



Summary Notes

BOE Attendance:

Chair – Richard Kaye

Rachelle Feldman Hurwitz -
absent

Dana Krug

Administrative Liaison:

Martin Smith

Guests:

Dennis Lepold

Andrea Bean

DISCUSSION (●) / DECISION (*)

I. (*) Middle School Elective

To begin discussion of creating a new elective class for 6th grade.

Currently 6th grade students can elect band, choir, or orchestra. If a student does not elect one of these, the student is placed in study hall. This school year there are approximately 90 students at Community and 75 students at Grover in 6th grade study hall. These students also have flex period each day. In addition, at Grover, some students have a second study hall for 30 days during cycle. The Curriculum Committee discussed the creation of an additional elective focused on developing students presentation skills.

II. (*) Middle School Math Placement Criteria

To begin discussion of criteria and a review process for middle school Math placement that aligns with the high school course placement criteria adopted by the Board in December, 2011.

Currently, math placement in middle school is based on teacher recommendation and parental override. In order to make the placement of students more criteria-based and transparent it was discussed that criteria be adopted that align to the newly adopted high school criteria. During the discussion of sequencing of math courses, it was pointed out that students who are in Algebra in 8th grade continue on to Calculus Honors in high school.

III. (●) Princeton University Student

Dr. Yarrow Dunham is a Research Scholar at Princeton University who studies Developmental Psychology. He is conducting a research study which involves understanding how children's thinking about groups relates to their moral reasoning.

He would like to conduct this research with children in the West Windsor-Plainsboro School District. He would need about 15 minutes with each student individually. The Curriculum Committee discussed the proposal and supports allowing students whose parents have consented to participate in the study.

IV. (●) Professional Development Updates

Professional Development Day

The Curriculum Committee reviewed the results from the Zoomerang survey that staff completed to evaluate the February 17th PD day. Over two-thirds of the staff completed the on-line survey. The results showed that staff felt positively about the day. The PD offered met felt needs and allowed staff to work with colleagues on common assessments. The Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) reviewed these results. The LPDC discussed using these results and recommendations as a basis for planning future PD opportunities for staff. The LPDC is looking to provide sustained PD opportunities for staff that allow for continued professional growth that aligns with district goals and meets staff needs.

Local Professional Development Plan

The State released the information on how to update district plans in mid-February. These plans are due to the State by May 15th. The School-Based Professional Development Committees are reviewing their plans and will forward to the LPDC by April 20. The LPDC will then draft the district plan. This will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee at its May 7th meeting.

V. (●) Program Review Updates

Social Studies – The internal team is drafting the Executive Summary with final recommendations. The internal and external reports with the final recommendations will be presented at the April 2 Curriculum Committee meeting. A formal presentation to the full Board is being planned for the April 24th Board meeting.

Special Services - The internal team is working to complete the internal report. They will then review the external report to develop the executive summary and final recommendations. The plan is to be ready to present to the Board in the next few months.

Language Arts – The internal team has been formed and begun to meet. They are in the process of developing surveys to be completed by parents, students, teachers and administrators.

VI. (*) Professional Development

To recommend approval for additional professional development opportunities through the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University during the 2011-2012 school year, at a cost of \$750. {Workshops will be charged as per contract less the cost of the prepaid ticket; paid through 2012 No Child Left Behind Title II grant funds.]

The Curriculum Committee expressed support for this recommendation.

VII. (*) Professional Development Travel Approval

To recommend approval for approximately 28 teachers to attend a free professional development workshop at Teachers College at Columbia University on Saturday, March 24, 2012 at a cost not to exceed \$475 for bus transportation to and from New York City, as approved by the Executive County Superintendent.

The Curriculum Committee expressed support for this recommendation.

VIII. (*) Grant

To recommend submission of an application to the State of New Jersey, Department of Education, for the Race to the Top Phase 3 (RTTT3) grant program #12-RT01-A01, in the amount of \$14,856 for continued improvement of the teacher evaluation system.

The Curriculum Committee expressed support for this recommendation.

IX. (*) Field Trip

To recommend approval for High School South Marching Band to YMCA Camp Fairview Lake, Newton, New Jersey, from August 24, 2012, to August 28, 2012. The cost of the trip is approximately \$250 per student.

The Curriculum Committee expressed support for this recommendation.

X. (●) New Jersey Department of Education No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Waiver

The Curriculum Committee reviewed the Acting Commissioner's letter outlining the States waiver from NCLB. The state will do away with AYP as conceptualized under NCLB and move towards providing district's with detailed performance data reports. The State will identify priority, focus and reward schools. The State will then provide supports to these identified schools. The district awaits further details from the State on this.

Next Meeting Date: Monday, April 2, 2012

Future Topics

Program Review Updates (Social Studies, Language Arts, Special Education)
Achievement gap presentation