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Patricia Kinsella
Assistant Superintendent of Schools

To: School Committee
From: Patricia Kinsella
Re: Report on Strategic Priorities A1 and A2
Date: May 11, 2017

This report highlights year-end results for Strategic Priorities A1 and A2 of the district's 2016-17 Strategic Plan. The results described below are the welcome outcome of the dedication, persistence, and creativity of faculty and administrators across the district.

Strategic Priority A1. *Continue to develop, demonstrate, and expand team-based collaborative practices, Facilitative Leadership, and coaching capacity.*

This report focuses on the areas of Facilitative Leadership and coaching capacity for Strategic Priority A1. Results in the area of Collaborative Practices were shared during the Community Forum held on 4/28/17; additional results in that area will be shared by Principals through their reports on Whole School Improvement Plans at the 5/11/17 and 5/25/17 School Committee meetings.

Outputs and Measures for Facilitative Leadership (FL)

- Twenty additional faculty participated for the first time in a two-day training on Facilitative Leadership with Gene Thompson Grove in the autumn of 2016.
- Curriculum Leadership Team (CLT) members increased their skill in agenda design and meeting facilitation through monthly practice with Gene Thompson Grove at CLT meetings.
- Agendas for department meetings led by CLT members show substantial, positive changes, with an increase in:
    - the amount of time spent on collaborative, intentional learning vs. business-oriented, administrative tasks;
    - the clarity of the goals articulated for each meeting;
    - the use of a wide variety of FL protocols to promote more in-depth, student-centered discussions;
    - the posing of questions to focus collaborative learning on what matters most.

Appendix A includes sample agendas from representative groups that CLT members lead: Music, Literacy, Art, and Wellness, along with sample agendas from meetings of the CLT itself. The agendas are presented in pairs, with the first agenda indicative of how department meetings were organized before professional learning about FL and its strategies took hold among CLT members. The second agenda of each pair provides specific evidence of the major shift in leadership moves of CLT members. These agendas illustrate the ways in which department and CLT meetings are now focused on intentional learning and problem-solving around professional dilemmas. CLT meetings themselves maximize the time dedicated to giving and receiving feedback on draft department agendas and opportunities to practice meeting facilitation in a supportive learning community.

The patient, concrete, multi-layered approach the district has taken towards developing faculty leadership skills in FL is yielding excellent results, and CLT members are eager to continue developing their leadership skills during the coming school year.

The quote below from a CLT member to their team two weeks in advance of a department meeting reflects the move towards a more transparent sharing of professional practice and the deliberate application of effective facilitation strategies:

> *Over the course of the next two meetings, I would like to have everyone bring a dilemma or issue, and we will work as a group using an appropriate protocol to problem-solve. It could be a behavior issue with a student, a challenging parent, or a colleague. It can be something you've struggled with in the last week, or over the course of years. I will work with you individually to figure out which would be the protocol [most likely] to give you ideas, coping strategies, or solutions. I've done these with other groups and found them incredibly helpful. There is such power in a group of professionals that so often goes untapped. I think we have a unique perspective, being from different buildings, with the commonality of teaching XXX. So, put your thinking caps on! What can we help you with?*

The increase in the use of time-tested professional learning tools was not limited to members of the CLT. Faculty who were trained this fall in FL put the tools to immediate use, as well. Members of one team, for example, used the *ATLAS: Learning from Student Work* protocol to examine the schoolwork of a newly-arrived student with a complex social and academic background, with the goal of learning as much as possible as soon as possible about the student's current strengths and needs. Given that the notes from this meeting are highly specific about a single student, this report includes a description of the *ATLAS* protocol in Appendix B rather than the meeting notes themselves.

<u>Outputs and Measures for Coaching Capacity</u>

Literacy Specialist Jenn Whitt participated in Literacy Coach training at Lesley University's Literacy Collaborative during the summer and fall of 2016, with the goal of deepening her skill in coaching conversations that would result in improved instructional practice for classroom teachers.

In Jenn's previous work, most coaching conversations focused on what she, as a literacy coach, believed the classroom teacher needs to work on. That dynamic has now been reversed, as Jenn puts the responsibility for learning squarely in the hands of the teacher through a cyclical structure to her coach/teacher collaborations with pre-conferences, observations, and post-conferences. In this revised practice, Jenn supports the teacher's reflection on their own learning goals. Jenn becomes, in essence, the facilitator of the teacher's learning, rather than the leader of that learning.

