July 2018

Successes and Challenges of Piloting and Expanding the SEM in an Urban School District
Topics

- Why the SEM was chosen (background of gifted education in DC Public Schools)?
- Introduction of the SEM (3 pilot schools)
- Brief History of the SEM Expansion
- Current Status of the SEM
- Successes
- Challenges
- Resources: SEM Handbook/IMPACT/TAS
District of Columbia Public Schools Demographics (2016-17)

- Total Student Enrollment: 48,555
- Schools: 115
- % Student Population Black: 62
- % Student Population Hispanic/Latino: 20
- % Student Population Other Ethnicity: 4
- % Student Population White: 14
- % Student Population in Special Education: 14
- % Student Population ELL: 12
- % Student Population Economically Disadvantaged: 77
Why the SEM was chosen (background of gifted education in DC Public Schools)?

- Gifted education is not mandated at the federal level in the same way that special education is through IDEA, etc., and therefore it is a matter left to the states.

- When states do not formally articulate what laws or regulations are allowed for gifted education it is then up to the local education agency (LEA) itself to do so if it wishes.

- In the case of Washington, DC there is no statewide laws or regulations regarding gifted education services and DCPS as the district's largest LEA has not put in place a formalized, traditional-style gifted education program.

- DCPS does not offer testing/screening for "giftedness" (however that would be measured) as it often varies from state to state.
Introduction of the SEM (2012)

From the 2012 Press Release:

- Beginning in the fall, [DCPS] will pilot a gifted-and-talented school-wide enrichment program. This new program is the first of its kind at any DC Public School.

- “DCPS is a serious school district that takes student achievement very seriously. We’ve demonstrated this commitment to student growth in our academic plan that began this school year. In the fall, we’re taking another important step forward by implementing this program at Kelly Miller and Hardy,” said Chancellor Kaya Henderson. “This program will empower teachers and parents and will encourage creativity, collaboration and rigor in the classroom.”
Expansion of the SEM(2013-18)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Elementary Schools</th>
<th>Middle Schools</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burrville</td>
<td>Hardy*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearst</td>
<td>Johnson*</td>
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<tr>
<td>HD Cooke</td>
<td>Kelly Miller*</td>
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<td>JO Wilson</td>
<td>Sousa*</td>
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<td>Murch</td>
<td>Stuart Hobson*</td>
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<td>Stoddert</td>
<td>West Education Campus (K-8)*</td>
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Most SEM schools have a dedicated Enrichment Resource Teacher. Teachers are provided with professional development and year-round support, including attending Confratute.
Current Status of the SEM

7 District-funded SEM positions
6 School-funded SEM positions

SEM teachers:
organize Type I activities
school-wide Enrichment Clusters
teach SEM “courses”
support classroom teachers through pull-outs/push-in
Successes

- Expansion from 3 to 7 District-funded positions
- Adoption of the SEM in additional schools
- Continued interest shown by schools to adopt the SEM
- DCPS Summer School program adopted the SEM
- Individual schools continue to grow the SEM within their schools
- 1st District-wide SEM Showcase (May 2018)
Challenges

- Teacher Evaluation (IMPACT) Rubric not easily transferable to the SEM
- Difficulty in training new administrators in the SEM
- Transformation of Middle School model (pull-out vs. courses)
- Whole-staff buy-in and understanding of school-wide Enrichment Clusters (clubs vs. clusters)
- Dedicated SEM teachers being utilized for other programs (PLTW, Read180)
- Need to allow schools to grow the SEM to meet the needs of their schools vs. SEM not being “SEM” any longer
- SEM time vs. Testing time
SEM Resources Developed (and in Progress)

- SEM Guiding Principles
- Roles & Responsibilities of SEM Teacher
- Course Catalog Descriptions
- Budget/Allocation Guidelines
- IMPACT (Essential Practices)
- CSC (Commitment to School Community)
SEM Guiding Principles

1. Enrichment should be available to all students.

2. Enrichment activities should foster student talent development.

3. Enrichment should be catered to students individual interests and learning styles.

4. Schools should utilize enrichment cluster grouping and curriculum compacting to ensure that students are consistently mastering new concepts and skills.
Roles & Responsibilities of the SEM Teacher

- Work with classroom teachers to organize and infuse Type I and Type II Enrichment activities into regular curriculum topics.
- Organize larger scale Type I activities.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to incorporate Type I and Type II activities into the regular curriculum and serve as a coach to teachers facilitating enrichment clusters.
- Provide guidance and support to students working on Type III activities. Ensure that completed Type III activities are showcased to other students, faculty, administration and parents/community members.
- Provide SEM information and support to teachers and administrators.
- Participate in regular professional development, including Confratute.
- Coordinate school visits and classroom observations with members of the Advanced and Enriched Instruction Department.
- Meet regularly (at least once monthly) with other SEM Resource Teachers, led by the Advanced and Enriched Instruction Department.
SEM Course Catalog Descriptions

- SEM 6 (7 or 8) This is the (6, 7, or 8th) Grade Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) course. SEM is a research-based model of gifted education that works to meet the needs of all students by nurturing and developing gifted behaviors. The overall goal of the program is to provide enrichment and engagement for students that will help them manifest and build on gifted behaviors through their creativity and production.

- P&PS (Projects & Problem Solving) This course provides middle grades students with teacher-supported, student-driven learning opportunities encompassing the DCPS standards from multiple subject areas. The main objective is to ensure that middle school students are developing the critical problem-solving skills that are vital to success in the global economy. Students choose problem-solving projects that require investigation, information-gathering, analysis, and presentation/communication of results.
### Budget Allocation Guidelines/Requirements

**Staffing (Personnel Services):** Enrichment Resource Teachers serve as enrichment specialists operating within the pedagogical framework known as the SEM. Enrichment Resource Teachers primarily provide inquiry-based facilitation as well as some direct instruction for individual students or small groups of students. This instruction can occur in a pullout or scheduled-class format. SEM teachers also plan enrichment opportunities (such as field trips or bringing in speakers) for the whole school. The Enrichment Resource Teacher serves as a liaison to families, the community, and as an integral part of a school’s RTI efforts.

**Flexibilities and Restrictions:** To maintain central office supports, Enrichment Resource Teachers following the SEM approach must spend at least 80% of their time providing enrichment-based instruction or related coordination of enrichment activities.
IMPACT (Evaluation)

- How do evaluators assess alignment through EP 2 (Challenge Students with Rigorous Content) when observing SEM (School Enrichment Model) classrooms?

One of the goals of instruction in SEM is to apply gifted pedagogy to an entire school to enrich the curriculum and develop the strengths and talents of all students with rigorous and engaging inquiry-based work. Essential Practice 2 assesses the degree to which a learning experience is aligned to appropriate standards and challenging for students. When assessing alignment in SEM classrooms, evaluators should consider whether the content observed is derived from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. Specifically, the SEM instructional model is intended to focus on using research to build, integrate and present knowledge and apply it to create solutions for real-world problems.
CSC (Commitment to School Community) Guidance

The Division of Advanced and Enriched Instruction would like to provide guidance so that SEM teacher expectations are clear. We expect SEM teachers to be responsible for organizing **school-wide** Type I Experiences (field trips, speakers, presentation, etc.), **school-wide** Enrichment Clusters (X-Block, Talon Time, Cobra Time, etc.), and SEM Learner Showcases (or whatever term you want to give to end of cycle exhibitions of student work/performances) to the extent that these are part of your school culture.

We would like to suggest that these components of their responsibilities be included in their CSC, provided they submit the required documentation for their accomplishments.
Final Announcements / Closing
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THANK YOU
for joining us!