

Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes November 15, 2010, 5:00 P.M.

The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, November 15, 2010, in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 4:59 p.m. by Committee Chairman, Alan Tabachnick. Present were Board President, Gary Johnson; Board Vice-President, Sue Moore; Board Members: Mel Brodsky and Beth Suchsland; Superintendent, Dr. Vincent Cotter; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; PW High School Principal, Heather Nuneviller; Dr. Liz McKeaney, Sergio Anaya, Maria Bellino, Donna Gaffney, Kathleen Hamill; community members Linda Doll and Tom Davis; PWHS Student Leigh Brosos; and Marge Gramlich.

There were no public comments on the agenda.

PWHS Course Change Recommendations: Heather Nuneviller, PW High School Principal, discussed proposed changes to PWHS course offerings for the 2011-12 school year. She proposed the following additional classes: an *Investment Strategies* course (.5 credit), a *Writing Fellows* elective course (1 credit), and the creation of a *Jazz Improvisation I and II* tiered course (.5 credit). Other changes were proposed to Science, Technology Education, Computer Science and Art courses. There are no additional staffing costs associated with these proposed changes.

Demonstration of Interactive Software: Sergio Anaya, Social Studies Curriculum Supervisor introduced Liz Jones, third grade Plymouth Elementary School teacher. Ms. Jones presented a lesson overview using *Stratalogica* interactive software. Ms. Jones piloted the *Stratalogica* map software in her third grade class this fall with great success. Mr. Anaya noted that this program is aligned with our first, second and third grade curricula and he felt it would also add value to our K-3 Technology and Library Media programming. Mr. Anaya recommended the purchase of a three-year license for this product for first, second and third grade teachers. Dr. Gorodetzer thanked Ms. Jones for her preparation and demonstration of this software.

CSD Achievement Report: Dr. Liz McKeaney discussed an overview of the 2010 Student Achievement Report. She highlighted PSSA Montgomery County data comparisons; PSSA grade level summaries and state comparisons; SAT mean scores; ACT scores from 2006 to 2010 and Advanced Placement (AP) exams. Dr. McKeaney noted that CSD PSSA scores in Reading and Math far exceeded the county average and that five-year trends reveal increased levels of achievement across all groups. PWHS has demonstrated a statistically significant increase in Reading, Math and Writing Mean SAT scores. There has been a steady increase in the SAT Mean scores for all test takers over the past four years, with students showing the most improvement in Math. Student scores continue to exceed the national and state average. The college readiness benchmark, as defined by ACT testing, reveals that CSD's average student scores exceed those of the state. Mrs. Suchsland noted that the percentage of students in the high school taking the SAT seems to have experienced a drop over the past year, while there has been an increase in the percentage taking the ACT test. Further analysis will be needed to determine the shift in these numbers.

Mrs. Nuneviller provided information about student performance on the AP exams. The graduating class summary showed that the percentage of 12th grade students scoring 3 or higher increased. The total number of AP exams taken has also increased over the past five years. The percentage of PWHS students scoring 3 or higher continues to exceed the global percents in most AP courses. There was discussion during the meeting about the foreign language scores on the AP tests and how that area requires attention moving forward.

PWHS PSSA Testing Schedule: Mrs. Nuneviller discussed proposed changes to the PSSA testing schedule at PWHS, including extending the testing schedule for the Reading and Math sections from two days to three days. It is proposed that eleventh grade students would take PSSA tests from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and then be dismissed, while 9th, 10th and 12th grade students would follow a delayed schedule with abbreviated blocks of 50 minutes. Seniors would attend a “Career and Community Awareness Day” on the first day of PSSA testing. It was noted that lunch and transportation accommodations can easily be addressed.

Curriculum Updates: Kathleen Hamill, Language Arts Curriculum Supervisor, discussed recommendations from the 2009 CSD Language Arts Curriculum Review. She noted the many updates that have been implemented to Curriculum, Curriculum Access, Assessment and Professional Development. She indicated that cross-grade articulation visits have been conducted between eighth and ninth grade teachers. Ms. Hamill also indicated that a community preschools outreach information session will be held again in June, 2011.

Innovative and Enriched Learning Opportunities: Dr. McKeaney reported that twenty CSD teachers from grades two to five will participate in a six-session course for Differentiated Instruction and Problem Solving in Mathematics. This course will begin on December 7th and will be taught by a Colonial Elementary School teacher. Dr. McKeaney will provide updates as this course progresses.

Dr. McKeaney also discussed an enrichment opportunity at the middle school. Four students are currently enrolled in a Chinese Culture research program during their activity period. Sergio Anaya, Social Studies Curriculum Supervisor, along with a teacher will write a grant for the second component of this learning experience involving an on-line Chinese language course. In addition, it was also noted that four PWHS students will pilot the *myChinese360* course during the second semester.

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation Review Team: Dr. Gorodetzer stated that a team of teachers and administrators is being developed to review the current teacher supervision/evaluation system. It is hoped that a tiered supervision model can be designed to better address the varying experiential levels and learning styles of our teachers.

Conference Requests: None

There being no Public Comments, Chairman Tabachnick adjourned the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

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