

School Committee hears details on math curriculum

By PAUL FEELY | Posted: Friday, April 26, 2013 1:00 pm

READING - This week, the School Committee heard an update from Assistant Superintendent of Schools Patty de Garavilla on the elementary math curriculum selection process.

According to de Garavilla, the Elementary Math Program Selection Committee has completed its work to determine a new K-5 program for implementation for the next school year to replace Everyday Mathematics. The committee consisted of one teacher per grade level per elementary school, special education teachers, and an administrator.

The following is a list of the actions taken by the Committee to make this decision:

1. Met together for a full day to hear presentations and overviews of the three programs under consideration. These included Go Math! Published by Houghton Mifflin, Math in Focus, published by Houghton Mifflin, and envision Mathematics, published by Pearson
2. Taught lessons from the sample materials sent out by the publishers
3. Visited schools in other districts to observe all three programs in K-5 classrooms
4. Spoke with teachers, math curriculum specialists and coaches, and administrators on the implementation process, benefits and challenges, and professional development in their districts
5. Met again to share opinions on the three programs and determine needs going forward with a new program

After carefully reviewing with the committee Common Core State Standards and Standards for Mathematical Practices alignment, level of rigor, program support for differentiating to meet needs of all students, technology for instructional purposes as well as for home use, types of assessments, student engagement, and teacher and student materials, de Garavilla said she is recommending that school officials adopt the Math in Focus program. This is based on the concepts of Singapore math and will focus heavily on place value and problem-solving. It will also provide assessments that will prepare elementary students for the new PARCC assessment in 2015 and build a strong mathematical foundation for all K-5 students.

There will be a strong need for ongoing professional development for local K-5 teachers over the next two years to support them with this implementation and their teaching of mathematics.

“We will also provide parent overviews of the program as we transition from Everyday Mathematics to Math in Focus,” said de Garavilla. “We are looking forward to a mathematics program that will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards and will provide an engaging and rigorous

instruction for our students.”