Perhaps one of the greatest shifts in Jenn's coaching practice as a result of her training this year is that each pre-conference ends with a joint decision about the action steps the teacher will try before their next meeting. Jenn is then able to observe the teacher's implementation of the action steps during her classroom observations. Jenn describes the improvement to her coaching practice:

> *Attending the Effective Literacy Coach training at Lesley has immensely changed the way I work with teachers. Lesley provided a structure for both the instructional coach and the teacher to reflect upon a lesson in a constructive way to formulate an area of growth. Once this area of growth has been identified, the conversation switches to an action plan- what*

can we do next time... The training also changed the language that I use with teachers. Delving into specific language "moves" to help lift teachers' knowledge of the reading and writing processes and keep the conversation going with a positive tone was enlightening to me. As a result of this training, I feel empowered and confident in my abilities to coach my colleagues in a way that both honors their knowledge and gently expands their literacy knowledge and tools.

Jenn cites her work on reading comprehension with one teacher as an example of the instructional improvement taking place through her improved coaching practice. The classroom teacher had noticed that student understanding of the ways in which characters may change over time was not strong, and she wanted to improve her instruction in this area. With Jenn's assistance, the teacher learned about the differences between the 'picture walks' the teacher typically used to present new texts to her students and 'book introductions' that would provide more targeted information about a new text in a way that better supported student comprehension. The results were immediate – as were ideas about next steps to even further refine classroom instruction:

The kids were making more accurate predictions on stickies while reading and were better able to identify character traits because they knew [the traits] were going to change. The teacher was already reflecting on what changes she would make for the next session, even before this lesson was over. For example, the group ran out of time.... The teacher's thoughts were that the students were spending too much time on writing [on the stickies], and not enough reading was getting done within the 30-minute group. I am so pleased that this teacher is actively reflecting on her own! We talked about a few options, such as letting the kids read the entire story and then going back to do character work as a group and the pros/cons of writing while reading vs. writing after reading, and the rationale for both. The next time [I am in that classroom] we will hopefully be trying a different format (same book orientation, letting the kids read text before character/ group work) with a different text to explore the same goal: comprehension of how characters change over time...

Strategic Priority A2. *Create a culture and develop structures that support innovation and risk-taking to improve student learning.*

This report focuses on innovation and risk-taking in curriculum development, in particular with the curriculum developed last summer with support from consultant Heidi Fessenden. This work includes exposure to the project-based methods of EL Education (formerly Expeditionary Learning), along with upcoming plans to extend these curriculum-writing opportunities to more faculty during the summer months. As with Strategic Priority A1, additional results for Strategic Priority A2 will be shared by Principals through their reports on Whole School Improvement Plans at the 5/11/17 and 5/25/17 School Committee meetings.

Outputs and Measures for Innovation and Risk-Taking

During July and August 2016, small faculty groups worked under the guidance of Heidi Fessenden, a veteran teacher in the Boston Public Schools, whose instructional practice is exemplary for its student-centered, project-based approach.[1] The integrated curriculum project in

[1] A sample of Ms. Fessenden's work, the *Farms and Food Model Exhibition*, may be found at www. eleducation.org/resources/farms-and-food-model-learning-expedition. To learn more about Expeditionary Learning in general, see www.eleducation.org.

the third grade at Lincoln School K-4 was developed by Joe Colombo and Scot Dexter with support from Ms. Fessenden during both the summer and the school year.

Parent insight into the effect of engaging and meaningful learning opportunities on their children is a critical barometer of educational success. The quotes below from parents in Mr. Colombo's and Mr. Dexter's classrooms are clear evidence of their first-year success in exploring an integrated approach to teaching and learning:

Comment #1:

I have never seen [my child] so excited!

I'm hearing about the Stamp Act, the Navigation Tax, and the Sugar Tax. She said "I'm almost out of money with all these taxes!"

[My child] is talking about possible changes to the tax structure. She is most excited about having a British Army.

She is still bucking the multiplication tables, but she is on fire about Exploration!

Comment #2:

Just to let you know, [my child] comes home most days now talking about learnings from the day... The boats, weather, birds, conversations, wee bits of insightful information. It tells me he is paying extra close attention; it's not work, he's just naturally learning rich material. Every class should be a "maker's and thinker's space. Your classroom is working. So refreshing to see, instead of farming "learning" out... It's simply organic and innate. Thank you and Mr. Colombo for treating our kids like the clever human beings they were born to be. What a difference this year has been for [my child]. A complete turnaround. He loves school again. Thank you, thank you, thank YOU!

Comment #3:

Quick note to say how awesome the Wampanoag village was. It was very much in keeping with my own elementary school experience and something I've really felt was missing for my kids. Thanks for taking the initiative to try something new! Each child was knowledgeable and excited to share their part of the village with all of us visitors. Truly wonderful.

Comment #4:

I just want to convey, while it's very fresh, how impressed I am by and how strongly I value the experiential pedagogy you are bringing to [my child], the 3rd grade, and Lincoln schools.

This morning each child was so proud and prepared to demonstrate their extensive learning about the lifestyles and cultures of the Wampanoag... It's obvious that the lessons they have learned through these experiences will be enduring. I love thinking about all the curiosity, exploration, and excitement that went into their learning and appreciation of this unique culture and particular time period...

Every child I spoke with this morning taught me something new. Each had a quick and interesting response to my question "Did anything surprise you when you were learning about this?" [My child's] engagement and pride in her constructions (I saw the skirt and dream catcher -- not sure if there were more) is what we have always hoped for along her learning

path. She -- and each child -- were shining so brightly at the intersection of their learning and interests. Their "presence" was remarkable.

So, you have accomplished what I think school (at any level!) should always be, but often isn't --- a place to ask questions that matter and to probe topics of interest; a resource for exploring, taking risks, figuring things out, and opening doors into new and different worlds; and an opportunity to foster and develop leader-full practices including taking responsibility, valuing difference, collaborating, and learning from each other....

As these parents make clear, students have responded positively to this approach. A survey conducted with these students in December and January confirms their enthusiasm and engagement (Appendix C). Highlights from this survey include the following statistics:

- Of the eight questions asked, the one with the highest percentage of students (over 83%) who responded with "strongly agree" was "*I liked learning about the Wampanoags by demonstrating through my project how the Wampanoags survived 600 years ago.*"
- Of the 36 students who took the survey, 35 agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "*I am loving the work and learning I am doing in Exploration.*"
- Conversely, a majority of students disagreed or strongly disagreed (66%) with the statement, "*I would rather learn about Massachusetts by reading and writing about it and staying at my seat in the classroom more.*"

The district has explored multiple ways of providing support that would increase the number of faculty developing integrated and project-based curriculum. Plans for the coming summer include opportunities for faculty to write integrated curriculum, whether new or revisions of existing units, with the support not only of Heidi Fessenden and her teaching partner, Annie Shah, but also with support from Steven Levy. Mr. Levy is a former classroom teacher (28 years) who has worked extensively with EL Education and has won multiple awards for his teaching and school design, including MA Teacher of the Year. The National Park Service named Mr. Levy and his fourth-grade students "Conservation Heroes" for their work studying environmental impact of a bike path in their school's community. His book, *Starting from Scratch: One Classroom Builds Its Own Curriculum*, is published by Heinemann.

Distinct from last summer, all faculty who participate in workshops with Ms. Fessenden and/or Mr. Levy will be paid for their time; the workshops will be offered at three different times during the summer, as well. We believe these modifications will increase faculty participation – which will increase the number of classrooms and students who will enjoy the benefits of a refreshed, project-based approach to learning.

Appendix A: Sample meeting agendas

Music Meeting, September 2014
Music Meeting, February 2017

Literacy Coaching, September 2014
Literacy Team, January 2017

Art Team, September 2014
Art Team, March 2017

Wellness Team, September 2016
Wellness Team, January 2017

CLT, October 2014
CLT, August 2016

Music Meeting Agenda, September 2014

Welcome
Share a summer memory, and who is your favorite current group on the radio?

Norms

DDMs/ Educator Evaluation

Calendar
Any conflicts with concerts?

Plans for the year

Concert Schedule
Please send me your teaching schedule (such as it is)

Music Meeting Agenda, February 2017

Objectives

1. To use our collective resources to support each other with a teaching dilemmas.
2. Gain a sense of common lessons/themes/works in our district to look for trends.
3. Understand current district needs and how to support those needs moving forward.
4. Reflect on the effectiveness of our work.

