

**Curriculum Committee Meeting**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**Spaulding Union High School Elementary/Middle School**  
**February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**In Attendance**

- Joe Blakely, Committee Chair and Board Member
- Brenda Waterhouse, Principal
- Rick McCraw, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, BSU

**Agenda**

1. Review/approve minutes of January 17<sup>th</sup>
2. Changes to agenda
3. Flexible Pathways
4. Upcoming agenda and meeting date/s.

The meeting was called to order at 3:01.

**1. Review/approve minutes of January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Minutes were approved as submitted.

**2. Changes to Agenda**

No changes were made.

**3. Flexible Pathways**

Brenda described several of the flexible pathways options, one of which was the work-based learning program about which Michelle Lafrancis spoke at a recent meeting. Others include dual enrollment and early college, independent study and online learning.

One option considered by Spaulding was to expand the Phoenix program, but the budget would not support it. (Phoenix is generally for juniors and seniors who are missing key credits. Phoenix has two teachers who meet with students as early as 6AM depending on student need. Some students meet at Phoenix prior to classes at CVCC.)

As noted above, Flexible Pathways include independent studies. This especially happens in Spanish and JROTC when there are too few students to run a full section of a course.

A key component of flexible pathways is identifying how students will qualify for credits. This process includes educating the community placement, when one exists, as to expectations. This is regulated in part by a panel of teachers to whom the student must demonstrate proficiency on the chosen standard(s).

Brenda mentioned a recent letter from the state Secretary of Education clarifying that schools are not obligated to financially support any given interest a student might have. She cited the example of a student wanting to spend a semester in Italy in order to learn Italian. There is no obligation

for a school to support that financially. Conversely, Brenda has a goal of ensuring that access to community learning opportunities is equitable.

Brenda mentioned the work Spaulding teams have done at the state BEST conference. This year's focus is on flexible pathways. The team will comprise Michelle Lafrancis, Dave Nicholson, Shannon Lessley, Ry Hoffman, and the administrative team.

Rick mentioned Vermont's Education Quality Standards and the fact that they call for Flexible Pathways with the goal of engaging students who might not otherwise be.

Joe raised concern about students who might take an independent study and not work. Brenda stated that there is accountability.

#### **4. Proficiency-based Learning**

Joe asked how PBL is developing. Brenda has responded to some of the concerns expressed by parents. For the most part, parent concerns have been about lack of consistency layered atop concern about the change. Overall, parents are responding well to Spaulding's outreach, the reassessment plan and academic alerts.

Joe alluded to the concerns of some parents as to how PBL might impact their child's ability to get into their desired school. When these concerns are brought to the school, Spaulding contacts the schools in which students are interested. In every case to date, the college or university accepts proficiency-based transcripts.

Brenda has experienced no complaints about the progress reports. However, it's understood that the school's data system does not lend itself to proficiency-based reports, and a committee is working on adapting reports accordingly.

#### **5. Upcoming agenda and meeting date/s.**

The next meeting will be on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 in the library of Spaulding High School. The topic will be the proposed transformation of the library into a media center and maker space.

Subsequent meeting agendas will be as follows:

- April: Summer reading program (upcoming is the third summer), Literacy Team and Joey Hawkins' work
- May: Multi-disciplinary team; credit recovery; Phoenix program
- June: Proficiency-based graduation requirements; community service; plans for 2017-18 school year.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25.

Minutes respectfully submitted,



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