

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

APRIL 20, 2021

SUBJECT:

CollegeBoard Springboard Curriculum Pilot Program in ELA and Math in grades 7 and 8 at Kennedy Middle School

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The CollegeBoard is the organization that gives the SAT and the Advanced Placement exam yearly to students for college credit and admissions. They have also established a dynamic SpringBoard curriculum that prepares middle school students for the advanced rigors of Advanced Placement. Given to all students in a grade level, the SpringBoard curriculum, in essence, teaches vital skills to students to prepare them to eventually take more advanced coursework. Going above and beyond, SpringBoard also opens up a tremendous amount of resources and professional development to teachers that they would not typically have access to. From its close reading and writing workshops for students, to its language workshops for English Language Learners, SpringBoard meets students where they are academically and “springs” them forward to instill confidence in them in their academic abilities. The types of skills SpringBoard instills are as follows: critical thinking and problem solving through close observation and analysis of texts, evidenced-based writing, higher order questioning, engaging in academic conversations, collaboration with others in a variety of settings, and teaching students how to communicate in an advanced academic setting. Likewise, additional resources include access to the ZINC Learning Lab, TurnItIn Assist, and the Quill Writing Lab, all tools current college students use on a regular basis at major universities. To give middle school students access to these resources in order to prepare them for Advanced Placement gives them an edge over others as this is what universities already use. In the area of Professional Development, teachers are taught how to incorporate these resources into their everyday teaching, but it also gives them access to many more resources, only accessible through the CollegeBoard, such as already aligned texts for Advanced Placement and math lessons specifically designed with Advanced Placement in mind.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

As a feeder school to South Aiken High School, an Advanced Placement Academy, it is natural for Kennedy Middle School to serve as a preparatory component in order to prepare students for their future high school coursework. Using Title I funding as its sole funding source, Kennedy Middle School seeks to implement SpringBoard in both ELA and math to initially begin with 7th grade during the 2021-2022 school year and then to add 8th grade ELA and math the following year. Kennedy Middle will use the extensive professional development provided by the CollegeBoard to initially train teachers and staff during the summer of 2021 and ongoing throughout the SpringBoard Program implementation. Kennedy Middle will communicate with parents regularly on the implementation of SpringBoard. Kennedy Middle School will also continue to maintain the curriculum pacing

of Aiken County Schools in both ELA and math and will continue to take regularly scheduled benchmarks on a quarterly basis.

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with Board Policy AR IG-R, when an individual school proposes to change an existing instructional program, the superintendent, facilitated through the division of instructional services, will make a recommendation to the board for approval. The superintendent recommends approving the CollegeBoard Springboard Pilot Program in ELA and math in grades 7 and 8 at Kennedy Middle School with an initial evaluation using district benchmark, SCReady, and universal screener data in the spring of 2022.

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