

Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes October 7, 2013

The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, October 7, 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 Mr. Alan Tabachnick, Vice-President, Mrs. Susan Moore; Board Members: Mrs. Kathleen Oxberry; Christina Frangiosa, Leslie Finegold, Beth Suchsland, Heather Palmer, Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Special Education and Pupil Services, Karen Berk; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. Liz McKeaney; Curriculum Supervisors: Sergio Anaya, Dr. Katy Giovanisci, Maria Wileczek and, Sara Frey; community member Linda Doll, and Nancy Aiken.

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

Curriculum Committee Chairman Mel Brodsky opened the meeting asking for any public comments and there were none. Dr. McKeaney then welcomed Sara Frey, Instructional Media Specialist at PWHS.

Informational Updates:

Instructional Technology: Resources to enhance delivery of Curricula

Dr. McKeaney introduced Sara Frey, Instructional Media Specialist, who gave a presentation on the changing role of librarians and the role of the Instructional Media Specialist in the 21st century. She provided some background regarding the action plan for the reorganization of the PWHS library and instructional space at PWHS. The structure will mirror university models such as St. Joseph University and Drexel University and reflects the digital age. To repurpose the PWHS library space, Sergio Anaya, Curriculum Supervisor and Sara Frey wrote a grant application to the Colonial Foundation. They received funding which will be used to create a *Makerspace* in the PWHS Library. The *Makerspace* concept aligns with overall District goals and focuses on building students' skills for the 21st Century (questioning, cooperative learning, and meaningful integration of technology). The *Makerspace* will be designed to:

- Entice students with little/no experience to explore various technologies and take advantage of multimedia enhancements (such as video, computerized slideshows, and sound).
- Encourage students with an interest in technology to explore concepts and techniques used in technology courses.
- Provide opportunities for learning through self-exploration ("tinkering," trial/error), collaboration, and student-to-student teaching.
- Provide a new learning space which will give students access to workstations with fast processing speed, photo editing, music production, voice recordings, computer programming, multimedia composition, and even 3-D printing.

- Encourage all teachers (especially technology teachers) to showcase and promote their students' work and abilities.
- Foster collaboration between students and among staff.

BYOD is also being rolled out with the PWHS teachers next month. Sara Frey is involved with this initiative and has already met with a number of classroom teachers. She has also been collaborating with teachers to demonstrate how to use various web-based resources and databases to support students with authentic research.

Atlas Rubicon – Curriculum Mapping & PA Core Alignment:

Dr. McKeaney spoke about how the district is using Atlas Rubicon as a framework for Curriculum Mapping and PA Core Alignment. Dr. Katy Giovanisci, Language Arts Curriculum Supervisor, shared the professional development plan outlining the implications of PA Core Standards on Mathematics and Language Arts instruction. The K-12 librarians will continue to support this alignment by uploading links and resources to their current curriculum.

Information Updates:

National Merit Scholars:

Six PWHS Seniors have been recognized for their “exceptional academic promise” by the National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSC).

Dr. McKeaney noted that there were 2 student Semifinalists in the 2014 National Merit Scholarship Competition and 4 Commended students in the National Merit Program for scoring in the top five percent of those who took the 2011 PSAT. The two Semifinalists will learn if they became Finalists in February.

PA School Performance Profile:

Dr. McKeaney presented updates on the PA School Performance Profile and the challenges associated with this new model. The new PA School Performance Profile (SPP) replaces Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as a measure of school effectiveness. Schools are assigned a numerical score that is based on a number of factors, including school structure. This numerical score is not equivalent to a letter grade and does not reflect overall student achievement. It was noted that the scores are school based and not district based. Dr. McKeaney stated that the Academic Growth factor of 40% is especially problematic at the grade 4-5 level.

Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Student achievement was highlighted. In May 2013, 315 PWHS students participated in AP examinations in which 81% (more than 236 students) earned a score of 3 or higher.

Early Admissions Process:

Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services, spoke about the early admissions policy. She conducted research of the 16 other surrounding school districts and found that 12 other districts do not admit students for early admission. For most districts, the student must be five by 9/1.

Conference Requests:

Two conference requests were presented for approval. Donna Drizin- National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Washington, DC, and Marna Caintic- National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Washington, DC.

Discussion Items:

There was a question regarding Parents Council being held at other times during the day. Dr. Gorodetzer said that this structure has already been piloted, but can be explored further.

A suggestion about conducting an instructional technology night was also given. Dr. McKeaneey agreed that this is a good idea and will follow-up with staff.

Public Comment: There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy C. Aiken
Administrative Assistant to the Director of
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment