

“Curriculum Maps and Case Studies” presented by Lily Talcott (*Northeast Principal*), and Jennifer Wilkie (*Teacher on Special Assignment*)

- Discussion around empowering learners through authentic learning processes by having them do the work of historians, scientists through case studies.
  - <http://www.ithacacityschools.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=668>
- Discussion around goals of helping to raise our students to make a difference “in service of themselves, community and others”
- Examples of “project-based learning” were shared
- More discussion around ways to bring Science, Reading, Writing, and community focus into classrooms through these projects
- Talked about every student having at least one “Case Study” experience a year
- Discussion on how Case Studies are determined
  - Must cover N.Y. State Learning Standard which is usually at the heart of what is being picked
  - History, Social Studies, and Science offer a chance to ask compelling questions and/or address big problems
  - Studies typically lead to sustained inquiry and purposeful research
  - Consideration taken into account like what Ithaca offers in the way of options for field work
  - Many times the students will research a bit beforehand so they can go out into the field with some starter questions
- Discussion around assessment. How to measure success.
  - One positive outcome is a high quality tangible product that students can be proud of
  - On the way to creating quality product, learning targets for teachers come up, ways to assess learning.
    - How do students work together?
    - How do they come up with questions?
    - Collect data?
    - Does their writing cycle process improve?
  - Teachers work together on these Case studies
    - Studies show when teachers come together to talk about learning and assessment, you get the most effective outcomes
    - Discussed success of Citizen Science Action Project
    - Teachers work with Librarian and technology instructors to learn how to cite sources properly
  - Students deal with gray area of unknowns that come up in research
  - Skills are all transferable to other learning processes

- The ICSD curriculum maps have Science and Social Studies being the main subjects around which the Case Study questions are developed and explored. Reading, writing and math are needed in order to explore, answer, and present quality findings.
- Curriculum map overviews were shared, broken into Fall, Winter and Spring queries
  - As the school year continues on, the exploration into Social Studies and Science gets more involved, a bigger lens is added and more complex layers
  - This exploration of “Who am I” and how do I fit into my space, as well as the study of surrounding habitat, widens and gets deeper with each school year.
- There was discussion around idea that these Case Studies are meant to offer additional ways to help assess students beyond the end of year tests
  - Points along the way
  - Offering kids chances of self assessment
    - What do I need to do?
- Connecting to Cornell and Ithaca College professionals
  - “Seed to Table”
    - Geneva USDA facility to see how food is produced