

Curriculum Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 9:00 AM

Via Zoom Dial-in: 646-558-8656 Passcode: 624214, 24 School Road, Weston, CT
06883-1623

I. Call to Order

**II. Information and Discussion on Strategic Plan
for Math Instruction 2021-22**

**III. Information and Discussion on Summer Academy
2021**

**IV. Information and Discussion on ESSER II Grant
Application**

V. Approval of March Minutes

VI. Other Curricular Issues



**Weston Public Schools
Strategic Planning for Mathematics:
A Comprehensive Approach to Accelerating
Student Growth and Performance**

**Presented to the Curriculum Committee
April 7, 2021**

Introduction

Due to the pandemic, student performance in math is lagging behind previous years. Since March 11, 2020, the district has employed several learning scenarios (distance learning, hybrid modes) as alternatives to our normal daily operations. While these changes were necessary for health and safety reasons, there has been a resulting negative impact on student growth and performance in math. Despite the best efforts of our teachers, who have done an admirable job adjusting their teaching methods, growth in math is lower than in a typical year, largely due to the reduced amount of in-person instruction.

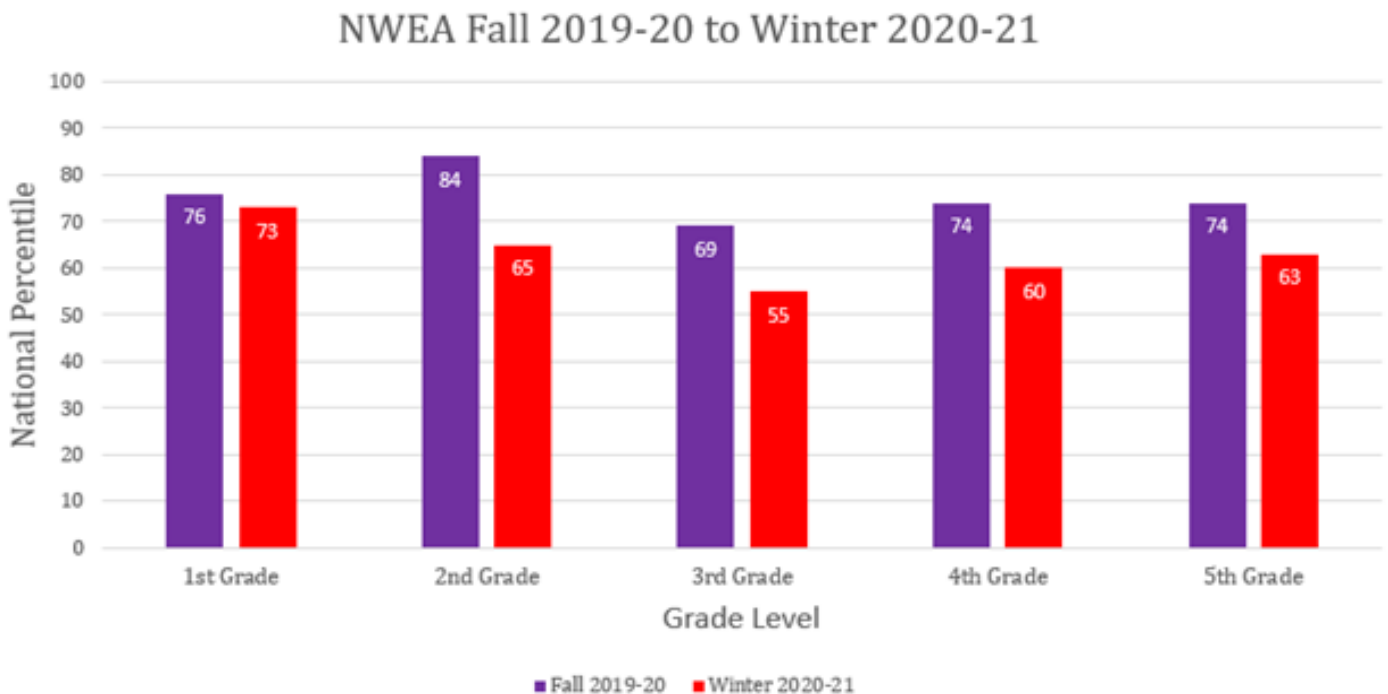
Math Results 2020-21

The following MAP results for grades 1-8 illustrate the lag in student growth in math performance. These results are consistent with what has been observed in other districts and has been reported by NWEA at the national level.

Graphs 1-4 in the following pages provide an overview of grade level and cohort performance in grades 1-8. The results indicate that math performance is an area of need for targeted improvement, which will likely be a focus for the next several years.

Graph 1 displays the average MAP percentile score for grades 2-5 and indicates that the average MAP score has dropped by more than 10 percentile points when comparing the Fall 2019 MAP results to the Winter 2021 results for grades 2-5.

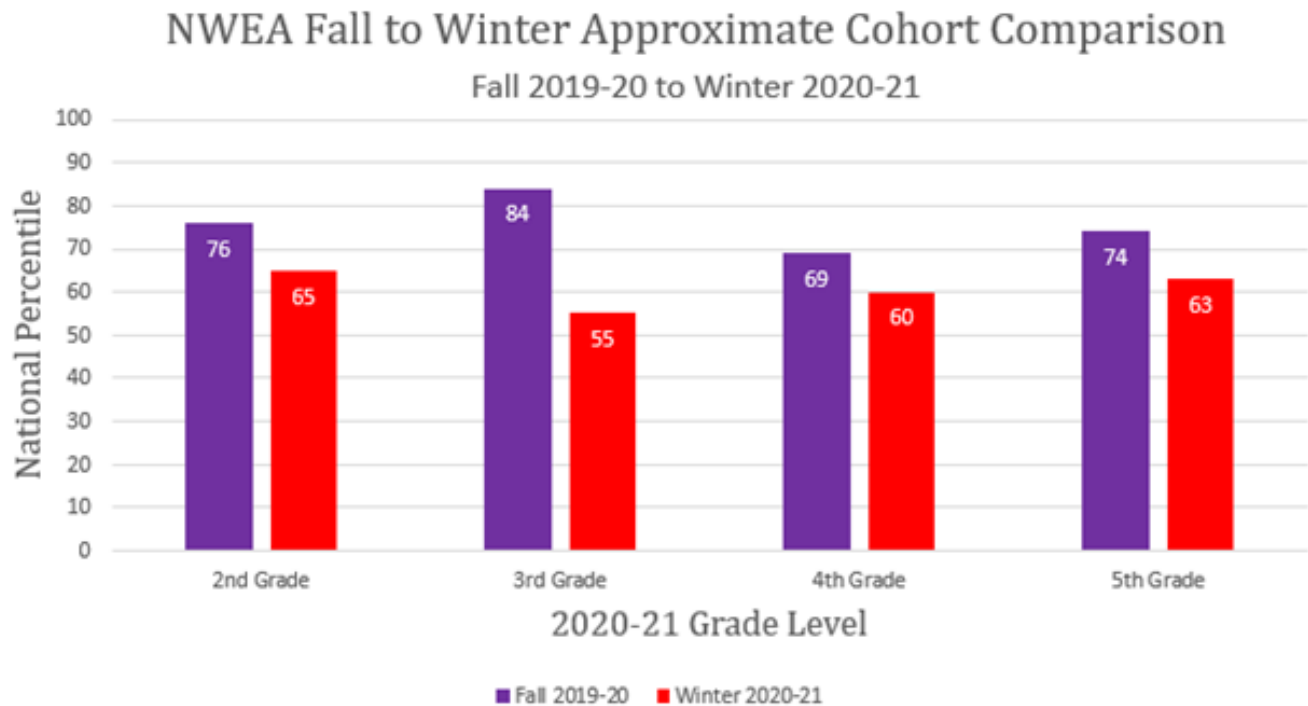
Graph 1: Average MAP Percentile Score for Grades 1-5 for Fall 2019 v. Winter 2021



When examining performance data, one approach is to look at year-to-year grade level performance as in the above graph. However, it is more informative to look at the performance of an approximate cohort or matched cohort of students from one year to the next. The cohorts are considered approximations when some students have left the cohort and some new students have entered the cohort.

