

**AMITY REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING
DISTRICT PRESENTATION ROOM
April 1, 2009, 5:00 PM**

Minutes

Please note: These minutes have not been approved by the Curriculum Committee.

Members in attendance: Joe Abbatiello, Julie Altman, Dr. John Brady, Charles Britton, Diane Crocco, Dr. Richard Dellinger, Rita Gedansky, Thomas Hurley, Mary Raiola, Robert Slie, Sheila Wycinowski

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Julie Altman, at 5:00 p.m. in the District Office.

Tom Hurley made a motion to approve the minutes of October 30th, Julie Altman seconded the motion. The minutes of October 30, 2008 were approved.

Discussion and Possible Action on Proposal for Community Service at Amity High School

Dr. Britton discussed a proposal for a Community Service Graduation Incentive Program. Students would complete 100 hours over a four year period commencing in their freshman year of high school. A student completing 100 hours would receive a high school diploma with "Service Distinction," a notation on their academic transcript that they earned "Service Distinction" and a letter from the high school principal recognizing them as a student who has earned "Service Distinction." Students would attend an orientation outlining program expectations. Students would be responsible for documenting their service hours. A guidance counselor and the Career Center Services will run the program and support students. Next year will be a pilot year, prorating the hours of service for current Amity High School students enrolled in the program.

Much discussion ensued with regard to incentives for students and current credit now given for service. Also noted was the Connecticut State Department of Education proposed community service as part of the new high school redesign. Dr. Britton will continue to work out the details.

Tom Hurley made a motion to approve, Diane Crocco seconded. Motion approved. The Board of Education will review the proposal.

Update on Life Arts at Amity Middle Schools

Mr. Slie noted a broad-based committee has been working on a proposal to expand the depth of the program and to provide for student choice based on a survey of students and faculty. The new proposal provides for a new structure (45 day cycle) and a new schedule for students. He noted the new schedule will limit study halls for students but allow seventh grade students to have Academic Success everyday. Eighth grade students will have Academic Success every other day. The new structure will provide more opportunity for students to experience band, choir, strings, general music and Mandarin Chinese. The eighth grade program will provide students with new elective choices.

Students currently are signing up for this new schedule and the changes have been communicated to parents. He also noted there are no staffing implications. Much discussion ensued with regard to student choice and music.

Other side benefits of the new structure include:

- A. Common grade level planning and preparation time
- B. Same team meeting time daily
- C. More time for co-teachers and their counterparts to meet and plan lessons
- D. Minimal study halls
- E. More periods and potential for students receiving support services

Findings of NEASC Report – Amity High School

Dr. Britton outlined the NEASC progress reporting process. Overall, the report was positive. He noted one of the recommendations centered around providing students with the least restrictive environment. Currently, some level 4 classes at Amity High School are comprised of over 50% special education students, which is unacceptable according to State guidelines. Presently, we have six levels at Amity High School. Next year Dr. Britton will eliminate level four. Dr. Britton outlined resources he will use to support teachers and students to prepare for this change. Teachers will be provided with professional development training, curriculum writing dollars, and other such supports in order to facilitate this change. Much discussion ensued with regard to leveling /tracking. Dr. Britton will present an executive summary of the highlights of the NEASC report in the near future.

District Global Audit, Amity District Grades 7-12

Sheila Wycinowski presented the District Global Audit created to address the current Board of Education goal. A broad-based committee completed the audit based on student attributes outlined in “Student Attributes and Benchmarks for a Global Society.” Mrs. Wycinowski reviewed the Amity indicators and noted the recommendations and commendations developed by the committee based on the benchmarks outlined “Student Attributes and Benchmarks for a Global Society.”

Diane Crocco made a motion to approve, Rita Gedansky seconded. Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

Discussion and Possible Action on, and Participation in Cultural Intelligence Research Project

Dr. Brady asked the Committee to support the Cultural Intelligence Research Project survey. This is a 10-15 minute survey which would be administered at the middle schools. This survey will support our efforts outlined in the Global Audit. The Curriculum Committee approved participation in this research study. Dr. Brady noted he will receive the results from the project managers and also be provided with a summary of the results. Diane Crocco made a motion to approve the participation in the survey, Rita Gedansky seconded the motion. The motion carried.

School Climate Project Middle School Pilot

Dr. Dellinger discussed a recent professional development session he attended entitled the “School Climate Project” by the Dickon Pownall-Gray Foundation. The project addresses school climate/bullying in schools. Dr. Dellinger has invited Dickon Pownall-Gray to present to the middle school leadership on April 22nd at 2:45 p.m. in the District Offices. Dr. Dellinger invited the members of the Curriculum Committee to attend the session on the 22nd. The Committee discussion followed with regard to bullying and school climate. Currently, few schools are involved in the project. The cost for our middle schools would be approximately \$5,250.

Dr. Brady noted Project Choice funds would be used to fund this initiative, if piloted. Currently, we have a character education program in both middle schools. He noted the survey results would allow us to address school climate issues. Ms. Altman mentioned we should explore other school climate surveys.

Other

Mrs. Wycinowski noted there is a need for the Curriculum Committee to review and approve the revised Technology Plan. It was decided the Committee would convene on May 6th at 5:00 p.m. to review the Technology Plan.

Diane Crocco made a motion to adjourn, Rita Gedansky seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Wycinowski,
Director of Curriculum & Staff Development

SFW/bam