Warm-Up (5 mins)

Play a game of Encore (pick a word, how many songs can you come up with that have that word?)
Of course, we have to sing!

Problem Solve (30 mins)

Dilemma –Use Descriptive Consultancy p.37

98% of the time there is music playing at beginning of class. Points to listen to are on the boards with agenda, where to sit, and structure of class are all listed. Is it a student choice whether they listen to the song? Students who do not listen as an activity have no other structured activity at this time.

How can I get students to actively listen to the musician of the month so it works for the whole classroom?

20 Minutes to look at the room.

Space is not organized that works for everything that needs to happen. Needs help using space.

How can I make my space function efficiently for all the different things that happen in the space?

Break (5 mins)

Bio break

Compilation (20 mins)

Map out activities performed at each grade level in music

Bring anything you need to chart out what activities/units/composers/projects you do at each grade level so we can begin looking at commonalities to get a district view of activities/lessons that happen in LPS (see google doc)

Budget Talks (Rest of Time)

List all materials that we have/what would we like to see in the district

What do we need in our programs?

Next Steps

Preparing for our next session

Bring a lesson or activity that didn't go as planned
Someone willing to have present their work for structured group feedback?

Reflection

How did we do in our meeting?

What went well? What can we make even better?

Literacy Coaching Agenda, September 2014

1. Planning for PD This Year
   What questions do we need to ask?

2. District Days

3. Check in about Data Wall Meetings and Fall Assessments

4. Technology Permission and Licenses

5. Literacy for All Conference in November

Literacy Team Meeting, January 2017

GOALS for this meeting:

- To be introduced to an "ice breaker" meeting warm-up tool purchased by the district for each building
- To complete a team text analysis using the ten characteristics of text as referenced in the *Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum*
- To work in job-alike pairs to complete an additional analysis with a text at the current benchmark level of a given grade level
- To ponder implications for this work as a team with grade-level teams

Shared Reading (1:35-1:45)

Is there a volunteer to bring a text to share?

Postcard Resource (1:45 – 2:00)

Maureen

Text Analysis, as a team, of a Level J text (2:00 – 2:45)

Jenn will facilitate

Text Analysis of current benchmark-level texts for given grade levels (2:45 – 3:30)

Suggested partnerships & levels:

- 1st grade: Patti & Maureen (Level E, possibly examining F)
- 3rd grade: Rose & Loretta (Level N)
- 4th grade: Jen & Jeanne (Level P)

I'll provide books at the above levels, however you may bring other books if there is a book you would like to dig into. You may also adjust the partnerships to best support your learning.

Once each partnership has a chance to complete the 10 point analysis:
Share out! What did you learn? Was there anything that surprised you?

Team brainstorm! (3:30 – 4:00) (Someone please take notes for Gwen)

How can we best share this work and this thinking with grade level teams?
Is there merit for doing this work with BAS texts, or is it best to do it with fresh texts?

Items Needed:

- Postcard Resource
- Literacy Continuum
- Text Analysis Sheets
- Multiple Copies of Leveled Texts

Art Team Agenda, September 2014

Welcome Back

Norms

Art Show dates

Please bring in calendars with known obligations and commitments for your school, such as Sargent Camp, field trips etc.

Public Library Show

Project share

Anyone have any successful (or not successful) projects they'd like to share?
Not a must- just if there is time.

Art Team Agenda, March 2017

10 Lessons the Arts Teach (National Art Education Association) (1:35-1:55)

Where, and how, can we advocate for the arts?

"But I didn't mean it! Why It's So Hard to Prioritize Impacts Over Intents" (2:00-2:30)

Take 10 minutes to read article from Scientific American, October 2013
4 A's Text protocol (page 62)

**What assumptions does the author hold?*
**What do you agree with?*
**What do you argue with?*
**What parts do you aspire to (or want to act upon?)*

Break (5 minutes)

Between Ink and Paper video (15 min)

Micro Lab (page 95) (3:00-4:00)

Colleen presents a dilemma

Wellness Team Agenda, September 2016

1. Check-in
2. Review Norms
3. IPad update
4. Looking at Fall Assessments
5. Student Work/Protocols
6. Wrap up

Wellness Team Agenda, January 2017

Check in/business items (1:35 – 1:50)
Share a goal for 2017 – personal or professional
Follow-up about conference (it's good 😉)

Norms (1:50 – 2:00)
Review norms and discuss any changes (if needed)

Game Share (2:00 – 2:20)
Basketball
Check out this website for some new ideas: http://www.gophersport.com/blogentry/11

Report Cards (2:20 – 2:45)
Review standards, comments, reaching out to parents, etc.

Professional sharing with protocol (2:45 – 3:45)
Scott will be presenting this meeting. We will have an opportunity to guide him

Debrief and set agenda for next meeting (3:45 – 4:00)
Use the Delta process to review the meeting
Next meeting: 2/15 @ Smith
Ryan is presenting and bringing snacks

Curriculum Leadership Team, October 2014

Welcome and check-in

Business

- Review of calendar:
  - CLT meetings
    - January 21
    - March 11
    - May 27
  - Department meetings

Schedules – please send in

RBT webinar

DDMs: Where are we? What do folks need?

Working and learning

- Institute Day: possibilities… what's your feedback?
- Peer Observations: update on nascent plan
- Important questions and topics from the group

Feedback and closure

Curriculum Leadership Team, August 2016

Objectives:

- Differentiate between groups that are communities of practice and those that operate as teams
- Design a meeting agenda for September 7
- Give and receive feedback on agendas

What	How	Time
Opening	Gather and welcome each other (in pairs) -- *As you think about the summer – what is one day you would love to relive? Why?* Agree to a few norms for today's meeting: • Be accountable to each other, to the process, and to the learning • Speak up and share your thinking/Step back and make room for others	1:35- 2:00
Differentiate between groups that are communities of practice and those that operate as teams	Read *Communities of Practice* Individual reflective writing, followed by conversation in pairs: *To what extent will your department be a community of practice? A team or committee? How does your answer to this question inform your agenda design?*	
Design a meeting agenda for Sept. 7	Engage in the Microlab Protocol (in pairs – changing partners for each question): 1. *Who are the people in your department? What do you know about them – what they want and/or need to learn, and what they already know?* 2. *Go to the future ... It is June, and you have had a year of successful department meetings. What accounted for the success? What do you want people to be able to do as a result of their learning tin department meetings this year?* 3. *What work/learning does this suggest should be part of your meetings this year? How will you work/learn together? Where will you begin on September 7?* Read the agenda design tips at the end of this agenda and create an agenda for September 7.	2:00- 2:15 2:15- 2:50

Give and receive feedback on agendas using a structured protocol	Determine what kind of feedback you want, and choose either the *What? So What? Now What*? (p. 43) or *Tuning Adult Work* (p. 16) In triads, give each other facilitated feedback, 20 min. each **<u>Shortened protocols @ 20 minutes</u>** **Tuning Protocol** 1. Presentation of context and framing question (5 min.) 2. Clarifying questions with short answers (2 minutes) 3. Participants review work, prepare warm and cool feedback, and give feedback (10 min) 4. Presenter's reflection/conversation (3 min) 5. 5. Debrief: Will do when all three rounds are finished **What? So What? Now What?** 1. Presenter shares their draft agenda, ending with a focus question (5 min.) 2. Clarifying questions with short answers (2 min.) 3. Participants talk among themselves; presenter listens (10 min.) 4. Presenter reflects back to group (3 min.) **Debrief:** Will do when all three rounds are finished	2:50-3:50
Closing	Next steps and meeting evaluation	3:50-4:00

Some questions to guide your agenda design:

- Why are you creating this agenda? What is the situation that calls for this learning?
- Where will you meet, and what is the time frame?
- Determine what the content of the session will be. What skills, knowledge, and/or beliefs/attitudes do you want people to learn? What products do you want them to produce?
- After you have identified the content of your session, then create a set of objectives. In other words, what will participants actually do with the content (as opposed to what YOU will say or do)? This is where you use action verbs.

  SOME EXAMPLES:
  Identify the underlying tensions, **listen** to stories about changes in practice, **create** and **use** probing questions, **design** an assessment, **examine** a range of student work samples, **give feedback** on the draft rubric

- Brainstorm how participants will meet the objectives. Be as specific about the how as you can. In other words, create learning tasks – carefully constructed processes through which participants build skills, learn the content, and/or shift beliefs. For example, if the participants will "give feedback to each other," will they use the Tuning Protocol? Will they do a Gallery Walk with written comments on post-it notes? Remember that sit and listen or sit and discuss will likely NOT get you to your objectives. This is where the protocol book might be helpful.

AGENDA TEMPLATE

WHAT?	HOW?	TIME

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What	How	Time
Opening	Gather and welcome each other (in pairs) -- *As you think about the summer – what is one day you would love to relive? Why?* Agree to a few norms for today's meeting: • Be accountable to each other, to the process, and to the learning • Speak up and share your thinking/Step back and make room for others	1:35-2:00
Differentiate between groups that are communities of practice and those that operate as teams	Read *Communities of Practice* Individual reflective writing, followed by conversation in pairs: *To what extent will your department be a community of practice? A team or committee? How does your answer to this question inform your agenda design?*	
Design a meeting agenda for Sept. 7	Engage in the Microlab Protocol (in pairs – changing partners for each question): 1. *Who are the people in your department? What do you know about them – what they want and/or need to learn, and what they already know?* 2. *Go to the future ... It is June, and you have had a year of successful department meetings. What accounted for the success? What do you want people to be able to do as a result of their learning tin department meetings this year?* 3. *What work/learning does this suggest should be part of your meetings this year? How will you work/learn together? Where will you begin on September 7?* Read the agenda design tips at the end of this agenda and create an agenda for September 7.	2:00-2:15 2:15-2:50

Give and receive feedback on agendas using a structured protocol	Determine what kind of feedback you want, and choose either the *What? So What? Now What*? (p. 43) or *Tuning Adult Work* (p. 16) In triads, give each other facilitated feedback, 20 min. each **<u>Shortened protocols @ 20 minutes</u>** **Tuning Protocol** 1. Presentation of context and framing question (5 min.) 2. Clarifying questions with short answers (2 minutes) 3. Participants review work, prepare warm and cool feedback, and give feedback (10 min) 4. Presenter's reflection/conversation (3 min) 5. 5. Debrief: Will do when all three rounds are finished **What? So What? Now What?** 1. Presenter shares their draft agenda, ending with a focus question (5 min.) 2. Clarifying questions with short answers (2 min.) 3. Participants talk among themselves; presenter listens (10 min.) 4. Presenter reflects back to group (3 min.) **Debrief:** Will do when all three rounds are finished	2:50-3:50
Closing	Next steps and meeting evaluation	3:50-4:00

Some questions to guide your agenda design:

- Why are you creating this agenda? What is the situation that calls for this learning?
- Where will you meet, and what is the time frame?
- Determine what the content of the session will be. What skills, knowledge, and/or beliefs/attitudes do you want people to learn? What products do you want them to produce?
- After you have identified the content of your session, then create a set of objectives. In other words, what will participants actually do with the content (as opposed to what YOU will say or do)? This is where you use action verbs.

  SOME EXAMPLES:
  Identify the underlying tensions, **listen** to stories about changes in practice, **create** and **use** probing questions, **design** an assessment, **examine** a range of student work samples, **give feedback** on the draft rubric

- Brainstorm how participants will meet the objectives. Be as specific about the how as you can. In other words, create learning tasks – carefully constructed processes through which participants build skills, learn the content, and/or shift beliefs. For example, if the participants will "give feedback to each other," will they use the Tuning Protocol? Will they do a Gallery Walk with written comments on post-it notes? Remember that sit and listen or sit and discuss will likely NOT get you to your objectives. This is where the protocol book might be helpful.

AGENDA TEMPLATE

WHAT?	HOW?	TIME

Appendix B:
ATLAS: Learning from Student Work Protocol

SRI SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVE
A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

ATLAS: Learning From Student Work Protocol

Learning from Student Work is a tool to guide groups of teachers discovering what students understand and how they are thinking. The tool, developed by Eric Buchovecky, is based in part on the work of the Leadership for Urban Mathematics Project and of the Assessment Communities of Teachers Project. The tool also draws on the work of Steve Seidel and Evangeline Harris-Stefanakis of Project Zero at Harvard University. Revised November 2000 by Gene Thompson-Grove for SRI.