In looking at the current grades 2-5 cohorts Winter 2021 MAP results below, the data in Graph 2 indicates that there is at least a 9-point reduction in the average MAP score as compared to the fall of 2019, which was coming off of a typical year.

Graph 2: Fall 2019 to Winter 2021 Cohort MAP Results for Grades 2-5

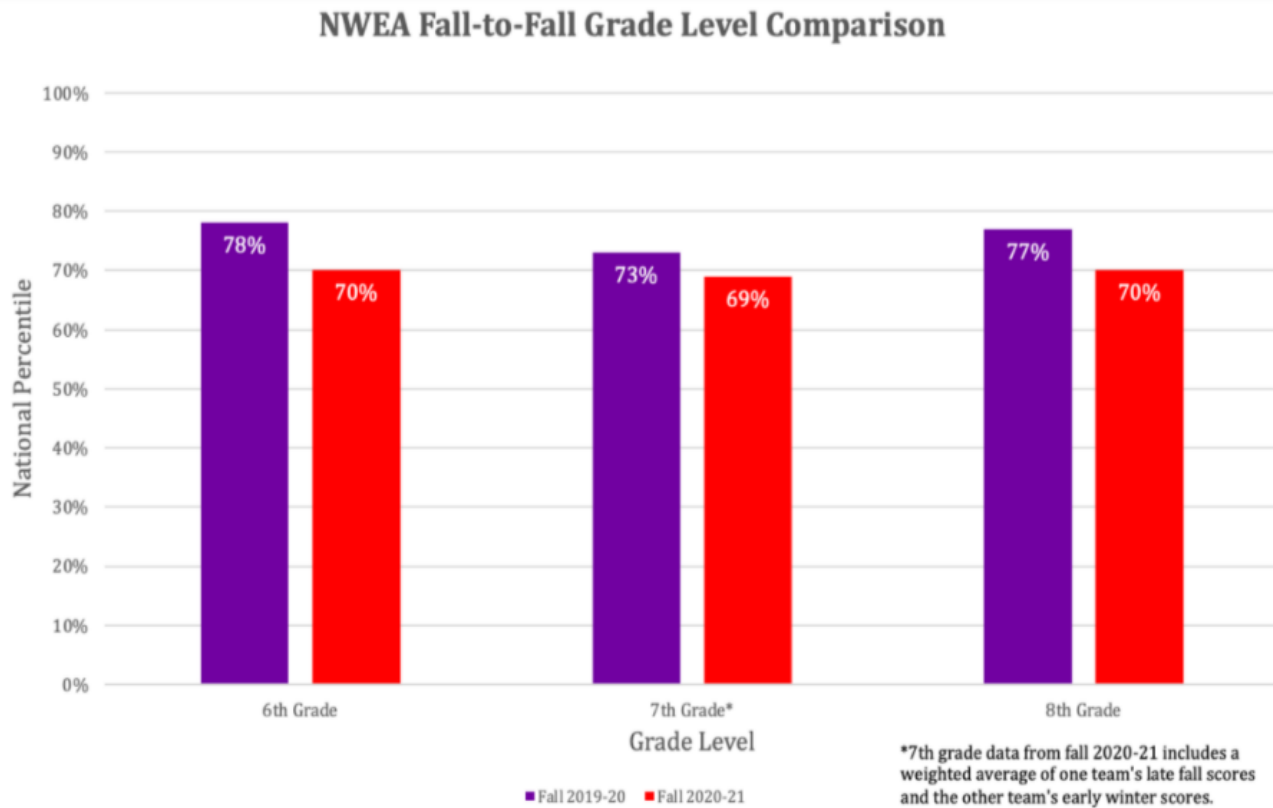


Graph 3 on the next page displays the average MAP percentile score for grades 6-8, which indicates that the average MAP score has dropped when comparing the Fall 2019 MAP results to the Fall 2020 results.

