

Barre Town Curriculum and Teacher Support Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School
November 30, 2016

In Attendance

- Brenda Buzzell, Committee Chair and Board Member
- Scott Griggs, Principal, Grades 5-8
- Ainsley Burroughs, BTMES Kindergarten Teacher
- Lindy Johnson, BSU Primary-Grade Literacy Specialist
- Rick McCraw, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, BSU

Agenda

1. Review/approve minutes of September 21st
2. Additions/deletions to agenda
3. ECO Classroom (Ainsley Burroughs)
4. Standards-based reporting
5. Upcoming agenda and meeting date/s.

The meeting was called to order at 4:04.

1. Review/approve minutes of September 21st

Minutes were approved without amendment.

2. Additional/deletions to agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. ECO Classroom

Kindergarten teacher Ainsley Burroughs presented on her ECO (Educating Children Outdoors) classroom. Ainsley took a course in ECO through the North Branch Nature Center, and she began implementing it this year. It's her hope that other teachers will pick it up. There is one ECO day per week, and on that day, students are educated in their outdoor classroom.

See attached slide deck and lesson plan for details. Some key points not reflected in the slide deck follow:

- Curriculum's standards are largely drawn from NGSS.
- There's more than one adult out with the children: Other staff members, parent volunteers or both.
- Ainsley obtained outdoor clothing as donations for those students who lack them, including from Cabot Hosiery.
- There are 17 students in the class.
- The entire kindergarten team is interested in implementing ECO.
- Ainsley has been in touch with Amanda Garland at CVCC regarding possible collaboration.
- Ainsley maintains a blog and frequently posts pictures there. (The blog is only available internally.)

- She finds that students engage in much more teamwork, problem solving and mutual concern than she observes in the classroom.
- Students take tremendous ownership of the outdoor space they use. A number of them show their pride by bring family members to the space outside of school.
- The classroom is “leave no trace.”
- Overarching standard; “humans can reduce the impact they have on the land.”
- The curriculum can be enacted from kindergarten through high school.

4. Standards-based Grading

Rick updated the group on the current state of standards-based grading, and in particular, the effort to develop a standards-based report card for use in both BSU K-8 schools. He outlined the broad process as described in the book *Designing a Standards-Based Report Card* by Thomas Guskey and Jane Bailey. Among his points:

- The Guskey book is an excellent and well-regarded guide for developing a standards-based report card.
- Rick shared a checklist in use by the committee to track progress through the Guskey process (attached).
- Beginning last year, a cross-school task force began work on designing a common standards-based report.
- The two schools are in quite different places relative to truly standards-based grading. Barre City began work on a standards-based report card several years ago, and one is now in use in grades 5 and 6. Parallel work was not done at Barre Town, and not all grades at Barre City have been deeply involved with this work.
- Part of the work going forward is to unify the work of the two schools. This involves balancing the good work done at Barre City with respecting the needs and perspectives of the Barre Town teachers.
- Identifying the standards to be reported on can proceed somewhat independently of the development of the report card itself. The task force will develop guidelines as to how many standards should be reported in each subject area, but identifying those must take place at each grade level by content area.

Rick will provide an update at the next meeting.

5. Upcoming agenda and meeting date/s

We will meet from 4:00 to 5:00 on December 14th.

Design lab: In lieu of presenting to the Curriculum Committee, Michael Pope will instead be invited to present to the full Board.

Agenda:

- Status of instruction in keyboarding and cursive (Lindy and Jen)
- Standards-based grading (Rick)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick McCraw', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick McCraw
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment
Barre Supervisory Union