math data was also further broken down by grade level allowing a deeper dive to look at the subgroups by grade level.

While looking at the Math data, a board member shared that again, 4th grade students with disabilities are extremely concerning.

Another board member asked if we are going to discuss what is being done or if we are just looking at the data today?

Data that compares subject area and fall to winter data was presented. Ms. O'Keeffe explained that the Student Growth Percentile (SGP) is the percentage of students in national norm sample that had an ROI that was smaller than or equal to a given ROI. We

tend to look at the SGP because it's correlated with specific Roi so the SGP is a way that we can consistently look at growth across different grades measures and time intervals. Whereas the ROI is an average weekly raw score point increase between fall and winter. The ROI is helpful, but what we look at is that the ROI is already correlated with the specific SGP and because the GP is consistent across grade levels, subject areas, and subtests. We really want to draw attention to the Student Growth Percentile. We usually see higher ROI or SGP with Tier 3 students because the students who are performing lower are receiving more services. So they might be growing at a faster rate and that is what you typically see in data. But as we go through this, that is not what we see in all of our grade levels and subgroups. This is something that we need to address.

Ms. O'Keefe shared that these graphs are helpful because we were able to make some changes to things such as curriculum. For Math and Reading, we onboarded two new curricula last year and then we also started a new math curriculum this year so it is helpful to see what things looked like last year and how the changes that we made impacted our students this year.

A board member shared that from Winter of 22-23 to Spring of 22-23 it looks like there were significant jumps and winter 23-24, it looks like there are dips compared to last year. What will we continue to do to try and see some of those similar gains by spring?

Dr. Conrady shared that looking at Kindergarten students with disabilities subgroup, fall 23-24, Tier 3 Math drops from 71% to 43% and Tier 1 going from 7% to 39% which is nice growth.

Some changes that were made last year and that may have had an impact are the adoption of Bridges in K2 this year and the onboarding of ST Math. Some positives with this are that Average SGP in the "high" range. A higher percentage of students in "average" or "above average" performance bands in all ENB subtests. The difference is particularly apparent in QTF, with 74% for SY 23-24 and 52% SY 22-23. A higher percentage of students placed on grade level on Winter i-Ready Math diagnostic in SY 23-24 (39%) than in SY 22-23 (27%)

In ELA, we are Continuing Foundations and Heggarty with that big fidelity push last year. Average SGP for SY 23-24 is 41%, last year it was 50%. When looking at accuracy for Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) and Letter with Sound Fluency, 20 students fell below 80% accuracy on LNF and 38 students fell below 80% accuracy on LWSF, with 8 of those students earning an accuracy percentage in the 70s. Teachers have been asked to practice building speed and fluency, and ensuring students are able to identify letter names and sounds with and without the support of the Foundations cue cards. Higher percentage of students tested "on grade level" on Winter i-Ready Reading diagnostic in SY 23-24 (51%) than in SY 22-23 (35%), with the greatest positive difference being found in the domains of Phonics and Lit. Comp.

Dr. Conrady shared that with this data just coming out, he plans on meeting with directors and really analyze the data and identify where we see gaps or fidelity issues and also looking at what is the growth of each one of the tiers. Are we seeing significant positive growth, especially in Tier 3 and Tier 2.

Ms. Buckmire shared that one thing overall that she would really like him to focus on with the directors is around ML's and SWD's. The next time we meet it would be really helpful

to hear what the specific actions that were taken to target these subgroups because it continues to be a large concern. What is the most concerning is that our SWD's is a small percentage compared to other districts. Most districts hover in the 20-30% and to have so few students identified with disabilities and ML's, it continues to be an area of significant concern. Not just performance, but thinking about the kids that are behind these numbers, what are they getting?

A board member shared that they are less curious about the gaps in student outcomes and more curious about the gaps in implementation and where those targeted supports and accountability for faculty and staff are and I am curious about the family and partnership side of this, how families think about their student's SGPs, so that we don't get caught up in where are they now, but how are they growing over time? How do they feel empowered to be a part of that growth?

Also, in reference to UDL, if we were only seeing red bars in SWD's then this would be a student support issue, but we are also seeing this with other subgroups. What does collaboration and partnership look like in terms of providing supports in classrooms and how all students are accessing resources and supports, not just SWD's and ML's? When I look at the numbers, it is unclear to me if we know what the root cause of what these issues are and have a clear plan of how to address it.

III. Update from Chief Academic Officer

A. Whole School Update

Dr. Conrady shared When looking at Math growth from i-ready and seeing the growth that 6th grade has made, it is important to see what is happening in these classrooms where we are seeing a high amount of growth. Finding out what the difference is and going through fidelity, what instruction looks like, and how UDL is being used.

A board member shared that the 6th grade team is a veteran group of teachers and we know what they are doing. How do we replicate excellent skilled teaching across all grade levels.

We have completed phase 1 for the integration of a common writing framework - Professional development delivered to both lower and upper school, laying out the K-6 sequence for writing, We are now in Phase 2, looking at subject level support and integration. Curriculum coordinators are building in planning aspects within their content planning. We've identified different teachers, who need more support and if someone is excelling at teaching writing how we can continue to support them to be more innovative and excel with the writing process and integration. Our Math, Science, and Specialty Classes have created common writing prompts and a common rubric has been implemented for feedback purposes. Through content meetings, Curriculum Coordinators are providing differentiated support.

Our first of two Writing Walks will be this week, 2/8. Identifying initial level of integration of PD in classrooms, within planning, instruction and UDL supports in place for students.

We will be looking to see if all students have access to different supports to help them in the writing process. I have seen some great creativity in how the writing is being implemented.

We had our 2nd walkthrough of Bridges Implementation. We had our instructional partners come in and look at where we are with the integration. The feedback from them is that we are on target with the implementation process K-5. They identified areas of strength & areas to continue to support. An area of support continues to be the planning aspect and making sure teachers are hitting their rigor of the grade level standards. In some cases the pacing is off so they are not hitting all standards. In content meetings with teachers we will be focusing on making sure teachers know the most important piece they need to get to. Our Instructional Partners hosted a recent PD focusing on ensuring rigor of standards.

A board member shared that the areas of growth for teachers is something that he is seeing in a number of the schools that he is touring at the moment. This is not Renaissance specific. What are the supports for these teachers around the implementation and rigor. I understand you have support from a DESE grant, but what does internal support look like to ensure you are seeing the strides from teachers that you want to see?

Dr. Conrady shared that curriculum coordinators are working with teachers to ensure the planning documents to make sure we see the same things we want to work on and highlight the planning process. Then taking the next step and ensuring that the same actions from the planning process are being done in the classroom. If so, what areas are we going to support teachers. We have a wide range of skill sets and experiences. We have started looking at each individual teacher to see what supports are needed. 3rd grade is focusing on small groups and student engagement, which is what we are trying to push towards. They are the trend setters and are pushing them to be a model for our school. We are starting to see less teacher talk and students doing more of the work.

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Gardner

Documents used during the meeting

None