There were statistically significant decreases in performance in grades 6 and 8 as compared to the same grade the previous year.

There are no MAP results for the Winter 2021 for WMS as a comparison, but the district will have Spring 2021 results for further monitoring of the impact of the pandemic on math performance.

Graph 3: Average MAP Percentile Score for Grades 6-8 for Fall 2019 v. Fall 2020

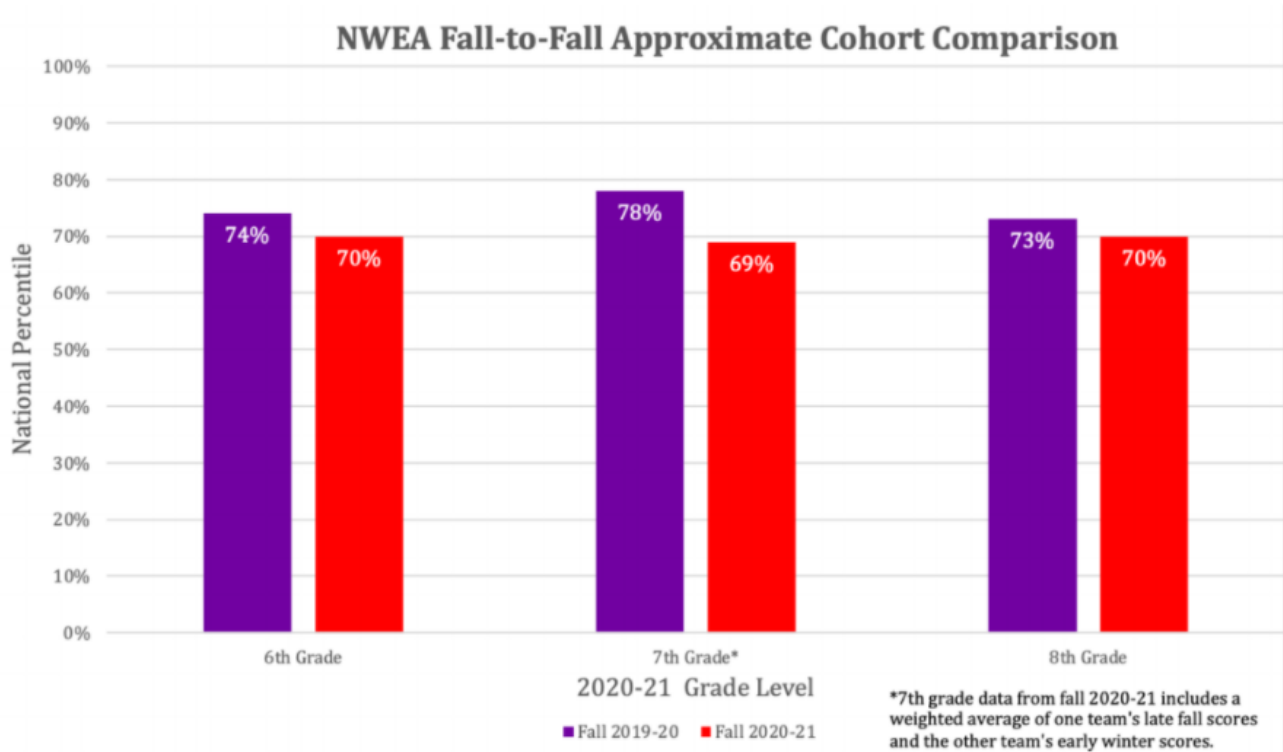


Upon reviewing the grades 6-8 cohorts Fall 2020 results in graph 4, the lag in performance was most pronounced in grade 7 for the start of the school year following the shift to distance learning in March 2020.

The average MAP percentile score for grade 7 was 69% as compared to 78% for the fall of 2019, which was coming off of a typical year.

It is anticipated that the gap has widened in all three grades since the beginning of the year while the schools have been in various learning scenarios. The district will examine the Spring 2021 MAP results to continue to monitor the trend.

Graph 4: Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 Cohort MAP Results for Grades 6-8



Strategic Planning

To address the learning lag in math, our principals and curriculum instructional leaders met on March 30 to begin the strategic planning process for the 2021-22 school year. The group has identified six key strategies to accelerate growth in math. Each of these approaches is described in more detail in the sections that follow.

1. **Goal Setting:** Establish district, school and teacher goals aligned throughout the system on assisting all students in meeting their growth targets. While the administration will use multiple measures to assess performance, both quantitative and qualitative, the NWEA assessment will be a critical tool in grades K-9.
2. **Personnel:** Increase math intervention personnel through the ESSER II grant funding.
3. **Resources:** Accelerate the procurement of the remaining Math in Focus resources listed in the 3-year purchase plan to have them in place for all grades K-8 by the fall.
4. **Professional Learning:** Provide K-12 math and intervention teachers with ongoing training on how to differentiate for math instruction, employ the new Math in Focus resources and effectively deliver SRBI services.

5. **Summer Academy:** Provide an in-person opportunity for any student entering grades 1-8 to attend summer math classes to avoid the summer slide.
6. **Feedback/Evaluation:** Schedule an upcoming external evaluation of our math intervention efforts through the Tri-State Consortium. The external evaluation will take place from March 30 through April 1, 2022.

Goal Setting:

SMART goals will be established at the district, school and the department levels to target improvements in math. A SMART goal stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound.

Goals may target the follow areas for improvement:

- Increasing the number of students achieving grade level standards.
- Increasing the number of students meeting their growth targets.
- Accelerating the growth of SRBI students who are below grade level benchmarks.
- Addressing any gaps in performance by subgroups, including special needs, ELL, free-reduced lunch and ethnicity groups.
- Targeting a specific strand of math that is in need of additional instruction and practice (i.e. geometry).

A sample SMART goal at the district, school or department level may be written as follows;

75% of students receiving tiered support for SRBI math in grades K-8 will meet their growth targets as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment when comparing their spring 2021 MAP score to their spring 2022 MAP score, and when comparing their spring 2022 MAP score to spring 2023 MAP scores.

Grant-Supported Personnel:

ESSER II funds will be used to augment our intervention staff across grades K-8. The most efficient use of the funds is to make full time our part-time math intervention specialists. The intent is to use grant funding for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years to support these staffing levels. These increases will not impact the FY22 or FY23 budgets since grant funding is being used as the sole source of funding.

Table 1 lists two part-time math positions and one part-time reading position that will be made full time through grant funding. In addition, there is one new math intervention specialist position that will be shared between the intermediate and middle schools.

Table 1: Personnel increases to support Tier 2 and Tier 3 SRBI

Personnel					
School	Current	2021-22 (With Grant)	Increase	Cost	Benefits
HES math Intervention	.6 FTE	1.0 FTE	.4 FTE	45,835	665
WIS math Intervention	.7 FTE	1.0 FTE	.3 FTE	36,043	523
Shared WIS/WMS math intervention*	N/A	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE	75,062 Excludes benefits	28,016
WMS/WIS reading intervention*	.7 FTE at WMS	1.0 FTE	.3 FTE	34,376	498
Totals	2.0 FTE	4.0 FTE	2.0 FTE	191,316	29,702
				\$221,018	

** Grant funding is also targeted to make a part time-reading specialist full time. The part-time reading intervention teacher is currently at WMS (.7 FTE). Her assignment would become full time but shared with WIS. This would give WIS 2.3 FTE reading intervention, while WMS would remain at 1.7 FTE in total. The added support at WIS is essential in ensuring that all SRBI students receive proper support, while at the same time addressing the increased demands in reading for students with special needs.*

K-8 Math in Focus Resources:

We are currently in year one of implementation of the 3-year math resource replacement plan with grades 5, 6 and 8. The grades 3, 4 and 7 are scheduled to be purchased in July with the FY22 funding. We are also seeking to accelerate this purchase plan by purchasing the resources for grades K-2 a year in advance. A combination of funding sources may be used to purchase these resources.