1. Getting Started

- The facilitator explains the protocol.
  Note: Each of the next 4 steps should be about 10 minutes in length. The presenter is silent until Step 5. The group should avoid talking to the presenter during steps 2-4. It is sometimes helpful for the presenter to pull away from the table and take notes.
- The educator providing the student work gives a very brief statement of the assignment. The educator should describe only what the student was asked to do and avoid explaining what she/he hoped or expected to see.
- The educator providing the work should not give any background information about the student or the student's work. In particular, the educator should avoid any statements about whether this is a strong or weak student or whether this is a particularly good or poor piece of work from this student.
  Note: After the group becomes more familiar with this process for looking at student work, you may find it useful to hear the educator's expectations. However, this information will focus more of the group's attention on the design of the assignment, the instruction, and the assessment, rather than on seeing what is actually present in the student's work.
- The participants observe or read the work in silence, perhaps making brief notes about aspects of it that they particularly notice.

2. Describing the Student Work

- The facilitator asks: "What do you see?"
- During this period the group gathers as much information as possible from the student work.
- Group members describe what they see in the student's work, avoiding judgments about quality or interpretations about what the student was doing.
- If judgments or interpretations do arise, the facilitator should ask the person to describe the evidence on which they are based.
- It may be useful to list the group's observations on chart paper. If interpretations come up, they can be listed in another column for later discussion during Step 3.

3. Interpreting the Student Work

- The facilitator asks: "From the student's perspective, what is the student working on?"
- During this period, the group tries to make sense of what the student was doing and why. The group should try to find as many different interpretations as possible and evaluate them against the kind and quality of evidence.
- From the evidence gathered in the preceding section, try to infer: what the student was thinking and why; what the student does and does not understand; what the student was most interested in; and how the student interpreted the assignment.

- Think broadly and creatively. Assume that the work, no matter how confusing, makes sense to the student; your job is to see what the student sees.
- As you listen to each other's interpretations, ask questions that help you better understand each other's perspectives.

4. Implications for Classroom Practice

- The facilitator asks: "What are the implications of this work for teaching and assessment?"
- Based on the group's observations and interpretations, discuss any implications this work might have for teaching and assessment in the classroom. In particular, consider the following questions:
  — What steps could the teacher take next with this student?
  — What teaching strategies might be most effective?
  — What else would you like to see in the student work? What kinds of assignments or assessments could provide this information?
  — What does this conversation make you think about in terms of your own practice? About teaching and learning in general?

5. Reflecting on the ATLAS

The presenter shares back what she/he learned about the student, the work, and what she/he is now thinking. The discussion then opens to the larger group to discuss what was learned about the student, about colleagues, and self.

6. Debriefing the Process

How well did the process work? What went well, and what could be improved? If the group has designated someone to observe the conversation, this person should report her/his observations.

SRI SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVE
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About Learning from Student Work

Written for use with the ATLAS Protocol. Published in HORACE, *November 1996 (p. 2), Coalition of Essential Schools. The* Learning from Student Work Protocol *was developed by Eric Buchovecky of ATLAS Communities, drawing on the work of Mark Driscoll at Education Development Center and that of Steve Seidel at Harvard Project Zero.*

Purpose
The guidelines (summarized below) help participants stay focused on the evidence before them and listen to multiple perspectives, rather than getting bogged down in assumptions.

When looking for evidence of students' thinking:
- Stay focused on the evidence that is present in the work.
- Look openly and broadly; don't let your expectations cloud your vision.
- Look for patterns in the evidence that provide clues to how and what the student was thinking.

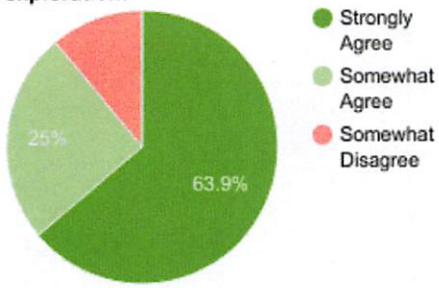
When listening to colleagues' thinking:
- Listen without judging.
- Tune in to differences in perspective.
- Use controversy as an opportunity to explore and understand each other's perspectives.
- Focus on understanding where different interpretations come from.
- Make your own thinking clear to others.
- Be patient and persistent.

When reflecting on your own thinking:
- Ask yourself, "Why do I see this student work in this way? What does this tell me about what is important to me?"
- Look for patterns in your own thinking.
- Tune in to the questions that the student work and your colleagues' comments raise for you.
- Compare what you see and what you think about the student work with what you do in the classroom.

