

**Curriculum Department Report to the Board of Education**  
**Curriculum Department Highlights**  
**October 18th, 2023**

**To:** Mr. Watts, Superintendent  
Ms. Malone, Chairperson of the Board  
Members of the Board of Education

**Newport Curriculum Department Vision:**

We envision a day when **all leaders** of Newport Independent Schools exhibit high expectations and guarantee excellence of instruction, ensure equitable opportunities and leverage all high-quality resources so that students, staff and leaders will **maximize** their fullest potential.

**Chief Academic Officer**

**Cognia 2023 Continuous Improvement Conference**

Education requires a great deal of professional learning, to grow and continuously improve. We continue to remain committed to finding new ways to reach all of their students, improve our district, and leadership abilities by making sure our own education never stops.

More than 900 of Kentucky's educators convened at the Central Bank Center in Lexington for the 2023 Continuous Improvement Summit, which is co-sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and Cognia. The conference is the annual kickoff event for all things continuous improvement and is supported by KDE's Office of Continuous Improvement and Support.

For two days, we learned from the experts on improvement planning, the power of personalized coaching and how to drive continuous improvement through improvement communities. Literacy K-3 was the focus of the sessions I attended, as well state accountability, and minority recruitment and retention.

Upon return from the conference we met with the instructional coaches to develop a draft K-3 literacy plan. This plan's purpose is to unify the district K-3 literacy program, growing reading proficiency by 3rd grade. Below is a draft of the priorities that will be the focus of our literacy plan.

1. **Assessment and Goal Setting:** Begin by assessing each student's literacy level and set specific, measurable goals for improvement.
2. **Curriculum Development:** Develop/Maintain a comprehensive literacy curriculum and curriculum resources aligned with state standards, focusing on the science of reading (phonological awareness, phonics, high frequency words, vocabulary, and comprehension)
3. **Instructional Coaches:** Train and Empower Instructional Coaches with expertise in early literacy to work closely with teachers. Coaches provide guidance, professional learning, and model effective teaching strategies.
4. **Differentiation:** Tailor instruction to meet individual student needs. use various instructional methods, materials, and technology to engage diverse learners.
5. **Regular Progress Monitoring:** implement ongoing assessment to track student progress. Use data to make informed decisions and adjust the literacy plan as needed.
6. **Small Group Instruction:** Targeted interventions, prevention, and enrichment. Coaches can assist teachers in creating and managing small groups effectively by planning intentional instruction during PLCs.
7. **Parent Involvement:** Encourage parents to support literacy at home through activities, reading at home, informational parent workshops, etc.

8. Reading Enrichment: Promote a love for reading with activities like book clubs, author visits, and library literacy rich activity visits.
9. Teacher Collaboration: During PLCs foster a culture of collaboration among teachers, instructional coaches, and staff to share best practices and align instructional strategies for student success.
10. Professional Development: Continuously provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their literacy instruction skills. (Currently 5 NPS teachers and the instructional coach are participating in the state reading teacher training program LETRS. LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) is a 2-year evidence-based training that provides professional learning grounded in reading research for educators. The reading research represents a body of comprehensive and multi-disciplinary evidence for how students learn to read and write proficiently, why some students struggle and how educators can teach and intervene, if necessary.)
11. Resource Allocation: Ensure that classrooms are well-equipped with age appropriate books, technology, and literacy resources.
12. Support for Struggling Readers: Identify students who may need additional support and implement tailored interventions and resources to increase literacy success.
13. Celebrate Achievements: Recognize and celebrate literacy achievement for both students and teachers to maintain motivation and enthusiasm for learning.
14. Feedback and Evaluation: Collect feedback from teachers, coaches, and students to refine and improve the literacy plan continually.
15. Community Involvement: Partner with the local community, libraries, and literacy organizations to enhance the program's impact.

The literacy plan will be guided by instructional coaches, with the goal to improve literacy proficiency in grades K through 3 and develop strong literacy skills that form the foundation for their academic success.

### **Career Exploration Grant for NIS students from ADM Cares**

ADM (Archer Daniels Midland) ADM's mission is to transform natural products like cereal grains and oilseeds into a wide array of products, including ingredients and flavorings for food and beverages, supplements, and nutritional products for pets and livestock. It is located in Erlanger, Ky.

I have been working with their investment division to obtain a grant to advance career exploration at the 3rd through 6th grade level. ADM will work with NIS to provide career exploration opportunities to students through volunteers and monetary awards. Below is the summary of plans on how career exploration will be implemented utilizing the grant from ADM.

### **ADM GRANT – NEWPORT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL (GRADES 3-6) CAREER EXPLORATION**

Newport Intermediate School in Newport, Kentucky is a vibrant and engaging educational institution that caters to the diverse needs of students in the Newport community. With a strong commitment to fostering academic excellence, personal growth, and a supportive learning environment, Newport Intermediate School stands as a school of continuous improvement. Our dedicated faculty and staff work tirelessly to provide a well-rounded education, equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful future. Because Newport Intermediate Schools believes in nurturing the potential that exists in every student, we have summarized our intent for the ADM grant below with a focus on career exploration.

## **NEWPORT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Makerspace:** A makerspace will be a vital component in our school project's business plan, offering a versatile space for students to create, innovate, and collaborate. This dedicated area will be equipped with tools, materials, and technology, fostering hands-on learning experiences. It will serve as a hub for prototyping and developing our project ideas, promoting STEM education and honing practical skills. Additionally, the makerspace will facilitate teamwork and problem-solving, preparing students for real-world challenges. By integrating a makerspace into our students' business plan, we aim to empower students, foster creativity, and elevate the quality and impact of our project. Students will develop products to be created, marketed, and sold in the school's Wildcat store.

### **Budgeted Materials:**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>COST (ESTIMATED)</b>
3D PRINTER	\$2000
CRICUT EXPLORE 3	\$300
VINYL	\$100
CIRCUT PRESS	\$150
TSHIRTS	\$200
3D PRINTER RESIN	\$200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2950</b>

2. **Robotics/Drone Photography Club:** The Robotics and Drone Photography after school club offers students an exciting opportunity to explore the realms of technology and creativity. This club combines the fields of robotics and photography, allowing students to build and program robots, as well as learn the art of aerial drone photography. Participants will gain valuable STEM skills and develop a keen eye for visual storytelling. By providing this club, we plan to inspire curiosity, innovation, and teamwork while preparing students for a future that values both technology and artistry. It's a unique and dynamic after-school experience that fosters a range of valuable skills and interests. (Students may compete within the region when opportunities arise)

### **Budgeted Materials:**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>COST (ESTIMATED)</b>
5 Drones with Camera	\$200 (\$40 x 5)
Color Printer and ink	\$200
Poster Maker	\$2000
Robotics Competition	\$500
Volunteers (ADM staff)	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2900</b>

### 3. Career Day (February 2024)

Newport Intermediate School Career Day is an exciting and educational event that exposes students to a world of possibilities. During this special day, professionals from various fields visit our school to share their experiences and insights. Through engaging presentations and interactive activities, students get a glimpse into the diverse career options available to them. This event aims to inspire and motivate our young learners, helping them set their sights on future goals while reinforcing the importance of education and perseverance. Career Day at Newport Intermediate School is a valuable opportunity for students to explore their dreams and aspirations.

### **Budgeted Materials:**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>COST (ESTIMATED)</b>
Volunteers (ADM staff)	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>

#### 4. Coding Club

The Newport Intermediate School Coding Club for Career Exploration will be an afterschool program designed to introduce our students to the world of technology and computer science. Through fun and interactive coding activities, students will not only learn the fundamentals of programming but also gain insights into how coding is utilized in various careers. This club empowers students to explore their interests and potential career paths while building essential problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. By fostering early exposure to coding and its real-world applications, we aim to ignite the curiosity and passion of our students, inspiring them to consider exciting career possibilities in the tech industry and beyond. It's a gateway to endless opportunities and a bright future.

#### **Budgeted Materials:**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>COST (ESTIMATED)</b>
Teachers After-school salary	2160 (72 x \$30)
Volunteers (ADM staff)	\$0
Computers	\$2000 (\$200 x 10)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4160</b>

The remaining funds of the grant funds will be held in contingency to support any overages of the budget items above.

Thank you for your support of Newport Intermediate Schools Career Exploration activities.

Darla Payne  
Newport Independent Schools  
Chief Academic Officer

#### **District Wide Services:**

Professional Learning Attended:

Cognia Continuous Improvement 2023

Sessions:

-Using Kentucky Educator Placement Service (KEPS) Data to Develop Strategies for Growing a Diverse Educator Workforce

-The Power of Activating School Culture to Retain Teachers in America's Schools

Gain insight into how you can monitor culture in real-time to enable teachers and leaders to foster collaboration and develop schoolwide commitment for improvement and increase teacher retention.

-Revitalizing culture in the post-covid19 school

Learning Intention:

We are learning about elements of culture that can help leaders to support and maintain a positive learning environment.

Success Criteria:

- We can describe how teacher mind frames, collective efficacy, and credibility influence our culture and climate.
  - We can identify possible ways to strengthen mind frames, collective efficacy, and credibility of our teachers.
- (HANDOUT)

Webinar:

Essential Skills for Equitable and Inclusive Educators

## Session 1: Understanding Implicit Bias and What to Do About It

This workshop provided me with an understanding of implicit bias and how our brains are wired to create mental shortcuts that have mostly positive impact on our lives. Additionally, I learned about biases with negative impact that are reinforced unconsciously through literature, popular media, and other messages we receive. I learned the language and tools needed to examine my own biases, consider how bias shows up at school, and learn proven strategies to reduce the impact of bias on our decision-making.

## Session 2: Interrupting Microaggressions in Schools

Implicit bias has a significant impact on organizational culture and climate. Left unchecked, implicit bias can leave people feeling unwelcome, excluded, misunderstood, and marginalized. In this workshop, I learned how implicit bias leads to microaggressions. Researcher Dr. Derald Wing Sue describes microaggressions as “everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership”. I learned what microaggressions are, how they show up in the classroom and beyond, and what I can do to interrupt microaggressions in order to create a more welcoming and inclusive climate.

CRTL BELT Team

Upcoming: SESSION II Validating Student Identity in Classroom

Guidance/Facilitation: Slide preparation for work session II

Action Research

Respectfully Submitted,

**Katina Brown**  
Director of District Wide Services

**Darla Payne**  
Chief Academic Officer