Having all resources for grades K-8 in the hands of our teachers will allow the district to accelerate the teacher training and to provide students with the most up-to-date resources.

Table 2: Three-year math resource replacement plan for grades K-8

2020- Edition - 6-year Digital and Print Licenses for Students and Teachers			
Year	Grade	Cost	Funding Source
2020-21	5	30,998	FY21 Budget
	6 & 8	42,412	FY21 Budget
2021-22	3 & 4	55,921	FY22 Budget**
	7	20,412	FY22 Budget**
2022-23	K-2	77,510 (estimate)	TBD

***Grades 3, 4 & 7 resources may be purchased with FY21 surplus funds*

Teacher Professional Learning:

Math professional development is a key element of the strategic plan. With the influx of new Math in Focus resources, we are planning training sessions on how to employ the new resources and on how they are different from the previous edition. However, most of the professional learning will focus on enhancing instructional practices, particularly in the area of differentiating instruction for students.

There is funding in the FY22 budget to cover the Math in Focus training. Additional training would require additional funding in the amount of \$10,00 to \$12,000. This funding would come from within the FY22 operating budget and possibly in combination with grants.

Summer Academy:

WPS is running a Summer Academy for math and reading for students entering grades 1 through 8. The purpose of the Summer Academy is to provide students with an in-person opportunity to continue to grow as readers and mathematicians.

The program will consist of two classes daily at each grade level: Math Workshop and Reading Workshop. Summer Academy will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from July 6 to July 29. Classes will be taught by WPS faculty and staff.

There is a \$350 registration fee to participate in the program. Based on the initial parent survey, there were 87 students who expressed interest in participating in the program. We are anticipating registration in the area of 65 students. If this is the case, we anticipate revenue of approximately \$22,750, which will cover the cost of the instructors and administrative fees. Any transportation costs will be handled through the ESSER II

funding. See attached spreadsheet outlining ESSER II and the Summer Academy budget.

Summer Academy - Projected Expenses		
Staffing Salary & FICA	8 instructors paid at an hourly rate of \$58 per hour for 12 sessions each running 3 hours in length. Each instructor will be paid \$2088 for 36 hours of teaching.	Total \$16,704
	FICA	\$242
Administrative fees (registration)	We are partnering with Weston Youth Services in handling the registration process and payment of instructors. There is a 12% processing fee with WYS for the registrations, refunds, and payment of instructors. We are looking into whether we can bring this service in house for future years	Estimate \$2,400-\$2,900
Transportation	Transportation for Summer Academy will be coordinated with the ESY program, so as to minimize any transportation costs. We are budgeting up to two additional buses to be covered by the ESSER II grant if additional transportation is required beyond ESY.	\$10,443
Total Anticipated Expenses		\$30,290

Feedback/Evaluation:

Weston has been a long-standing member of the [Tri-State Consortium](#), which is a group of high-performing districts in CT, NY and NJ. Every three years, the district is afforded an opportunity to conduct a programmatic evaluation with a particular focus guided by essential questions for a visiting committee of experts to conduct a critical friends evaluation.

Given our strategic focus on improving math performance, we have planned a consultancy for **March 30 to April 1, 2022** to specifically examine our math intervention services across the district. The review will consist of a qualitative and quantitative examination of intervention practices at the tier 1, 2 and 3 levels as well as look at student performance data.

The Tri-State Consortium evaluation model is based on eight indicators of performance. Two or three of these indicators will be selected to focus the visit on the most critical questions regarding our intervention services and student progress. The Tri-State model indicator around equity will be a key lens through which we will examine how our programs and services address the needs of all learners.

Shortly after the visit, the Tri-State Visiting Committee will provide the district with a written evaluation along with recommendations and suggestions for improvement. There is a follow-up meeting with Tri-State two-years following the visit to discuss progress in addressing the recommendations in the original report.



Weston Summer Academy 2021

OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS ENTERING
GRADES 1-8

Tue, Wed, Thu
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
July 6 - July 29

Daily
Math and Reading
Workshops

Registration Fee: \$350/child*

Registration opens: **Wednesday, March 31**
Through [Weston Youth Services](#) website

*financial assistance available

Weston Summer Academy - Students Entering Grades 1 - 8



Dear Weston Families,

We are pleased to announce that WPS will be offering a Summer Academy for math and reading for students entering grades 1 through 8. The purpose of the Summer Academy is to provide students with an in-person opportunity to continue to grow as readers and mathematicians.

The program will consist of two classes daily at each grade level: Math Workshop and Reading Workshop. Summer Academy will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from July 6 to July 29. Please see the description of classes below, which will be taught by Weston Public Schools faculty and staff.

The Summer Academy is open to all Weston Public Schools students enrolled for the 2021-22 school year, but space is limited and will be available on a first come, first served basis. We highly recommend Summer Academy for students who have received math and/or reading intervention services or other academic supports during the school year.

How to register;

Step A: Please complete a [brief survey](#) by **Monday, March 29**, so we may gauge interest, transportation needs and the feasibility of offering an afternoon camp option to extend the day through Weston Parks and Recreation.

Step B: You will receive a subsequent email from Weston Public Schools with information regarding registration and payment to be made online. **Registration will open on Wednesday, March 31.**

Step C: Please complete and submit the [Summer Academy Health Form](#) by June 1.

Summer Math Workshop:

Students will strengthen math skills through engaging and enjoyable activities designed to increase confidence as students enter the next grade. Activities will review concepts from the previous grade that are most needed for success moving forward as well as developing mathematical reasoning and the enjoyment of math.

Summer Reading Workshop:

Students will extend and reinforce the skills and strategies they have learned in order to prepare them for the next grade. This work will involve a blend of direct teaching, engaged discussion of text, written responses that deepen thinking, and a focus on the importance of reading stamina and volume during the summer months.

Grades: Students must be enrolled in grades 1-8 in the Weston Public Schools for the 2021-22 school year.

Format: Classes will be in-person only. There will not be a distance learning option.

Instructors: Weston Public Schools Faculty and Staff

Class Sizes: 10-12 students

Location: Hurlbutt Elementary School

Dates: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from July 6 through July 29

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; See schedule of classes on the next page.

Snack: Students may bring a snack for between classes. Whenever possible snack time will be outdoors or in the cafeteria.

Transportation: School bus transportation is available for drop off at 9:00 a.m. and for pick up at 12:00.

Cost: There is a \$350 registration fee for the Summer Academy

Scholarships: For information regarding financial assistance, please contact June Curiano in the WPS Curriculum Office at 203-221-6555.

Refund Policy: Refunds for Summer Academy will be given, less a \$25.00 administrative/processing fee, with withdrawal from any class on or before June 1.

Afternoon Camp Option: (12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

We are working with Weston Parks and Recreation to see if there is enough interest for P & R to offer an afternoon camp from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. for families who would like a full-day option.

Health & Safety Protocols: The Summer Academy will follow the guidelines set forth in the [WPS Health & Safety manual](#). Students and faculty participating in the program will be required to wear masks.

Contact: If you have any questions, please email SummerAcademy@westonps.org.

Schedule:

Time Slot	Grade Level	Subject
9:00-10:30	1	Reading Workshop
10:30-12:00	1	Math Workshop
9:00-10:30	2	Math Workshop
10:30-12:00	2	Reading Workshop
9:00-10:30	3	Reading Workshop
10:30-12:00	3	Math Workshop
9:00-10:30	4	Math Workshop
10:30-12:00	4	Reading Workshop
9:00-10:30	5	Reading Workshop
10:30-12:00	5	Math Workshop
9:00-10:30	6	Math Workshop
10:30-12:00	6	Reading Workshop
9:00-10:30	7	Reading Workshop
10:30-12:00	7	Math Workshop
9:00-10:30	8	Math Workshop
10:30-12:00	8	Reading Workshop

