



STEM Update

By Dr. Joyce Edwards, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning

The Franklin Public Schools have been very busy this year updating our curriculum and instructional materials in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

In the Science area, our K-8 schools have embraced a new resource called STEMscopes with hands-on Science activities for all students. The program provides an emphasis on writing across the curriculum as students of all ages are taught to make a scientific claim and then present their evidence and reasoning. We are grateful to the Town of Franklin and the capital budget process that provided the funding for this resource. This has helped our teachers work towards a multi-year plan of aligning our teaching and learning to the 2016 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in this area. At Franklin High School the 2016 Frameworks standards are fully implemented in our Biology, Chemistry, and Physics courses.

The Mathematics department has also been quite busy as our elementary teachers began the year with positive Math messaging and the implementation of units and assessments that align with the 2017 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Math. The middle schools have been investigating new resources for next year and will be using Illustrative Mathematics in grades 6-8. This program scored the highest possible score from an independent non-profit group called Ed Reports. This organization evaluates curriculum in all areas for all grades to ensure appropriate curriculum coherence, rigor, and usability. We are excited to launch this in the fall, again with gratitude for the funding from the town's capital budget process.

Additionally, Franklin High School will be piloting Illustrative Math which is brand new for Algebra I and Algebra II. Being selected to participate is quite an honor and we are proud to be 1 of 32 districts nationally to pilot these materials. The middle schools and the high school will also be using a program called Big ideas for Algebra I and Algebra II, a more traditional approach so that teachers and students will have a variety of resources to meet the needs of all learners.

This is a [link](#) to a recent School Committee presentation that highlighted our work in Science, Mathematics, and Digital Learning. Please feel free to speak with your child's teachers, principal, or to call me if you have questions. Happy Spring!