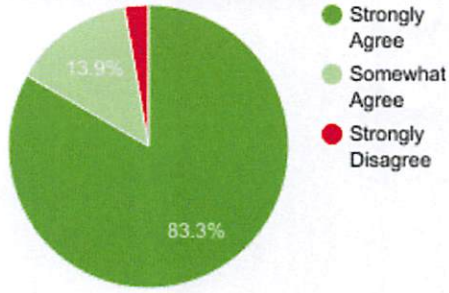
When you reflect on the process of looking at student work:
- What did you see in this student's work that was interesting or surprising?
- What did you learn about how this student thinks and learns?
- What about the process helped you see and learn these things?
- What did you learn from listening to colleagues that was interesting/surprising?
- What new perspectives did your colleagues provide?
- How can you make use of your colleagues' perspectives?
- What questions about teaching and assessment did looking at this student's work raise for you?
- How can you pursue these questions further?
- Are there things you would like to try in your classroom as a result of looking at the student's work?

Appendix C:
December/January 2016-17 Student Survey Results

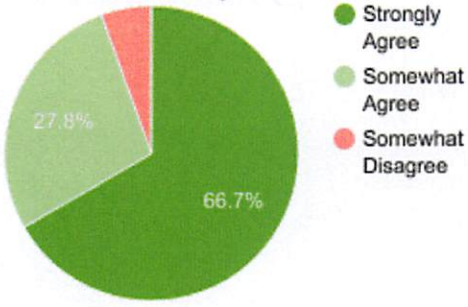
I liked learning about Massachusetts' environment by going on a field exploration.



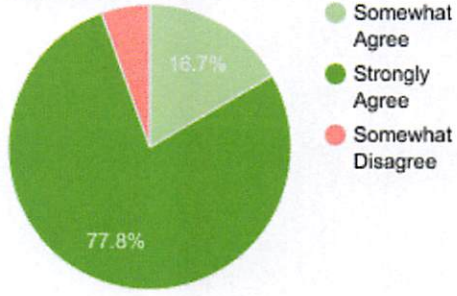
I liked learning about the Wampanoag by demonstrating through my project how the Wampanoag survived 600 years ago.



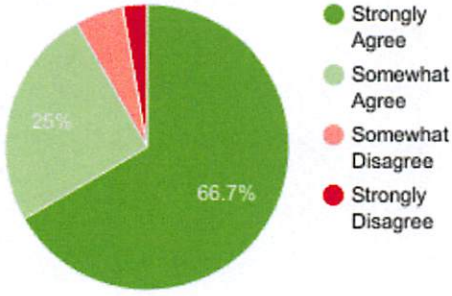
I liked learning about the Mayflower's Voyage by acting out the story The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower.



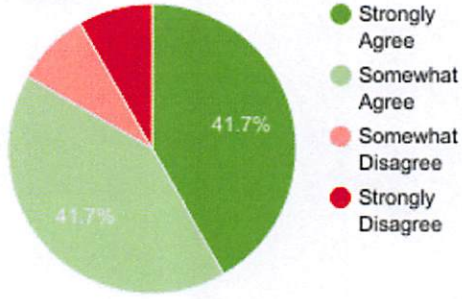
I liked learning more about the Wampanoags and Pilgrims by visiting Plimoth Plantation.



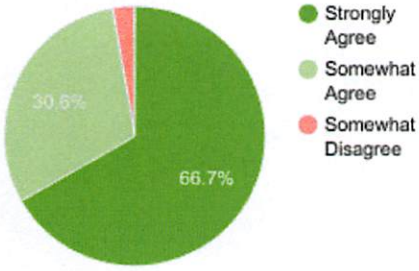
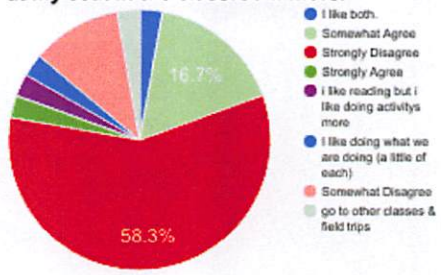
I am excited to learn more about Sugar Maples by growing one.



I have thought about Maple Trees, Wampanoags or Pilgrims from time to time at home.



I am loving the work and learning I am doing in Exploration.



I would rather learn about Massachusetts by reading and writing about it and staying at my seat in the classroom more.