FY21-22 ESSER II & SUMMER ACADEMY BUDGET

ESSER II

Description	Total	Salaries	Health & Payroll Taxes
HES math Intervention	46,500	45,835	665
WIS math Intervention	36,566	36,043	523
Share WIS/WMS math Intervention	103,078	75,062	28,016
Share WIS/WMS Reading Intervention	34,874	34,376	498
	221,018	191,316	29,702
Summer Academy	11,419	11,256	163
Total	232,437	202,572	29,865

Summer Academy

Funding Source

Registration Fee (65 @\$350)	22,750	
ESSER II	11,419	
		34,169

Expense

Salaries	16,704	
FICA	242	
Administrative Fee	2,900	
Transportation -2 Buses for 12 days	10,443	
		30,290
Net		3,880

Curriculum Committee Meeting

March 10, 2021 9:00 a.m.

Via Zoom Dial In: 1 646-558-8656 Code: 958388

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am

Present Committee Members:

Taffy Miller (Chairperson), Gina Albert, Hillary Koyner

Present Administration:

Kenneth Craw, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent; Tracy Edwards, Director of PPS; Lisa Wolak, WHS Principal; Dan Doak, WMS Principal; Pattie Falber, WIS Principal; Laura Kaddis, HES Principal; Dan DiVito, Director of Digital Learning & Technology; Alex Bluestein, CIL K-5 ELA and SS; Andrea Noble, CIL K-5 ELA and SS; Carolyn Vinton, CIL L-5 Math and Science, Christine Cincotta, CIL 6-8 ELA, Janine Russo, CIL 6-8 Math; Mercedes Fernandes, CIL K-12 World Language

Members of the Public:

Ruby Hedge, Kristana Esslinger

2. Information and update regarding Special Education

Discussion:

- Ms. Edwards spoke on the Connecticut's State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) regarding special education access. She reported on two items that were flagged by the State as out of the norm and addressed questions from Committee members and laid out the next steps to address these concerns.

3. Presentation and update regarding student progress and next steps

Discussion:

- Dr. Craw presented on WPS student progress for the 2020-21 school year to date. The report presented a snapshot of student performance comparing 2021 to 2020 school years. The report focuses on Math and ELA achievements using benchmark assessments and MAP testing for grades K-5, MAP testing for grades 6-8, and quarterly grades for grades 9-12.
- CILs Andrea Noble and Alex Bluestein addressed questions regarding K-5 ELA. Although there is some learning lag, overall the assessments show there is learning growth for students. Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) has been in place for students who are struggling; the number of SRBI students is not significantly higher than 2020. It was noted that Mrs. Noble took steps in advance to mitigate learning lag in reading. Also noted, teachers are in constant contact with parents regarding benchmark performance.

- CILs Carolyn Vinton and Janine Russo spoke on the math assessment results for WIS and WMS. Assessments provide necessary data for targeted intervention for students.
- WHS data was presented as an overall grades comparison for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2021 as compared with 2020.
- Ms. Cincotta added that all WHS CILs and teachers met to identify students who were struggling and devised individual plans for students.
- Dr. Craw concluded the presentation by reviewing a list of action steps including a Summer Academy for students targeted for SRBI.

4. Follow up on K-12 World Language curriculum renewal

Discussion:

In follow up to the world language presentation last month, Mrs. Fernandes was tasked with putting together a wish list for the program. She cited the following:

- Increase the number of minutes for world language instruction at HES and WIS; such as instruction four to five times per week at WIS and every day for sixth grade.
- Continue to support programs with up-to-date print and digital materials
- Increase opportunities for student engagement in communities near and far.
- Explore increasing world language offerings and modalities at WMS and WHS.
- Continue to support teacher professional development.
- Explore how to personalize the offerings for students from heritage families.

5. Approval of January 2021 Minutes

Motion Passed: With a motion Taffy Miller and second by Hillary Koyner the February 2021 minutes were approved.

3 Yeas - 0 Nays.

6. Other curricular issues

Discussion:

No other items were put forth for discussion. Meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Curiano