

## Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes April 9, 2012

*The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, April 9, 2012, in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Board President Alan Tabachnick. Present were Board Members: Leslie Feingold, Christina Frangiosa, Beth Suchsland; Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. Liz McKeaney; Curriculum Supervisors, Sergio Anaya, Maria Bellino, Donna Gaffney and Kathleen Hamill; PWHS English Department Head, Kim Geiger; CMS Principal, Robert Fahler; CMS Mathematics teacher Gina Nelson and CMS Math Coach/Gifted teacher John Gebhardt; community members Tom Davis and Linda Doll; and Marge Gramlich.*

**Public Comments:** There were no public comments on the agenda.

### **Informational Updates:**

- Mid Atlantic Writing Centers Association - Kim Geiger, Head of PWHS' English Department, attended the March 30-31 MAWCA conference along with four PWHS writing fellow students who participated in peer tutor workshops and presented *Envisioning, Planning and Implementing the Student-led High School Writing Center* information to the conference. Writing fellow Lauren Ravitch received the *Peer Tutor's Award for Scholarly Promise* and Mrs. Geiger received the *High School and Community College Leaders Award* at the conference. Mrs. Geiger spoke at the conference about mentorships and about alignment of the writing program with college requirements. Dr. McKeaney congratulated Kim on her fine work.
- Quaker Chemical/Act II Playhouse – Kathleen Hamill, Language Arts Curriculum Supervisor, reported that Act II Playhouse teaching artist, along with a local member of the American Society of Media Photographers presented a free hour-long journalism workshop in PWHS teacher Kendra Hoffman's journalism classroom. Supported by our community outreach partner Quaker Chemical Foundation, the workshop was presented using video, photography, hands-on exercises, and debate.
- TESOL Conference - Sergio Anaya, ESL Curriculum Supervisor, provided an update on the TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) conference which three regular education and two ESL teachers attended. Best practices discussed at the conference are aligned with CSD's practices. Mr. Anaya noted that presently, CSD is accommodating students using more than 20 different languages. Dr. Gorodetzer mentioned the cost-effective *SIOP* program used at CSD.

**CMS Math – Enrichment Model: Curriculum Changes:** Dr. McKeaney introduced Mrs. Donna Gaffney, Math Curriculum Supervisor and spoke about the work she has been doing on the middle school Math curriculum. Mr. Robert Fahler, CMS Principal, introduced Gina Nelson, 7<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher and CMS Curriculum Liaison, John Gebhardt, Math Coach/ gifted teacher at CMS. Mrs. Gaffney spoke to three key recommendations from the 2008 Math Curriculum

Review: emphasis, flow and strengthening of algebraic content and skills. She provided an overview of the accomplishments and changes in Mathematics at grades 4-12 over the course of the last few years, leading up to the middle school changes for next year. Mrs. Gaffney shared that 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers worked together to identify curricular needs before they implemented newly developed units in each grade. One benefit to the new units in 5<sup>th</sup> grade is that when students get to 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they will already have received an introduction to the primary resource. Mrs. Gaffney indicated that feedback will be collected at the end of the year and reviewed so that recommendations for changes can be made if necessary.

Mrs. Nelson spoke about restructuring the math extensions curriculum at CMS to support what is occurring in the core Math classrooms in grade 6-8. Mr. Fahler provided an overview of the current schedule and what the proposed schedule will look like next year. John Gebhardt spoke about the advantages of heterogeneous grouping in 6<sup>th</sup> grade math. Questioning and rich discourse guides the flexible grouping of students who are in need of support or ready for a challenge. As a Math Coach, he supports teachers in formative assessment and the differentiation of their instruction. He noted that the teachers are very excited about this new structure and curriculum.

Dr. Gorodetzer provided a historical perspective of the process used to arrive at this conclusion.

Homework and parental involvement was discussed. Mrs. Nelson discussed the available help and support for students after school and the homework hotline.

**Conference Requests:** A conference request was reviewed for Pat Tamborello, PWHS College Counselor, to attend the Garden State Counselor Tour from May 2-4, 2012 in Piscataway, NJ. There are no fees for this conference. Consensus was reached to approve this conference request.

There being no public comments, President Tabachnick adjourned the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Marge Gramlich  
Administrative Assistant to the Director of  
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*