

**Northshore School District
Curriculum Materials Adoption Committee Minutes
June 12, 2018
3:00 PM
Administrative Center Room 204**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the CMAC, Curriculum Materials Adoption Committee, was held on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at the Administrative Center in Bothell, Washington. Chairperson Obadiah Dunham called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Obadiah Dunham, Becky Anderson, Heather Miller, Dave Wellington, Rebecca Nielsen, Nancy Dodson, Kim Osgood, May Pelto, Janice Rendahl, Tiffany Rodriguez, and Sarah Takayoshi.

Absent: Shannon Colley, Carlos Lazo, Angie Maynard, Shelby Reynolds,

Late Arrival: Kelly Griffin

OLD BUSINESS

Review and Approval of Minutes

Obadiah asked committee members to review the minutes from the May 21 CMAC meeting.

A member questioned the answer to the question on page 3 regarding whether Kenmore MS teachers will be paid for AVID training. Obadiah confirmed that the answer to that question can be updated: Kenmore teachers will be paid to attend AVID training this July. He noted that the minutes don't need to be corrected, as they are an accurate record of the information presented at that time.

It was **MOVED** by Nancy Dodson and **SECONDED** by Kim Osgood to approve the May 21, 2018 CMAC minutes as written.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

Update on 2020P Revisions

Obadiah reviewed the work to date on revisions to 2020P:

- Subcommittee of CMAC met and recommended changes to the procedures
- Anne Deutschman made revisions and re-ordered sections to improve the flow of information
- Rebecca and Obadiah reviewed the proposed changes with Dr. Reid so she could share them with the School Board
- Obadiah, Rebecca and Anne made some additional revisions

After members have reviewed and agreed on the changes, it will go before the Superintendent's Cabinet for approval, most likely sometime in August

Obadiah asked for feedback from CMAC members, noting that the goal was mainly to clean up the flow of the document to provide more clarity and remove redundancy.

Q: As we think about core materials, oftentimes core needs to be supplemented. Are we thinking about supplemental materials as we go through a core adoption? Is that an expectation we want to state in the procedures?

A: We are shifting to this model for core adoptions:

- What is the core instruction piece (Tier 1)?
- What are the Tier 2 level of supports that come with the materials?
- What are the Tier 3 supports? If not available in the core materials, then supplemental materials should be identified along with the core materials at the time of adoption, rather than waiting until later to address that need.

This might best be addressed in a revision to the core adoption checklist, rather than the procedures (2020P). Members discussed how best to address that requirement, whether in the procedure and/or in the core adoption checklist. It was agreed that it should be addressed in the CMAC checklist, which will be revised to reflect that requirement.

Members were provided with both a "mark-up" version of the procedure showing changes, plus a "clean" version. Because many of the changes made were in the structure of the document (moving sections of text to different areas to improve flow), it was beneficial to have both versions.

Rebecca noted that she and Obadiah often get asked for clarification of the following statement in the procedure: "*CMAC reviews and recommends for approval... Sets of 6 or more supplementary texts or novels...*" (on page 6 of the clean document version, the first bullet under the *Procedures* section). Rebecca suggested revising the statement to read "*Sets of 6 or more, per class, supplementary texts...*", then delete the third bullet on the next page as it is redundant and gives the appearance that there is an additional requirement to consider. The guideline allows for use of a particular text with no more than 5 students in a given class at any given time, which allows for small literacy groups. There was additional discussion to clarify the intent of the statement:

One member suggested that it would be easier for literature circle purposes to have the allowable number of texts as 6 rather than 5, as that is a better number for dividing into groups.

Q: If we have 11 sections of students, we could buy enough texts to have 5 per classroom? Is that OK?

A: Yes, as long as they are only available to 5 students per class at any given time.

Q: What about the elementary LC teacher who buys 5 copies of a text, but uses it with 50 students, though no more than five at a time? The concern is that teachers could be using materials that are not good instructional materials on a repeated basis.

A: As long as it is a supplementary text. Any core text would require approval. That language has not changed – it refers to number of texts, not number of students with which it is being used.

The hope is that teachers will look for good materials if there is a need and bring it to their principal, field test, then ultimately bring through CMAC. If we're doing a better job of identifying the need for supplemental materials with core adoptions, then teachers should be less likely to look for additional materials to fill the gaps.

It was agreed that the following additional changes will be made to 2020P:

- Page 6, first bullet under *Procedures* will read: “*Sets of seven (7) or more, per class, supplementary texts or novels, including texts with or without accompanying digital resources (web-based or stand-alone).*”
- Page 7, under *Materials that do not require CMAC approval*: the third bullet beginning “*Five or fewer copies...*” will be stricken.

