

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE



Independent Program Reviews

June 8, 2023

Presentation

Objectives



- **Review the Social Studies Equity Audit**
- Provide an overview of trends from the studies that have been conducted
- Build a bridge to goals and objectives of the strategic plan

Social Studies Equity Audit





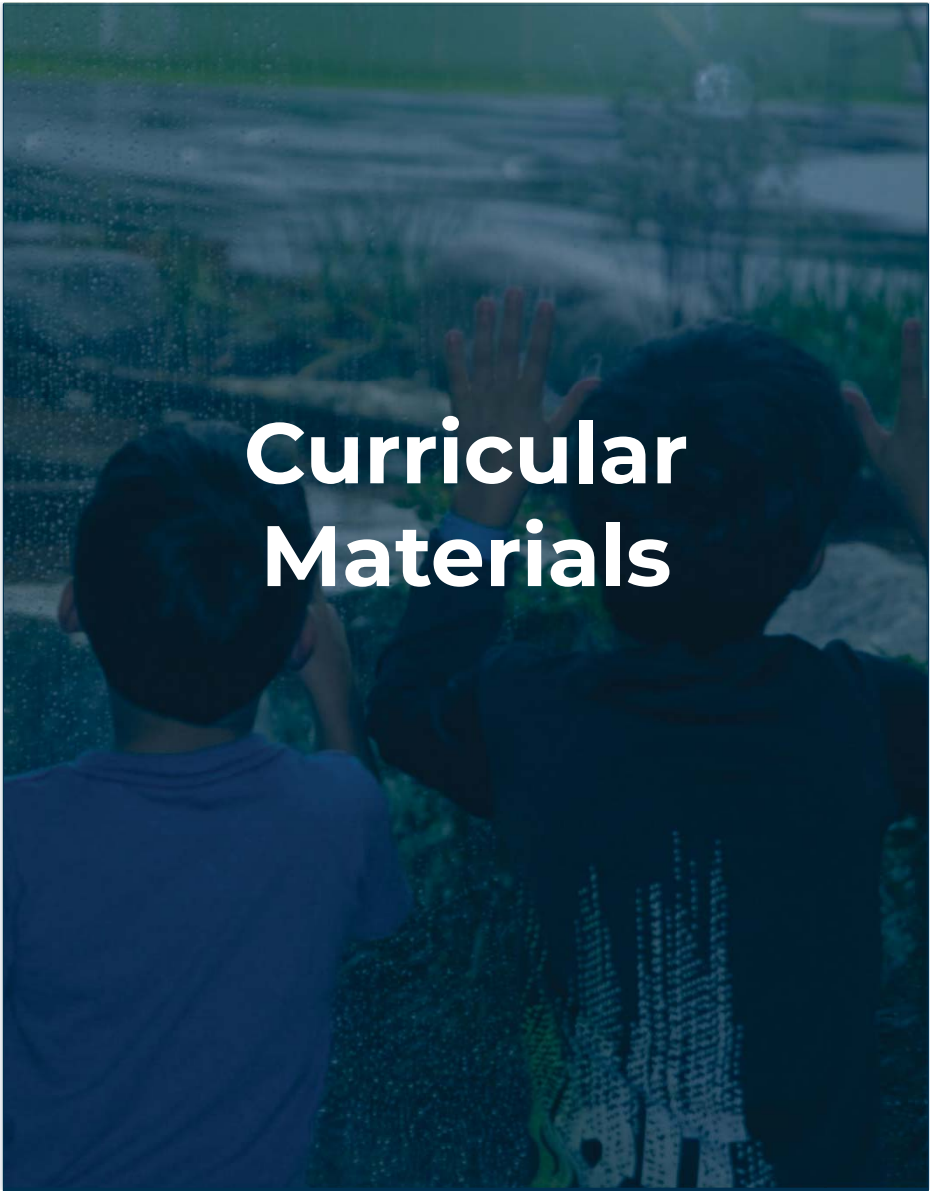
Community

School and classroom communities are generally welcoming and support the sense of adequate learning taking place.

A healthy culture and the conditions for high quality classroom instruction were evident.

Students identified having adults that they feel connected to.

There is a belief that the appropriate learning is taking place in Social Studies classrooms.



Curricular Materials

Curricular materials [in grades 6-12] provide guidance but are incomplete.

Though progress has been made, resources for daily instruction are available for fewer than half of the units of study.

While there was evidence of the use of district materials in more than half of the classes observed, the majority of teachers shared that they rely on themselves or peers to obtain their content.

The inconsistency of teacher access to quality materials guarantees vastly different learning experiences for students learning Social Studies.



Cultural Responsiveness

Enacted lessons are not meeting the standards of rigor or cultural responsiveness.

Though 85% of observed lessons were focused on grade-level content, students were not spending the majority of lessons reading, writing and/or speaking about text(s), artifact(s), and/or primary sources.

Overall, only 35% of the observed lessons were inclusive and reflected a culturally responsive learning experience.

The dissonance in teachers' belief around Culturally Responsive Practices further underscores the ongoing need for professional development.



Professional Learning

Time for professional learning is limited.

...educators want and need more time in learning to be able to deeply engage with the curriculum and materials and what it means to be culturally responsive in instruction

There needs to be more days of required professional development available to ensure teachers can implement a quality curriculum and lean deeply into the tenets of culturally responsive teaching and learning.

Recommendations

- 1. Develop an instructional framework** that provides a vision for excellent social studies instruction, common language and expectations, and the structures to support the district-wide implementation.
- 2. Adopt a high-quality inquiry-based curriculum** for core secondary social studies courses or continue to strengthen the current scope and sequence documents.
- 3. Provide ongoing professional learning** around methods of inquiry, unpacking complex sources, and promoting academic discourse.
- 4. Build teacher and leader understanding of high-leverage culturally responsive instructional practices** that lead to success for students across all skill levels in Tier 1 Instruction.
- 5. Analyze student success based on the intersectionality** ... in order to identify and address areas of inequity.

Social Studies Equity Audit

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Any questions?

A decorative pattern of small, light-colored dots arranged in a wave-like shape across the bottom of the slide.

Presentation

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Independent Reviews 22-23

Independent Reviews

- English Language Learning
- Middle School
- Social Studies
- Child Study Team/ Student Intervention Team
- *World Language

Common Themes from Findings

Trends identified

Three Year Strategic Plan

Goals, Objectives, Action Steps



Independent Review

Objectives

















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- Identify Potential Trends
- Highlight Culturally Relevant Themes
- Identify Targeted Areas for Professional Development
- Build Bridges to the PSB Strategic Plan

Areas of Commendation Across Program Reviews



Theme	English Language Learning Study	Middle School Study	Social Studies Study	CST/Student Intervention Team Study
Dedicated teachers and staff				
Welcoming schools and classrooms				
Sense of adequate learning				
Schools have time allotted for SEL, intervention/ support				



Commendations

“Teachers and staff of the PSB are dedicated to providing exceptional learning experiences and opportunities to students...”

“I do feel connected because I see my teachers in and out of school.” -*Student*

“I feel really connected to my teachers and that’s why I’m doing well.” -*Student*

“Teachers are engaged, I’m really happy with my kids’ experiences. My kids are good consumers of education and they are happy with their teachers. There is a real passion and desire to see students learn and succeed.” - *Parent*

A photograph of two children from behind, looking out at a landscape. The child on the right has their hands raised towards the sky. The image is overlaid with a dark blue tint. The word "Commendations" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Commendations

“There is a common belief in the power and potential of the K-8 model across the district.”

“There is a lot of beauty in watching and helping a student progress over 9 years. The K-8 model allows us to create a very nurturing environment for students.” -*WL Teacher*

“We moved here as a family because of the K-8 model. We felt, socially, it would support our kids the best.”- *Parent*

A photograph of two children from behind, looking out over a landscape. The child on the right has their hands raised. The image is overlaid with a dark blue tint. The word "Commendations" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Commendations

“School and classroom communities are generally welcoming and support the sense of adequate learning taking place.”

Nearly 90% of surveyed families agreed that their students have access to grade-level instruction, with fewer than 15% in disagreement that the Social Studies curriculum is equitable and culturally responsive.

-Social Studies Report

Opportunities for Growth





Opportunities for Growth

“The experiences of METCO students are varied, and other identifying factors provide more insight into student success.”

“They try, but sometimes it feels like they’re trying really hard, but it feels disingenuous.”-*Student*

“It’s not a matter of whether they try. It’s more systemic and rooted in the curriculum. When they try to include multiple cultures and identities, they are confined by everything else they need to teach.”-*Student*

“Students should know METCO is really good and it’s really positive. It’s a good thing for students to attend Brookline schools and I like the education here.” -*Student*



Opportunities for Growth

Enacted lessons are not meeting the standards of rigor or cultural responsiveness.

“...students were not spending the majority of lessons reading, writing and/or speaking about text(s), artifact(s), and/or primary sources. In many lessons there was no text involved, and contrary to teacher belief, fewer than half of texts used were deemed complex and engaging. Tasks students engaged with lacked cognitive demand, and instruction was teacher-centered and traditionally direct. “

















“...30% of lessons were inclusive of varying identities with 35% addressing issues of equity and power. The dissonance in teachers’ belief around CRP further underscores the need for professional development. “



Opportunities for Growth

There is no comprehensive middle school “baseline” across the eight 6-8 schools, which results in inequitable student experiences, access to instruction, and preparation for high school.

The district currently lacks a unified vision for middle school grades (6-8) across the eight K-8 schools. Many stakeholders reported that there is no consistent philosophy or documented set of priorities to guide middle school programming, staffing, and instructional decisions. As one school leader noted, “We have a system of separate schools, rather than a united school system of K-8s.”

Theme	English Language Learning Study	Middle School Study	Social Studies Study	CST/Student Intervention Team Study
Misalignment to Standards				
Incomplete Curriculum and Instructional Materials				
Undeveloped rigorous, worthwhile tasks				
Inequitable Access				
Lack of culturally and linguistically sustaining practices				

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Themes from Independent Reviews

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Any questions?



Building Bridges to the PSB Strategic Plan



Overarching Strategic Objective

Collaboratively establish, implement, and regularly assess a cohesive and consistent district-wide PK- age 22 standards-based curriculum using evidence-based instruction.

Initiative 1

Establish a professional development (PD) structure and plan that develops educators' instructional practices and curriculum delivery

Initiative 2

Establish a scope and sequence that includes common assessments and accountability benchmarks.

(Draft 6/6/23)

Overarching Strategic Objective

Collaboratively establish, implement, and regularly assess a cohesive and consistent district-wide PK- age 22 standards-based curriculum using evidence-based instruction.

Initiative 3

Establish a collaborative process for the selection of high-quality curriculum materials for all levels and disciplines.

Initiative 4

Design and implement school schedules that include common planning periods at each grade level, and provide consistent time for learning in each content area across schools.

(Draft 6/6/23)

Overarching Strategic Objective

Collaboratively establish, implement, and regularly assess a cohesive and consistent district-wide PK- age 22 standards-based curriculum using evidence-based instruction.

Initiative 5

Develop and implement report cards that are equity-driven and reflect the standards-based curriculum.

(Draft 6/6/23)

Bridge to Strategic Planning

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Thank you for your attention

Any questions?

