

Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes April 8, 2013

The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, April 8, 2013 in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Curriculum Committee Chairman Mel Brodsky. Present were Board President Alan Tabachnick; Board Members: Leslie Feingold, Christina Frangiosa, Heather Palmer; Kathleen Oxberry, Beth Suchsland, Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. Liz McKeaney; Curriculum Supervisors: Maria Wileczek, Sergio Anaya and Kathleen Hamill ; Director of Technology Andrew Boegly; PWHS Principal Jason Bacani; PWHS Assistant Principal Steve Price, Plymouth Elementary Reading Specialist Sandy Connelly, School community members Linda Doll and Mary Ann McGuire; and Bunnie Swetkowski.

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

Acceptable Use Policy – Dr. McKeaney introduced Andrew Boegly to present information regarding the policy revisions necessary to implement BYOD throughout the District. Copies of the revised #815 Acceptable Use of Internet and School Computer Network Policy and the new #237 Electronic Devices and #815.1 Use of Electronic Communications were distributed in the agenda packet for review. Drew noted that these policies were reviewed by the technology committee and recommendations were submitted and refined by the solicitor. The original #815 policy was 32 pages in length, and the information in the two new policies was originally embedded in that one policy. These policies will be presented for approval at the April Board meeting on a first-read basis.

BYOD – A few questions related to BYOD resulted from the new policies presented. PWHS Principal Jason Bacani shared that it is possible that a student may bring up to three of their own devices to school (cell phone, iPad, laptop). The district is able to filter / block inappropriate applications from the students' devices when accessing the District Wi-Fi. Dr. McKeaney noted that the District is rolling out BYOD very thoughtfully.

Mel Brodsky inquired about students potentially taking pictures in the district with personal devices. Dr. Gorodetzer responded that "yes" students are capable of taking pictures and video but would need consent of all individuals involved. Instructional situations pertaining to photo and video are up to the classroom teachers. Additionally it is the role of classroom teachers to monitor students' behavior / actions with these devices while they are in the classroom. We are in the process of implementing revised policies that specifically pertain to students using mobile devices responsibly.

PWHS Assistant Principal Steve Price noted that the students who were originally part a student focus group in August 2012, shared the desire to want to work with their own devices. Students further conveyed that they consider themselves to be responsible and want to have the opportunity to use their own devices. Steve reported that as part of an on-going planning meeting on February 15th, 84% of PWHS teachers shared that they would like their students to work with their own devices in the classroom.

Steve shared that a huge part of the success of BYOD will center around effective classroom management. Teachers continue to be responsible for the expectations with regard to honesty and respect of others, mobile device or not. One such example already employed during the 2013 Keystone exams, was collecting cell phones at the door to remove distraction and temptation. Teachers who are piloting the BYOD program will be documenting the process regarding “what does and what does not work” which will later be shared with the staff as the program expands in August 2013.

Mr. Jason Bacani noted that teachers involved in the pilot have the opportunity to determine the number of blocks they will have students bring their own devices. In response to a question from the Board, Jason replied that if a student does not have his/her own device, the district will most certainly continue to provide district owned technology to the student for in school classroom instruction. The district devices, however, may not be taken home. Additionally, opportunities for students to use district technology are already in place in the library after school hours.

Mrs. Linda Doll suggested that the District schedule Parent Information Meetings to be sure that parents are aware of this opportunity for their children. Some suggested meetings times were: freshman orientation, back to school nights, etc. Additionally, Mrs. Doll noted that she had concerns regarding theft of the devices and whether the district is responsible for stolen devices. Student code of conduct already in place along with student signed agreements clearly delineate that students be aware that they are responsible for their own devices.

Community member MaryAnn McGuire recommended that the district begin a communication roll-out to parents regarding BYOD at CSD. A BYOD Update on the District Website was also recommended, and it may include a listing of savings opportunities for the purchase of devices from specific vendors.

AP Exam Funding – Dr. Gorodetzer shared an overview on the history of AP Exam fees and noted that with the budget challenges the district is experiencing, a line-item review indicated that cost savings could be realized if the district cut back on funding the AP Exams. PW Principal Jason Bacani shared that a committee consisting of students, AP Teachers and administrators convened to take a look at AP Exam Funding (students were involved in the discussions as well). The district will pay approximately \$50,000 this year for all AP Exams. The recommended solution by the committee is to pay for only one AP Exam if a student takes more than one AP Exam. This would reduce the cost to the district by approximately \$35,000.

Number of AP Exams per year	Student Pays	District Pays
1	\$82	\$0
2	\$82	\$82
3	\$164	\$82
4 or more	\$246+	\$82

With regard to financially disadvantaged students, waivers are provided through the College Board. Or if the College Board does not waive a student’s fee, and the District discovers that a student is unable to pay, the District will pay for the AP Exams for that student.

Mr. Bacani noted that with regard to a communication plan to parents, this information will be included with the Course Catalogue and a letter will be drafted by the PW Administration in conjunction with the CIA Administrators to explain the new parameters for AP Exam Funding.

Board Directors recommended that the District discontinue funding all AP Exams beginning with the incoming 9th grade class. The District continues the expectation that students who enroll in AP classes must take the AP test and will emphasize the cost savings to parents regarding a successful AP test grade. Students do not have to take that course in college if they pass the AP test in high school, and if they take a number of AP courses and test successfully, they may even graduate early from college.

Textbook Approval – Sergio Anaya shared information regarding an AP Government Textbook that is up for adoption. He noted that the text currently being used is ten years old and does not include the last three presidential elections. The new books will cost approximately \$13,000 and will be an action item on the April Board Agenda.

Informational Updates:

Girls in Technology: Maria Wileczek noted that she received a grant to help fund the cost for the Girls in Technology Summer Program. Currently, 11 girls have signed up to participate, however it will be advertised again to recruit more girls. In addition, Riverbend has agreed to partner with CSD with an afternoon program. The additional cost for the Riverbend program is \$380 for two weeks. Ten participants must be guaranteed in order to run the program. Boys may be invited if the district doesn't meet the minimum requirement with girls only.

Weatherill Park: Maria Wileczek reported that she attended a meeting with Weatherill Park representatives to discuss ways to include Weatherill Park in our K-5 Science Program. Maria raised concerns regarding transportation costs and curriculum time during the school day. Another meeting is being planned for late June.

Summer Literacy Program: Kathleen Hamill reported that 115 students have registered for the Summer Literacy Program.

Discussion Items: There being no discussion items, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bunnie Swetkowski
Administrative Assistant
Superintendent's Office