

Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2011, 5:30 P.M.

The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, September 12, 2011, in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Dr. Liz McKeaney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. Present were Board President, Gary Johnson; Board Vice President, Kathleen Oxberry; Board Members: Mel Brodsky, Kelly Jowett, Jodi Miscannon, Sue Moore and Beth Suchsland; Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, Karen Berk; Curriculum Supervisors Sergio Anaya, Maria Bellino, Donna Gaffney and Kathleen Hamill; Special Ed. Curriculum Supervisors, Eileen Spector and Beth Maza; Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Assistant Principals Jason Bacani, Dan Balek and Joseph Carracappa; PWHS Physics teacher Eric Scheidly, PWHS student Mitch Weikert; community member Linda Doll; and Marge Gramlich.

There were no public comments on the agenda.

Curriculum Updates:

Science Journal – Dr. McKeaney reported that a curricular goal is to provide more innovative and enrichment opportunities for high achieving students. Maria Bellino, Science Curriculum Supervisor, shared this goal with Science teachers. PW Physics teacher Eric Scheidly responded by developing opportunities for students to create original experiments based on topics of interest to them. Results of those experiments were then published in the first annual CSD Science Journal.

Mr. Scheidly highlighted some of the original science experiments chosen and performed by PW Science students. Mitch Weikert, PW Senior, who was instrumental in authoring the journal, presented information concerning the experiment he and his science partner, Drew Zucker, performed. The high level of rigor of the experiments and enthusiasm by students was noted. Ms. Bellino reported that teachers in all science content areas will be seeking students to participate in experiments and publish their results in the second annual CSD Science Journal. Maria Bellino, Science Curriculum Supervisor noted that the Journal and some of the students' experiments are posted on the CSD Website. Dr. McKeaney thanked everyone for their fine work.

Nutrition & Wellness Curriculum: Dr. McKeaney noted that due to the elimination of the Family Consumer Science course at the high school, some key PA academic standards and skills were integrated into the Financial Literacy curriculum. In addition, a Personal Fitness & Nutrition course was developed to include PA Nutrition and Wellness standards. Sergio Anaya, Curriculum Supervisor, discussed the development of the nine-week, .5 Personal Fitness & Nutrition course being taught to ninth through twelfth grade students during four marking periods this year. The course will include a project-based component where students will develop an exercise, nutrition and diet plan and maintain their own journals. Mr. Anaya has also been working with Food Service Director, Lori McCoy to incorporate produce from the CSD Community Garden and to bring in the *Chefs at Schools* Instructor to allow students to develop some culinary dishes.

Financial Literacy – Dr. McKeaney discussed the importance of introducing financial literacy skills to elementary students. Mr. Anaya noted that second grade Social Studies classes have implemented books pertaining to personal finance, tax planning, investing and saving. Student lessons and projects will include creating a business and selling their products to other students. Mr. Anaya also noted that the high school Entrepreneurial class includes a project-based learning component. Also, Mr. Kevin Blair (LTS) attended the Federal Reserve’s week long “Keys to Financial Success” program in Philadelphia. Content from the Federal Reserve’s Financial Keys program was incorporated into the Personal Finance course at PW and various course structures are being tiered to meet the needs of all PW students.

Music – Donna Gaffney provided an update on the CSD Band Action Plan, which focuses on recruitment, program development and retention. Among the strategies being implemented are an annual Band Night; a Peer Assistance Program for students who in need of instrumental tutoring during I-Block; and a Band Buddy system for students new to the Marching Band. Mrs. Gaffney noted that there has been a 40% increase in band membership this year thanks to the combined efforts of middle and high school staff in recruiting students who wish to participate. She indicated that a more detailed report will be provided at the October Community Relations/Student Life meeting.

Summer Program Updates:

Bridge Program -- PWHS Assistant Principal Joe Carracappa provided updates to the Bridge Program and the ninth grade Orientation Day. Mr. Carracappa noted that the goal of the Bridge Program is to provide an opportunity for students to familiarize themselves with their high school and the rigor and responsibilities of the 9th grade curriculum. This summer, it was expanded to offer four hour sessions from Monday through Thursday for four weeks and served 120 students (32 students were served in the previous year).

Ninth Grade Orientation -- Mr. Carracappa reported that Orientation Day on Sept 1st for ninth grade students was very successful. He shared that 326 students participated this year which helped to facilitate a smooth transition on the first day of school. Mr. Carracappa also reported that 60 parents were invited to attend an informal meeting with administrators to learn information about school security, food services, etc.

Credit Recovery – PW High School Assistant Principal Dan Balek reported that 30 students participated in the Credit Recovery program this summer using *Educere*. He noted that Extended Learning Time and additional support provided to students during and after the school day has helped decrease the number of students in need of recovering credits during the summer. Mr. Balek stated that 85% of the courses were successfully completed this year and that course time was extended from four to six weeks allowing students more time to complete the work. Offering credit recovery during the school year using *Educere* is being explored.

Elementary Literacy Programs – Mrs. Hamill provided an update of the Elementary Literacy Summer Programs. K-2 and 3-5 programs were held at Conshohocken Elementary for students enrolled in the school district. A K-2 reading program was held at Ridge Park for students residing in the CSD community. These programs ran from June 20th through July 14th from Monday through Thursday. Average daily attendance for the 102 students who participated (an increase of 16% over last year’s enrollment) was 85%. Pre- and post-assessment data collected

shows that the goal for all participating students to either maintain or improve their reading level was attained.

Extended School Year - Karen Berk discussed the ESY summer program for students with disabilities. ESY programs were held four hours per day, for five weeks from June 20th to July 21st. Mrs. Berk reported that the goal of ESY programs is to help students maintain specific, targeted IEP goals. Eligibility for these programs is determined by the IEP team. Mrs. Berk noted that data will be collected for baseline measures to determine students' eligibility for next summer's programs.

Life Skills Support Program -- Eileen Spector, Secondary Special Education Supervisor, provided an update on 16 secondary students (2 were part time) who attended the Life Skills Support program and the Autistic/Life Skills Support program. Ms. Spector noted that the goals of the programs are to provide functional life skills and to aid students with transitioning to adult life. Ms. Spector indicated that, in general, all students maintained or made progress on some or all of their IEP goals.

Beth Maza, the new Elementary Special Education Supervisor, introduced herself to the Board and spoke to the Elementary programs. Mrs. Maza shared that she reviewed data for four classes serving 36 students in Grades K – 5 and determined that almost all students who attended the programs either maintained or increased their skill level on at least half their goals.

Girls in Technology Summer Program Update -- Ms. Maria Bellino provided an update on the second year for the Girls in Technology summer program which ran for two weeks during the month of June. Curricular changes and a smaller group setting have already been a proven benefit to the program and enabled the instructors to differentiate based on ages and interest of the girls. Among the classes offered were Graphic Design, Photo Shop, *Audacity*, *Moviemaker*, *Scratch*, Robotics, and design of a mouse trap car. Ms. Bellino noted that the 3D printer was also utilized. She reported that 17 of the 18 girls said their favorite part of the program was the mouse trap car and they would consider enrolling in technology courses. Connections were made between some of the girls from last year who assisted teachers in this year's classes. Ms. Bellino also reported that Tangent Energy made a solar panel presentation to the girls.

Strategic Plan-Mid Point Review – Dr. McKeaney reported that we have secured an extension of the filing deadline for the Strategic Plan Mid-Point Review which was originally scheduled for the end of September 2011, due to the change of Superintendent at CSD. Dr. McKeaney noted that some administrators and Board members may be asked to provide information for this state driven mandate.

Conference Requests: There were no conference requests.

There being no public comments, Dr. McKeaney adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

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