

My name is Beth Babecki. I am the parent of a 9th grader who has gone through Luxmanor Elementary, Tilden Middle School, and is now at Walter Johnson High School. I asked to speak because I wanted to ask for less internet involvement in the curriculum and greater reliance on textbooks.

Problem: In order to give students exposure to the many topics and the depth of treatment of them, schools have been moving away from textbook teaching. However, this has meant that: a) students spend huge amounts of time researching on the internet; b) it is difficult for parents to help students or check their work since there is not necessarily a text that they can study along with the student; c) parents may try to purchase textbooks that don't necessarily reflect the emphases of the classes themselves, wasting money and being no help to the student; d) learning what the curriculum is becomes a major part of the task of the student; and e) time for study and constructive practice is decreased.

Proposed Solutions: 1) identify the most useful textbooks for each class and publish the ISBN numbers before the class begins to allow sufficient time for the parents to purchase or otherwise obtain access to the materials; 2) provide a principal textbook to each student for each class; 3) for secondary textbooks, ensure access via the county library system, perhaps even with extended borrowing times – perhaps staggered for the various texts; 4) recommend to teachers that they cut back on the amount of internet-related work that they give students and incentivize them to do so; and 5) this is a comparatively well-off community and if we need to request more money for textbooks, I strongly encourage you to do so.

Beth Babecki