

**SCIENCE TASK FORCE
MINUTES
1/26/09**

Debbi Hardy opened meeting with introductions of new committee members, Andy Nydam from OHS and Jacob Baker from Roosevelt Elementary.

Update from October Community Forum:

- About 55 people attended the forum
- Handout “Community Forum Feedback” was reviewed
- An issue that came up at the forum, and has also been brought up since, is the need for education which gives students the opportunity to take accelerated courses in science. This option is available in math, but is not in science.
- Another concern (which could be related to this gap in accelerated science education) is the decreasing enrollment in AP Science courses.

A Zoomerang survey was sent out by the Task Force.

- Over 100 people opened the survey, but only 35 completed it.
- It was sent out to staff working in science-related positions at local agencies, The Evergreen State College, SPSCC and St. Martin’s College.
- Most of the responses came from local agencies
- Peggy Butler took the names of respondents who offered to help with science education and has been following up with these individuals.
- From this contact, a list of Community Volunteers was generated. Please share this list with your building staff as a resource.

Lisa Dennis-Perez is part of the Governor’s committee (ETAC) that worked on Environmental Education framework. They are looking for OSD staff willing to work over the summer on scope and sequence, including the integration of local resources and field trip opportunities; 2 elementary, 2 middle school and 2 high school. We estimate two to three days of work for which participants will be compensated at the curriculum rate. Please contact Debbi Hardy if you or someone in your school would like to participate.

Our February meeting conflicts with a presentation by Dr. Ken Wesson, a nationally renowned neuroscientist, being sponsored by ESD113. We will cancel our Feb. meeting so it won’t conflict. The February 23rd Ken Wesson presentation will include:

- A morning session for building principals and central office staff.
- An afternoon session for teachers. The Teaching & Learning Department would like staff from this committee to attend and will pay for subs. If you are unable to attend, we would encourage you to send another staff member from your building in your place.
- An evening session for parents and the community. Craig Gabler is working on a flyer that will be distributed to schools.

The high schools did not spend all of last year's Math/Science State Funds, which needs to be used before the end of this school year. The flyer for WSTA Spring Conference was distributed and high school teachers were encouraged to attend. We will also use these funds to send two teachers from each middle school. The Teaching & Learning Department will also fund, from Title II, one teacher from each elementary school to attend.

We want to make sure that information from these meetings is disseminated to building staff. Please ask building principals for agenda time at an upcoming staff meeting, so you can update your building staff.

We reviewed the "Professional Development Goals and 5 Year Professional Development Plan":

- In Year 1 (2008-2009) we have already done Inquiry training in 5th-8th grades. We still need to train in K-4th, and also focus on high school. Vicki Horton and Craig Gabler are preparing to work with high schools.
- Please talk with staff in your buildings to make sure they are aware of and participating in these professional development opportunities. It would also be helpful to get their feedback regarding science professional development needs.

District Adoption money:

- A situation we need to keep in mind is upcoming impact of budget cuts. (Refer to Bill Lahmann's letter to staff and the Governor's proposed budget).
- Our original adoption budget was for \$650,000, which was cut to \$500,000 and then cut again to \$250,000.
- For this school year (2008-2009) we have set aside \$250,000 to be used for K-12 Health adoption and Reading Interventions.
- In May or June we should have a list of materials aligned to the new State Science Standards.
- We could use the remainder of this year to work on elementary alignment. And, if funds are still available for 2009-2010 they could be used to purchase additional FOSS kits (as needed), buy materials to supplement FOSS, and to purchase material for IB and AP courses.
- The following year we could purchase science materials for secondary students for implementation in the fall of 2011.
- We will stay with FOSS. We already have a lot invested in these materials. We may need to supplement and update FOSS curriculum. Is it effective? Studies have shown that in district where teachers are getting the necessary professional development for implementation of FOSS, students are out-performing other districts. Are the kits being used? It depends on teacher's comfort with science. They are being used, but teachers are not always able to get through all the kits required for their grade level.
- What about funding a TOSA for elementary schools? This would impact our already reduced budget and is not likely to happen. There needs to be a commitment at each building. Building principals need to emphasize the

importance of teaching science. It needs to be a district focus, and needs to be consistent across the district for continuity from school to school.

Vicki Horton presented an overview of the Revised Washington State K-12 Science Standards.

(See OSPI link: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/Science/default.aspx>)

- Objective when initially looking through the revised standards is that teachers should be able to:
 1. Find grade band that encompasses the grade they teach
 2. Find specific content standards they will be responsible for
 3. Find performance expectations connected to that content standard
 4. Find Crosscutting Concepts and Abilities specific to grade band they teach.
- Page 6-8 are the Big Ideas in EALR 4
- Page 14-84 are the Content Standards
 - They are very specific and include the Content Standard (“*Students know that...*”) and the Performance Expectations (“*Students are expected to...*”).
- Page 5 are the Crosscutting Concepts and Abilities
 - They interweave it all together
- The next step is for these revised standards to go through the legislature, with the final adoption approved by Supt. of Public Instruction, Randy Dorn.

The WASL (4 point questions) will be going away and OSPI is looking to replace it with new state testing to include 2 point questions and some multiple choice questions.

Committee moved into level groupings to discuss:

- Given the feedback from our community and the new standards, what are the implications for changes at your level?

Elementary Level:

- There are new and additional topics for grade levels; i.e. fossils, sun, shadow, universe, solar system, genetics.
- Do we need more kits, new kits, other support materials?
- We will need more professional development for these new topics

Middle School Level:

- Revised standard were re-worded; no really new information.
- We need scope and sequence for what to teach at each level. There was dissention about who should decide what is and when it is being taught at each level. This is being discussed at the administrative level. Doesn't this need to be a conversation for the Task Force as well?
- There should be commonality on how to teach science.

High School Level:

- How do we have continuity in teaching based on state testing standards vs. college bound testing standards?
- There needs to be materials-based (Inquiry) professional development.

In lieu of the February meeting, Debbi Hardy will contact committee members for input on what will be helpful for them (at their grade level) in moving forward.

Future meetings:

March 16th – 4:00-6:00pm – Knox Board Room

April 20th – 4:00-5:30pm – Knox Board Room

May 18th – 4:00-6:00pm – Knox Board Room