

## Curriculum Committee of the Board Meeting Minutes October 13, 2014

*The Curriculum Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, October 13, 2014 in the Pupil Services Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Curriculum Committee Chairman, Mel Brodsky. Present were Board President, Susan Moore; Vice-President, Beth Suchsland; Board Members: Leslie Finegold, Heather Palmer, Kathleen Oxberry, Christina Frangiosa; Superintendent, Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Dr. Liz McKeane; Curriculum Supervisors: Dr. Katy Giovanisci, Sergio Anaya and Maria Wileczek; Community Member, Linda Doll; Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Principal, Jason Bacani; Colonial Middle School Principal, Robert Fahler; Colonial Middle School Assistant Principal, Phil Chang; and Nancy Aiken.*

Curriculum Committee Chairman Mel Brodsky opened the meeting asking for any public comments and there were none. Dr. McKeane then welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Phil Chang, Assistant Principal at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School.

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

### **Secondary Scheduling Updates:**

#### **Colonial Middle School Scheduling**

Bob Fahler, Principal of Colonial Middle School, and Phil Chang, Assistant Principal of Colonial Middle School, presented a PowerPoint Presentation entitled "Colonial Middle School Scheduling Updates," which demonstrated the revised Colonial Middle School scheduling changes. The proposed scheduling changes are a result of meetings with a scheduling consultant, Dr. Rettig and a core team of teachers who explored all options. Top priorities were to maintain teacher collaboration time, increase instructional meeting time to support instructional practices, lengthen reporting periods (quarters to trimesters), decrease transitional time and maintain whole school remediation/enrichment time.

Unified Arts was discussed in much detail, as it is one of the largest changes. All students will take introduction courses in 5 Unified Arts areas, such as Family Consumer Science, Technology Education, Art, Computer Literacy, Music. The courses will be taken over 5 trimesters in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The Unified Arts departments will offer 2 advanced courses. Students will have 4 opportunities to take 10 courses in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Students may take 3 courses in 2 specific contents over 3 years.

The benefits of implementing the new schedule in 2015-2016 school year would provide time to refine the curriculum and instructional pacing calendar for each content area. It would allow more time to revise benchmarks and gather resources. As a result, it enables teachers more time in preparing for these changes with professional development, and to strengthen their knowledge and comfort with curricular changes and instructional practices. Dr. McKeane added the projected 2015-16 implementation of the new schedule will lead to the alignment of the curriculum to the shifts in PA Core.

## **Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Scheduling**

Jason Bacani, Principal of Plymouth Whitemarsh High School presented a PowerPoint Presentation entitled "Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Strategic Planning Scheduling Committee," which demonstrated the findings and recommendations proposed for Plymouth Whitemarsh High School scheduling changes. The proposed scheduling changes are the result of a process of thorough review and great reflection by Committee Representatives which included the Plymouth Whitemarsh Administrative Team, Curriculum Department, Department Heads and Consultant, Dr. Rettig. It was noted that the top priorities and overarching goals were to maintain the integrity of a block schedule in terms of instructional best practices (e.g. Inquiry, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Differentiated Instruction & Student Engagement), increase flexibility and choice in the schedule for students-revise whole school remediation/enrichment time (Current I Block), and to be fiscally responsible. The Committee decided on a 5 x 5 Semester Block Schedule.

Moving forward, the Committee will also review the graduation requirements, re-organize the existing I-block structure, and review and revise the Curriculum.

### **Informational Updates:**

Dr. Katy Giovanisci reported on the 2014 Best Practices Fair. The theme for this year is "Restaurant Week." Sub-committees are in the process of developing a catalog of offerings, identifying vendors and preparing for the district-wide professional development event that is being held on November 4th. Over 100 teachers have collaborated to design 120 meaningful sessions to be presented that day. Dr. Giovanisci has secured Donovan Goode from Discovery Learning as the Elementary Key Speaker and A.J. Juliani as the Secondary Key Speaker. A.J. Juliani is the author of *Inquiry & Innovation in the Classroom* and co-founder of Classroom Cribs and *The Best & Next in Education* digital magazine. A.J. is a Microsoft Innovative Educator and Google Certified Teacher.

### **Conference Requests:**

One conference request was presented for approval. Lori Lynch- Carnegie Learning, 2014 Digital Learning Summit, Savannah, Georgia

### **Discussion Items:**

There was a question regarding the communication plan of the scheduling and course changes at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School and Colonial Middle School to the public. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that a communication plan to the public on the time frame of the proposed scheduling and course changes is in process. There was a request for increasing the roll-out time for scheduling at the high school by one year. The purpose is to ensure a quality approach to the implementation of the course changes and support time for more vertical articulation between CMS and PWHS. This means that the scheduling changes will not be occurring at PWHS until the 2016-17 School Year; however, the I-block changes will happen in the 2015-16 school year.

A parent from Plymouth Whitemarsh High School shared his concern about adding a 5th AP course to an already heavy homework laden schedule of the AP students. There was discussion on various ways to arrange the students' course schedule so that it would not be so heavy laden with homework.

**Public Comment:** There were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

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