

Jr/Sr HS Educational Initiatives & PD 2016-17

This year as a school and staff we are focusing on specific school-wide educational initiatives & PD, they are: Differentiated Instruction activities, Common Core math and ELA standards-based reports, 21st Century STEM skills (Including use of Chromebooks, Google Classroom, Robotics and 3-D Printing), ReTeach 7/8 (intervention practices using iReady), and ENL Instruction.

Differentiated Instruction -- Challenging all learners

At its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction. (<http://www.readingrockets.org>)

Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile:

Content – what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information;

Process – activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content;

Products – culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit; and

Learning environment – the way the classroom works and feels.

Our goal is to raise proficiency and mastery levels by at least 10% for all students on State and Regents assessments through Differentiated Instruction practices. We will measure student progress via skills based reports, unit test assessments, local and state assessments.

As a staff we will be working with an OCM BOCES network trainer focused on Differentiated Instruction practices. Our main topics will encompass...

- Creating a healthy classroom community in which students' unique qualities and needs are as important as the ones they have in common.
- Translating curriculum into manageable and meaningful learning goals that are fit to be differentiated.
- Use pre-assessment and formative assessment to uncover students' learning needs and tailor tasks accordingly.
- Presenting students with avenues to take in, process, and produce knowledge that appeal to their varied interests and learning profiles.
- Navigating roadblocks to implementing differentiation in all classrooms.

In addition to the work completed by our trainer the faculty will complete a book study on Differentiation in Middle and High School: Strategies to Engage All Learners, by Jessica A. Hockett and Kristina Doubet reviewed at monthly faculty meetings during the 2016-17 school year.

PD Activities:

Carol Kosnitsky training at the Oncenter, August 17 & 18, 2016, Topic: General Education & Special Education: Creating a Unified System through a Mindful Culture of Collaboration.

Main training provided by Lisa Schlegel, OCM BOCES staff developer on topic of Differentiated Instruction practices, September 1, 2016 and October 21, 2016.

Additional professional development and data review will be provided by Tracy Musso, Cayuga Onondaga BOCES Staff Developer once a month at faculty meetings throughout the 2016-17 school year.

Common Core Math and ELA standards-based reports

Our goal is to improve teaching and learning for our students on a yearly basis and we look to provide as much information as possible to our families regarding their child's progress in class. This year we will continue to provide our students and families common core standards-based reports in ELA & Math in all state tested areas in grades 7-12. The report will serve as an additional reference beyond the report card to give students and families insight to the standards students are expected to learn. The standards-based reports provide a more in-depth assessment of student knowledge, a consistent evaluation on standards, and suggestions for skill improvement/interventions. Student performance on each standard is based on the grading scale used for Regents Exam grading protocols. Every other marking period we will adjust the standards assessed based upon the course curriculum.

As we all may agree, Common Core Standards are more rigorous than previous NYS standards. Our current standards set high expectations for students, staff and our school. For additional information on *Common Core State Standards*, please reference the following website:

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards>].

PD Activities:

Teachers will meet during common prep times throughout the 2016-17 school year to create and revise the standards reports and intervention strategies. The reports will be provided to students and families at marking periods 2, 4, and 6.

21st Century STEM Skills

This is our second year with the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) initiative, which is truly rooted in building 21st century skills for our students. We have initiated courses at the junior and senior high level that encompass robotics, programming, computer coding, and 3-D printing. One of **our goals** for 21st century STEM skills is to expose students to communicating and learning via online applications, and Google for Education works directly to support that skill.

In addition to our STEM courses, we are beginning a Chromebook 1:1 plan for all students in Junior High School. Over the next year, we will purchase additional Chromebooks via the NYS Smart Schools Bond Act so we may expand our 1:1 initiative to the Sr HS level. We will also continue to expand our use of Google for Education which allows teachers to move to a more paperless/online environment for students. Students use an assigned SCCS email and their network password to access the application. Please note: Student school email addresses are secure and are only accessible to students and teachers at SCCS.

PD Activities:

Ongoing training will be provided by faculty and staff and will focus on robotics, Chromebooks, Google Classroom, interactive projector technology, and tech integration. Group workshops will be provided on October 21, 2016 and March 17, 2017. A part-time Instructional Technology Integration Specialist from OCM BOCES will be hired to train and support teachers in all our classroom technology applications.

