



## Haggerty School

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Haggerty School Advisory Council (SAC)

**Friday, February 14, 2025**

7:45-8:45

Haggerty Library & Google Meet

### Agenda:

- Introductions & Welcome
  - Roles - Note Taker
  - Check-in: What we're hearing - What's on Top? Peaches & Pits?  
(anything that is not on the agenda and needs time or planning will be tabled for another mtg or a subcommittee)
- Minutes from January Mtg
- New CKLA Curriculum Overview: *Director of English Language Arts, Emily Bryan*

### Attendance:

*Hester Breen, Emily Bryan, Kevin McGonegal, Lissa Galluccio, Katie O'Connell, Nancy Campbell, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Chris Cullen, Suzanne Russell, Leah Kean, Aminata Cham*

### Notes taken by Lissa:

#### *Peaches and Pits:*

- Morse had a Science Fair - They described the Eureka designed project from CKLA in 4th grade - shout out to CKLA
- Delighted to have an ELA curriculum - with a very structured curriculum. Kids are loving the learning about such varied topics, and being in collaboration.
- Spaghetti Dinner was so fun last night - the food, community, 5th graders had so much agency.
- We are continuing to think about looking for opportunities for outdoor field trips, and also increasing collaboration across grades and would love to align them across the curriculum units at different grade levels to support the teachers with ideas for their students. There are many places/options right in this area of Cambridge that folks may not know of.

**Emily Bryan, ELA -**

[Slide Show](#)

This is the first time we have the same curriculum through the grades and across all programs. Started with a question to caregivers as to why they came today - what do they want to learn more about? What do you hope to get out of this?

Answers from caregivers:

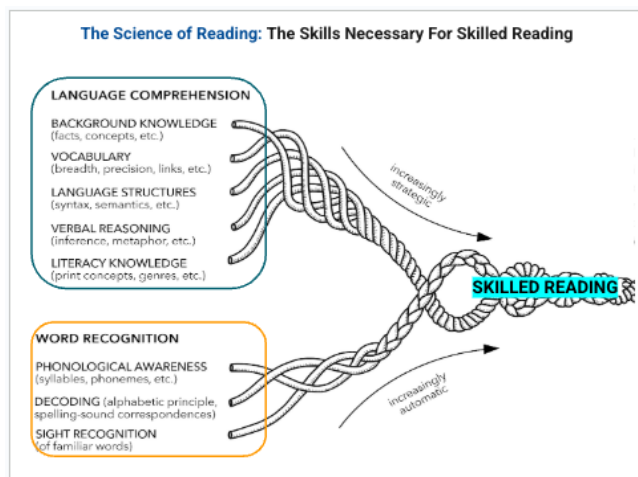
- Better understanding of the building blocks - what is the long term trajectory of the learning?
- From a perspective of outdoor learning, using this multi-disciplinary perspective are there opportunities for hands-on learning, outdoors, in this curriculum?
- Love to hear the teacher's perspective, what's working well?
- My child is a voracious reader, wonder how it's working across the spectrum of ability? Also how it works/connected in spaces like the Library? How are individual kid's needs being met?
- Caregiver unit sheets that come home are helpful. Been hearing that 5th grade literacy blocks are too long.

Emily Bryan - What brings me here today? Come to you as a person who as a student struggled with reading. Took many years for me to build confidence around school. Ended up in an alternative school, which changed the trajectory of my schooling and I could feel success. This school made such a big difference, so my goal is to make sure students never feel like they can't, or are not capable.

The Science of Reading - all but 5% of students have the cognitive capacity to read. The remaining 95% can and should succeed.

Curriculum Adoption is a multi-year plan. We know there isn't a perfect curriculum to meet all student's learning needs and matched to all standards - so we picked the strongest choice as a committee of coaches, teachers, principals, district leaders, etc. At this point we have 150 feedback points from teachers, and we will come together this Spring to share the ups and downs. How can we bring new opportunities that we know will need to be addressed?

Science of Reading - decades of research on how our brain learns to read and write. Boils down to this reading rope - tied at the end but frayed at the beginning and each strand is a specific skill. Broken into two big skills - language comprehension (more understanding) and Word Recognition (phonics).



What is different about how we teach phonics? Letters don't make sounds, letters *represent* sounds. Sounds can be represented by one letter or a group of letters. Groups of letters like igh - just represent the sounds i. Calling a letter "silent" can lead to confusion later. By the end of second grade they would have learned the entire English code.

What is hindering student comprehension? Is it general reading skills (fluency, finding the main idea) OR knowledge about a topic (vocab and concepts)? It's general knowledge - which is why CKLA is so rich in varied content. Hard as adults to remember how important this is for students -this knowledge is the velcro to learning.

It is now well accepted that the chief cause of the achievement gap among socio-economic groups is a language gap. So we will have the biggest impact when we increase our student's database of knowledge. (See [slides 14-19](#))

First graders have two blocks of CKLA a day (not always referred to as CKLA). One is phonics - really learning the representation of sounds. The other block is knowledge - and not decoding these words - but building knowledge and analytic skills. The complication of text increases with age. The building blocks are very intentional in this program. They will come back to different content areas across the grades, using the same vocabulary and themes. They also have research based projects, grade 2 will learn about the history of flight. (see [slides 20-22](#))

**Question:** At the beginning of this year the teacher sent home a list of topics for the year. Should we preemptively be doing some learning at home to help make this go much more smoothly. What can we do to help? **Answer:** not necessary to pre-teach the content. It's important to have



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that discovery process. But once it starts you could get more books on the topic, or watch a documentary. One school after the unit went to the Mayan exhibit at HNHM (Harvard Natural History Museum), but they knew so much about the topic they needed to adjust the presentation.

*Comment:* My child has really been an example of this, his outside knowledge is broad, which comes from our culture. Literacy levels in what language is the standard? A child can have a lot of outside knowledge in a culture outside of the US. What is the definition of literacy? Literacy in any language supports literacy in any language.

*Question:* Is there alignment between CKLA and the social studies and science curriculum.

*Answer:* The heads of these departments were all a part of the adoption process and the bias review team, and have a strong partnership. In terms of the content, Massachusetts has its own standards and our sequences are different than the national standards which CKLA is aligned to. As a result they are getting different content across these disciplines, but because of this they are also getting even more content. The question remains is that too much content. We are looking into that. Students do still need Science and Social Studies and Civics as separate curriculum, to get this content in a deeper way.

*Next Meeting - Friday, March 21st, 7:45 - 8:45 am*