



West Windsor-Plainsboro Board of Education
Board Curriculum Committee Meeting
Board Office Conference Room
April 5, 2016 7:00 PM

SUMMARY NOTES

BOE Attendance:

Dana Krug – Chair
Anthony Fleres
Yingchao Zhang

Administrative Liaison:

Martin Smith
David Aderhold

Guests:

DISCUSSION (●) / DECISION (*)

I. (●) High School Program of Studies Process

The CC discussed the process used each year to review the HS Program of Studies. The Board of Education Curriculum Committee reviews recommended changes to the Program of Studies in November; these proposed changes are reported at a public meeting of the Board of Education in November. In December, there is a formal Program of Studies presentation to the full Board for a vote.

The timing of this process, which has been used for many years, is critical, as we must publish the Program of Studies in January to begin the student scheduling process in a timely manner. In addition, such a timeline allows us to prepare the budget that supports the programs and teaching staff. At this time, all high school students have been scheduled based upon the criteria of the Board of Education adopting Program of Studies Program for 2016 – 2017.

It is important to note that the change recommended for Chemistry with Biology as a pre-requisite came directly from our high school science teaching staff. They believed a change was needed for students requesting both Biology and Chemistry in Grade 9. A high school student needs to develop the ability to engage with the content in an inquiry-based, problem-solving setting, skills specifically developed in a rigorous laboratory-based course. This is where well-developed skills become evident. When students take Biology and Chemistry in Grade 9, they believe that these students do not have the well-developed skills needed for Chemistry and its associated lab. Our teachers have found that students who have successfully completed Biology, while simultaneously developing their mathematical abilities during 9th grade, have enjoyed a much deeper sense of accomplishment in Science over the course of their high school career.

II. (●) High School Study Hall Discussion

When the high schools changed to the rotate and drop schedule, the school board wanted students to still have a study hall in their schedule. They wanted students to have a break in their day even if it did not occur every day. Administration sees that students surely need a break in their day when it can be provided. Study halls are when guidance groups meet (including college planning), when peer leaders work with freshmen, when special education students receive support, when music lessons occur, and when AP Science Labs meet. In addition, if we were to allow students to not have a study hall there would be very significant financial implications. These would include the need for additions to each high school in order to have sufficient space to hold the extra classes as well as around 25 additional teaching staff.

III. (*) Science Kits

To recommend approval to enter into an agreement with ECA Educational Services to provide science kit refurbishing services for the 2016-2017 school year at a cost of approximately \$96,000. The CC recommends approval of the purchase.

IV. (*) Technology – Student Information System

To recommend approval for Genesis Educational Services to provide system maintenance, including lesson planner, for the Genesis Student Information System and Genesis Staff Management System, interfaces for VersaTrans, IEP Direct, and Café Prepay, and secure backup services for the 2016-2017 school year at a total cost of \$38,950.

The CC recommends approval of the purchase. As a point of reference, Infinite Campus was costing the district around \$140,000 per year.

V. (*) Donation

To recommend acceptance of a donation from DonorsChoose.org of 11 Acer Chromebooks with a monetary value of \$2,369.96 for student use in the classroom of Sarah Hellman at Village School. The CC recommends acceptance of the donation.

VI. (*) Professional Development Travel Approvals

To recommend approval for the following professional development workshops and travel:

- 4 teachers to attend a one-week Teachers College Summer Institutes at Columbia University, New York City, from June 20, 2016 to June 24, 2016, at a cost of 825 per person plus travel.
- 2 teachers to attend AP Computer Science Principles at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, from June 27, 2016 through June 30, 2016, at a cost not to exceed \$1,025 per person plus mileage.
- 1 teacher to attend AP Chemistry at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, from July 18, 2016 through July 21, 2016, at a cost not to exceed \$1,025 plus mileage.
- 2 teachers to attend the Quest 2016 Scholars Program offered through Princeton University TeacherPrep, at Princeton University from July 11, 2016, through July 15, 2016 at a total cost not to exceed \$300 per person, no travel included.
- 2 teachers to attend the Connect-Ed Summer Institute at Rider University from July 18, 2016, through July 22, 2016, at a total cost not to exceed \$300 per person, no travel included.
- 2 teachers to attend the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Summer Institute for Grades 6-12 at Raritan Valley Community College from July 25, 2016, through July 29, 2016, at a cost not to exceed \$300 per person plus mileage.
- 8 teachers to attend the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Summer Institute for Grades K-5 at Raritan Valley Community College from August 8, 2016, through August 12, 2016, at a cost not to exceed \$300 per person plus mileage.

The CC recommends approval of the PD workshops and travel.

VII. (*) Overnight Field Trips – Revised

To recommend changing the location of the Junior Statesmen of America overnight field trip on April 16, 2016 and April 17, 2016 to Woodbridge, New Jersey instead of Parsippany. The cost of the trip remains approximately \$150 per student. [Originally approved on October 6, 2015].

The CC recommends approval of the change in date.

Next Meeting Date: May 3, 2016

Future Topics

Program Review Updates

Technology Committee Update