Reteach 7/8

The goal of Reteach at grades 7 & 8 is to offer students the opportunity to master essential skills and knowledge in math & ELA before moving on to the next level. Teacher(s) will meet with students who may be struggling with concepts to provide additional time and attention.

The initiative is based upon the work already completed in elementary school. Depending on a variety of data points, the 7/8 team will assign students to a reteach session depending upon student need. As areas of strength and concern vary among students, many students will be assigned to a Reteach class during the course of the year. Students will see the opportunity to focus on their individual needs and to learn a particular concept better than they did the first time.

Throughout the school year teachers will identify instructional priorities, develop formative assessments, and plan a range of activities to meet the wide range of academic needs of our students. The assessments in general will be brief and designed to provide a snapshot of each student's progress so teachers can address any needs promptly. The team will meet on a weekly basis to review the latest results, to identify students who are struggling, and to help plan instruction accordingly.

We will also begin to use a program called iReady to further assess all student skills in grades 7 & 8. i-Ready® (via www.curriculumassociates.com) answers “why?” and delivers “what's next?” i-Ready combines a valid and reliable growth measure and provides individualized instruction in Math and ELA. The iReady program offers:

Adaptive Growth Measure & Diagnostic: A single adaptive diagnostic for reading and mathematics that pinpoints student needs down to the sub-skill level, and ongoing progress monitoring shows whether students are on track to achieve end-of-year targets.

Teacher-Led Instruction: Provides rigorous, on-grade-level instruction and practice with Ready® and additional downloadable lessons to help meet individual student or small group needs.

Student Instruction & Practice: Provides personalized student instruction targeted to students' unique areas of needs and mobile apps to boost achievement.

Reports: Easy-to-use reporting and ongoing progress monitoring provide educators with real-time insights for each student at the class, school, and district level.

All students grades in grades 3-8 will be benchmark tested three times a year in Math and ELA using the iReady program. Students needing additional assistance with key area skills will practice the skills identified for them specifically using the individualized online lessons, while others will use the program to enrich and further develop their reading and math skills. RTI and Special Education students will be progress monitored using the program's quick PM probes.

PD Activities:

The Jr HS Coordinator position will facilitate data collection and provide ongoing training and support 7/8 classroom teachers. Training will occur on all Staff Development Days: September 1, 2016, October 21, 2016, and March 17, 2017 as well as select team meetings.

PD training for iReady including teachers and administrators will occur in September and October 2016. Initial training (September) is 2 1/2 to 3 hours regarding Getting Started with iReady - how to view classes, print username and passwords, prepare students for the assessment, etc. Then, in October there is another training regarding Understanding the Data. Training provided by Jean Sharlow, OCM BOCES staff trainer.

Additional professional development and data review will be provided by Tracy Musso, Cayuga Onondaga BOCES Staff Developer once a month throughout the 2016-17 school year.

English as a New Language (ENL) Instruction

The need for English language instruction and content area support for English Language Learners (ELLs) has increased tremendously over the past five years. Currently over twenty English Language Learners (ELLs) are enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve at Southern Cayuga Central School.

During the past few years, English as a New Language (ENL) staff have focused on assessing the needs of students and developing an English Second Language (ESL) program. This included researching English language materials designed for second language learners. This year the emphasis has moved toward assessing and defining the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) in content area classes. ELLs enrolled at SCCS span many language proficiency levels.

Some were educated in other countries while others received all of their education in the United States. This variation in English ability and experience with American education system creates a number of unique educational needs in the classroom. **Our goal** through this initiative is to acquiring subject specific resources in the students' native language, texts written in simpler English and providing professional development for all content area teachers. In addition, ENL staff will assist other teachers to develop sheltered instruction strategies and adapt learning materials. We will use a standards based report similar to the format used in our English classes to assess student proficiency and skill levels.

ENL coordinator met with key area teacher on August 4, 2016 to assess the needs of the English Language Learners and set professional development priorities for the upcoming school year during teachers common prep times.

Additional professional development to ENL teachers will be provided by Mid-State Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN), located at OCM BOCES throughout the 2016-17 school year.