

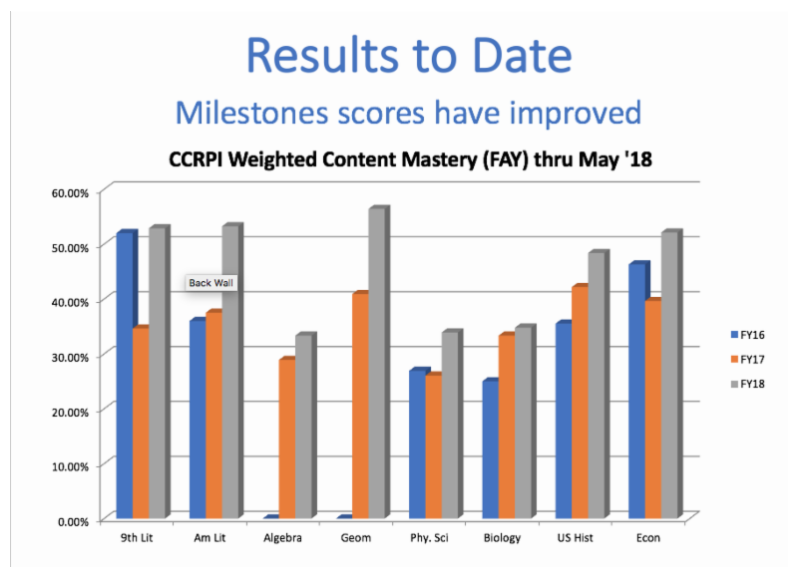
June 12, 2018



Foothills Education Charter High School Implementation Grant Update June Grant News

Staff, Friends, and Supporters of Foothills Education Charter High School:

There is little that is more gratifying than seeing positive results from hard work. That's where we find ourselves, as we near the completion of the first, "official" phase of the Implementation Grant. **As you will see in the chart below, End of Course scores have consistently gone up in every area.** While important work continues in these areas, this is a great affirmation of our efforts to date.



At the June 6-7 work sessions at Whitehead Road Elementary School, the hard work that has led to these transformations was very much in evidence.

I sat in with **Tim Jarboe** as he led the **Data Team Managers group**, reviewing the work done to date and, perhaps more important, working on data review protocols for the coming year.

The data topics covered through May 2018 included:

- November, 2017: Analyze the structure of Milestones constructed response items and technology enhanced items.
- January, 2018: Conduct domain analysis of all EOC data from the 2016-

2017 administrations.

- February, 2018: 1) Review the new CCRPI (under ESSA); 2) conduct an analysis of students within one Standard Error of Measure (SEM) of moving to the next Milestones Achievement Level.
- March, 2018: Review Depth of Knowledge alignment and achievement level descriptors.
- April, 2018: Review factors that go into test item creation.
- May, 2018: Examination of Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and Georgia Online Formative Assessment Resource (GOFAR).

Looking ahead to the next year, the Data Team Managers (DTM's) focused on these tasks:

- Decide the types of data to be analyzed regularly by DTM's and the frequency of the reviews.
- Begin the development of a Data Analysis Protocol to be used by DTM's when analyzing data on regular basis.
- Develop a process by which the DTM's will review GradPoint unit tests to evaluate the quality of test items and make revisions as needed.

The Data Team then set up a work plan and schedule for 2018-2019.

I next joined **Mark Tavernier and the Curriculum Group** as they worked on using data and their teaching experiences to revise and update the GradPoint curriculum for next year. As you will note, several key themes emerged across all content area groups.

Speaking for the **mathematics group**, **Mark Argo and Ronda Tate** pointed out that there are currently many required standards missing from the curriculum. The group found a way to create a search for items and to plug in the ones that were needed. A challenge for the group was to keep up with ongoing changes to the ever-changing Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), adding in new items, graphics, and videos. Argo noted that "we have addressed about 90% of the needed changes, but this will be ongoing, multi-year project."

The **algebra group** also found a lot material not related to standards, and those items have been deleted. **Laura Bannister and Christy DeLay** described how the group has reordered and condensed curriculum items, while removing "bad" questions and adding those that were more like those found in the EOC. They also noted that some of the revised sections will require a more interactive teaching and learning environment, including the use of frequent mini-lessons.

Representing the **biology group**, **Matt Dahlke and Geni Spect** noted that they have found and removed a great deal of extraneous content (redundant or not related to standards), while adding activities and simulations from other programs to fill in the gaps. "We're really excited about what we've set up for the students for next year," they added. "Now we're less 'broad' and more in depth, and much more up to date."

Dorann Mansberger, Lisa Simmons, Catherine Gibbs, and Becky McCullers all spoke up for the **English/language arts group**. Their work focused on adding a lot more writing to the curriculum, as this is a focus of the EOC. Their work has included refining writing prompts, linking quizzes more closely to the standards, and generally reorganizing content and making sure that the curriculum was not overly heavy in just a few standards while omitting others.

Speaking for **physical science**, **Paul Blais, Victor Devine, and Jon Lundy** described how they have revised and updated the curriculum, adding the kinds of

hands-on tasks required in the current, digital environment. Using "gizmos" - online, virtual representations of lab work, they hope to help Foothills students "think more like scientists," working more with discussions, analyses, and writing.

Finally, the **US history group** talked about the challenge of "starting with an off-the-shelf program" and aligning it to the GSE standards. Speaking for the group, **Lara Komanicky and Jane Berger** shared how they are not only updating the curriculum and connecting it to current standards, but also adding more interactive elementals, student engagement, and critical thinking. This includes adding quizzes and ongoing checks for understanding.

It was truly exciting to see the real-world application of the ideas the Implementation Grant group has reviewed and worked on for the past nine months. As suggested here, while these efforts are already showing results, the work will be ongoing throughout this summer, next year, and beyond.

Regards,
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