All other changes to 2020P are accepted as proposed and will be presented to Cabinet for final approval.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

After the reconsideration hearing of the Sherman Alexie novel, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, the district agreed to

- Restrict the use of the novel to 9th grade and above;
- Add a statement to the district approved novel list regarding the maturity level of novels for high school students;
- Provide a viable alternative option for students who choose to opt out that is clear and communicated to principals, teachers and parents

Sherman Alexie Controversy:

Members have been provided a summary statement regarding the allegations against the author: “...women reported behavior ranging from inappropriate comments both in private and in public, to flirting that veered suddenly into sexual territory, unwanted sexual advances and consensual sexual relations”

Obadiah asked members to review with a partner the allegations and consider the following question: “Should the recent allegations against Sherman Alexie require any change in the approval status of his novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* in the Northshore School District? Why or Why Not? Members shared their thoughts:

- The novel’s status should not change. We would open ourselves up to screening every other author who may have other questionable allegations. CMAC should not assume the role of censor.

- It's important to separate the individual from the art. We watch movies and TV shows made by artists with questionable actions. We need to "separate the message from the messenger."
- Question through the teacher's lens: If a teacher is struggling with the allegations, can the teacher choose not to teach this book? Yes, it is supplementary curriculum, so the teacher would make the choice to teach, or not teach, the novel.
- The worth of the text outweighs his personal life. It meets a lot of needs for underrepresented groups, as well as being highly engaging for students. Again, separating the art from the artist.
- It's good that there is an alternative, and it's true that this is awkward. There is probably a lot that we don't know about artists, and we don't want to start down that path. Often times the value of the art comes out of the fact that the artists have experienced awful things in their lives.
- The power of the movement is about individuals making the choice, so the girls should have every right to make a choice to read or not read the novel. It's also a powerful voice for the Native American community.
- The important point is that the text is supplemental, which takes the stress off the decision.
- Were the allegations proved – was he charged? He admitted and apologized for some of the allegations. He is who he is – a product of his environment, it is almost a symptom of the system. This could also be a good teaching point.
- A member asked if it would be important for teachers to address the allegations up front, or wait until someone brings it up?
- Another member said it's important to show that we thoughtfully came to the decision to maintain the approval status. Our CMAC minutes will reflect the level of discussion and thought given to the issue.
- The approved novel list will contain a statement about the maturity level of novels for high school students
- Is there a sense for how many students/parents are opting out of reading this novel? Obadiah is aware of three this year.
- It's also important to note that what is sensitive material to some families may not be sensitive to others. For instance, *Romeo and Juliet* deals with suicide, which may be particularly sensitive to some and not others.

It appears that the answer is that the approval status of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* should not change – is that accurate? Yes, members agreed.

Alternative text and assignment:

- Looked for a novel with a similar theme so students could also participate in much of the classroom discussion. *The Joy Luck Club* is the proposed novel. This is not intended for whole classroom use as an alternative to the Sherman Alexie novel, but for the teacher who has selected *The Absolutely True Diary*... but has student(s) who opt out.
- This novel will meet a need and a commitment made after the reconsideration hearing in September 2017. This would be a limited novel approval – it would only be approved as an alternative text to *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.

- If a teacher wanted to use *The Joy Luck Club* for a purpose other than as the alternative to *True Diary* they would have to bring it through the full CMAC process, and the committee would have to at that time consider that requested use.
- Would it fit under the “less than 7 novels” clause? No, we as CMAC committed to identifying an alternate text, so it needs to have CMAC approval for this purpose only.
- Because it will be CMAC approved, the district will be responsible for supplying the novels.

Comments by members regarding *The Joy Luck Club*:

- It doesn't seem much different, other than less offensive language. It also has heavy themes.
- It is not really a coming of age novel, as the Alexie novel is, it deals more with adult themes. It feels a little bit older in theme as a replacement novel for *True Diary*.
- This is a much longer novel than Alexie, and a more difficult read. However, students who opt out of Alexie will be spending more independent reading time, so will benefit from having a longer novel.

It was MOVED by Heather Miller and SECONDED by Tiffany Rodriguez to approve *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan and *The Joy Luck Club* Dialectical Journal Assignment as the alternative option for students or families wishing to opt out of reading the *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

Obadiah brought to the attention of the members a memo included with the meeting documents regarding a pilot of literacy and numeracy assessments. Derek Tucci and Niki Arnold-Smith will lead the pilot and share more information with CMAC in the fall.

ADJOURNMENT

It was MOVED by Janice Rendahl to adjourn the meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Kim Osgood.

Obadiah called for the question. The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM.