

## **Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes September 13, 2010, 5:00 P.M.**

*The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, September 13, 2010, in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Committee Chairman, Alan Tabachnick. Present were Board President, Gary Johnson; Board Vice-President, Sue Moore; Board Members: Bernie Brady, Mel Brodsky, Kathleen Oxberry and Beth Suchsland; Superintendent, Dr. Vincent Cotter; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, Karen Berk; Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Principal, Heather Nuneviller; Dr. Liz McKeaney, Donna Gaffney, Sergio Anaya, Kathleen Hamill, Maria Bellino; PWHS Assistant Principals Dan Balek and Joseph Carracappa; community members Linda Doll and Tom Davis; and Marge Gramlich.*

There were no public comments on the agenda.

**Science/Social Studies Curriculum Review – Executive Summary:** Dr. Liz McKeaney presented an overview of the Science and Social Studies Curriculum Review performed during the 2009-10 school year. The results assist in determining alignment of the written and taught curriculum in the K-12 Science and Social Studies content areas, and provide information about how to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of our local curriculum and assessments. Dr. McKeaney discussed the purpose and goals, process and design, and format and approach to the Curriculum Review.

Sergio Anaya, Social Studies Curriculum Supervisor, shared key findings and recommendations from the review. Recommendations included increased emphasis on Civics and Economics at the secondary level. Mr. Anaya noted that many of the recommended revisions were made during the summer to the K-12 Social Studies curriculum. As part of the recommendation for increased opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways, interactive map software is currently being piloted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades. A demonstration of this software will be shared at an upcoming Curriculum Committee meeting. Findings also suggest the need for identifying curricular opportunities to integrate Science, English/Language Arts and World Language concepts, skills and processes that can be meaningfully incorporated into intermediate and secondary level courses.

Maria Bellino, Science Curriculum Supervisor, also shared key findings and recommendations of the Science Curriculum Review. Recommendations included further development of digital curriculum to insure better alignment with current units, the inclusion of on-line resources and increased content integration in Language Arts, Mathematics and Social Studies at the elementary level. Ms. Bellino noted that Professional Development sessions will address the recommendation for implementing a new laboratory investigations kit. Findings at the secondary level revealed that more updated resources are needed to enhance instruction. Secondary goals include integrating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) concepts and skills into the lessons. Cross articulation between the high school and middle school is ongoing, as is collaboration with the Language Arts Department.

Donna Gaffney, Mathematics Curriculum Supervisor, discussed some curriculum changes that have occurred as a result of last year's Mathematics curriculum review findings and recommendations. Students are continuing to build algebraic skills and reasoning starting in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Internal benchmark assessments have also been reviewed and they are currently being revised. K-12 Professional Development sessions continue to focus on differentiating instruction to support and/or challenge all students. Communication with parents remains a focus and includes Math Night, on-line access and tutorials for parents and students. Practice tutorial resources for parents have been developed and are to be uploaded to the HUB.

**PWHS Summer Program Updates:** Heather Nuneviller introduced Dan Balek who reported on the high school credit retrieval program this summer. Mr. Balek explained that the credit recovery program this year was an on-line program provided by Educere. He discussed enrollment, costs and programs offered. He noted that student assignments were completed and submitted to an on-line instructor and that the final unit assessment was taken on-site and monitored by a PWHS teacher. The timeframe for the on-line program was extended by two weeks for some students due to the advanced rigor of some courses. 75% of students successfully completed their coursework. English 9 and 10 proved to be the biggest challenge for students. Mr. Balek made recommendations about extending the timeframe for next year's summer credit retrieval program. Mr. Balek recommended that a credit recovery program be considered during the school year utilizing time and personnel resources that are currently in place. He will present a proposal for these programmatic changes at a Curriculum Committee meeting in the near future.

Joseph Carracappa provided an update on the Summer Bridge Program. He noted that 31 students were identified to participate in the Bridge Program this summer. The goal was to provide these students with support related to transitioning to grade nine and to acquaint them with expectations in the core content areas. In response to parental feedback, this year's program was moved from June to August. At the end of the Bridge Program, students visited Gwynedd Mercy College where they toured the campus and met with the incoming freshman counselor who encouraged students to include college in their post secondary plans. Data regarding the academic and social success of these students will be monitored.

**Conference Requests:** Conference requests were reviewed for PWHS teachers Adam Bailey and Rich Madel to attend the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association conference in Erie, Pennsylvania on October 15 and 16, 2010. Funding for costs associated with this conference will be provided by the PWHS Building Budget. Consensus was given to present these conference requests at the Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting on September 16, 2010.

**PWHS Counseling Caseloads:** Mrs. Heather Nuneviller reported that parents of all seniors who had received a change in their counselor assignment were recently contacted. Mrs. Nuneviller also met with counselors to examine their goals for the year. She will continue to review counselor caseload distribution in an effort to optimize support to students.

**Gifted Guidelines Update:** Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, reported that 2008 changes to the Gifted Regulations are further explained in the 2010 guidelines. It is now more understandable. These guidelines will be made available to building principals at their request.

There being no Public Comments, Chairman Tabachnick adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Marge Gramlich  
Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent*