

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING**

Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
August 25, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Victoria Pompei, Chair (BT)  
Tim Boltin, Vice-Chair (BC) – arrived at 6:13 p.m.  
Alice Farrell (BC)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

David Wells, Superintendent  
Chris Hennessey, Principal (BCEMS) – arrived at 5:55 p.m.  
Jennifer Nye, Principal (BTMES)  
Brenda Waterhouse, Principal (SHS)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Paul Malone

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Venus Dean                      Karen Fredericks                      Jennifer Padilla                      Mike Padilla

**1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Pompei is experiencing audio issues, so Mrs. Farrell was asked to call the meeting to order.

**Mrs. Farrell, called the Tuesday, August 25, 2020, BUUSD Curriculum Committee meeting to order a 5:34 p.m., which was held via video conference – Google Meet.**

**2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda**

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes -**

**4.1 Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2020 BUUSD Curriculum Committee Meeting**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020 BUUSD Curriculum Committee Meeting.**

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Hybrid Learning/VTVLC Discussion**

Mr. Wells presented the BTMES Back to School Video. The video is intended to provide information to families regarding the re-opening of schools under COVID-19 guidelines. The video, which provided an overview of a day at school, included; protocols for transportation and entry into the building (for students riding the bus and those being transported by parents), recess (time outside), food, hallway traffic, and classrooms (layout and protocols). Mr. Allen was thanked for producing the video. At 5:44 p.m., Mrs. Pompei began facilitating the meeting. Mr. Wells displayed a document titled “General Expectations and FAQ for Faculty/Staff” and provided an overview of the document. Mr. Wells advised that there will be 8 in-service days prior to the opening of school. In response to a query regarding proficiencies for virtual learners, Mr. Wells advised that teachers will differentiate their instruction based on student progress, thus no students should meet all proficiencies prior to the end of each course. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that in high school courses, students can perform additional work to earn a higher GPA, and that under the re-opening plan, course content will be deeper and richer than it was during the emergency closure (it should revert back to what it was before COVID). Mrs. Waterhouse advised that dual enrollment is continuing, with 2 college courses provided (per student) to students at no cost. Additional courses cost parents \$162.00. In response to a query regarding how teachers will accomplish both in-person and virtual instruction on the same day (and how this will be improved from instruction provided during the emergency closure, including parental dissatisfaction with some of the on-line learning platforms), Mr. Wells displayed a document outlining the balance/flow of ‘Lecture/Mini-Lessons, Appropriate Practice and Feedback’ and advised that unlike under emergency closure, students will have in-person instruction two days per week. It was also noted that interventionists will be involved to provide additional support. Ms. Dean advised that for the re-opening of school, there has been more time to prepare for hybrid learning and platforms will be used much

more judiciously. Additionally, teachers will be creating videos, and question slides, and students will be able to create videos and be able to interact with other students. Staff members are currently working on ways to provide a ‘morning meeting’, but need to consider confidentiality/privacy issues. Mrs. Pompei queried regarding providing parents with a written document outlining expectations. Mr. Wells advised that information will be provided on the FAQs pages and expectations will be provided at the start of each class. Mrs. Nye suggested that the ‘day in the life’ videos include expectations. Mrs. Nye noted that flexibility is critical, as not all students are available to participate at a given time (daycare issues etc.). In response to a query regarding how long hybrid learning is slated for, Mr. Wells advised that hybrid vs in-person instruction will be driven based on guidance from the State. Much is unknown, and can/will change based on directives from the State. Virtual learning is slated as a year-long commitment from parents/students, but exceptions will be made based on what is best for each individual student. Parents are the best and strongest advocates for their students and the BUUSD would not stand in the way of a parent who feels their student needs a different placement. The schools will work with parents to provide the best possible educational experience. This flexibility of having teams work with parents occurs during non-COVID times. It was noted that the change from virtual to hybrid or all in-person instruction presents challenges because the curriculum for the different models do not mirror each other. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that at the high school level, students in virtual vs hybrid use the same curriculum. High school instruction does have many more licensure restrictions for staff. This difference does allow for more flexibility for students. Approximately 250 K-8 students are enrolled in virtual learning. Thirty more have asked to begin school with virtual instruction. There are approximately 15 available slots, which will be filled via a lottery. In response to a query, it was noted that one family (with 3 students) has asked to leave the virtual academy, but did not indicate why. Mr. Wells provided an overview of how virtual instruction will be delivered. In response to a query regarding why there are student limitations for virtual classes, Mr. Wells advised that in order for teachers to do a good job, and be well connected with their students, there is a limit of 25 students per teacher (Vermont School Quality Standards). Another limiting factor was matching the number of students who requested virtual learning, to the number of teachers who needed to teach virtually (because of risk factors), or volunteered to teach virtually. Mr. Wells advised that other local schools have had difficulty securing enough teachers to meet requests for virtual learning. Mr. Wells advised that at the present time, it is extremely difficult to fill teaching positions. In response to a query regarding start of school assessments for students in the virtual academy, Ms. Dean advised that it is her belief that all testing of virtual students is under the guise of the virtual learning academy. The virtual learning academy is a stand-alone program and the BUUSD will not be assessing those learners. It was noted that the BUUSD has licenses for the virtual academy, to use STAR360 for K-8 literacy assessments. The BUUSD does not have the equivalent of STAR360 for math. Mrs. Pompei stressed that it will be important to follow assessment data for BUUSD students in the virtual academy. Mr. Wells asked Ms. Dean to contact Jess Van Orman and Lorraine Morris regarding this matter.

## **5.2 Annual Work Plan Discussion**

Mr. Wells displayed last year’s Work Plan, and advised that he accepts the job to coordinate curriculum until the job is filled. Mr. Wells advised that he is working on a plan and will present his proposal to the Board at their next meeting. It will be important to put thought into the Work Plan and assure that the Plan covers all areas of curriculum. Mr. Wells advised that as part of the planning for the re-opening of school, a virtual academy was created in a very short timeframe. The September meeting will include discussion of the Work Plan, including soliciting more ‘voices’ (teacher, parent, and student input) to assure that ‘checks and balances’ are in place. Mrs. Pompei voiced concern that since January 2020, the ball has been dropped on many items. Mrs. Pompei expressed that the Curriculum Committee see presentations at each meeting, but that the Committee is not involved in any improvements. Mr. Wells agrees that most schools can improve curriculum, and that true improvement requires much input and feedback. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding the possibility of the Mission/Vision/Strategic Planning initiative, equity audits etc, being incorporated into the Curriculum Committee Work Plan. Mr. Wells recommends a five year plan that is well mapped out, and suggested that the BUUSD be more strategic with planning. Implementing curriculum improvements takes much time. Mr. Wells would like to see more strategic planning. Mrs. Pompei will e-mail the Work Plan to Committee Members. Mrs. Pompei advised that at one point, each school had its own Mission/Vision/Strategic Goals document and suggested that the individual schools’ documents be shared with the Committee. Mr. Wells does not believe he is in possession of those documents, and will hold discussion on this item at the Board meeting. Mr. Wells stressed that all of the schools’ curriculum needs to be aligned (Pre-k – 12). The Annual Work Plan will be added to the September agenda.

## **6. Old Business**

None.

## **7. Other Business**

None.

## **8. Items for Future Agenda**

- Hybrid / Virtual Learning Update (September and October)
- Annual Work Plan
- Anti-racism Curriculum in Our Schools – including plans for an equity audit (future agenda – month to be announced)

**9. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items**

The next meeting is Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

**10. Adjournment**

**The Committee Agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*