

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING**
BUUSD Central Office and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
June 22, 2021 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Renee Badeau, Chair (BT)
Alice Farrell, Vice-Chair (BC)
Tim Boltin, (BC)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mary Ellen Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Parker
Sonya Spaulding

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Flanders Karen Fredericks Josh Howard Sue Paxman Terry Reil

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Ms. Badeau, called the Tuesday, June 22, 2021, BUUSD Curriculum Committee meeting to order at 5:34 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

There were no changes to the Agenda.
Ms. Badeau reviewed the ‘Meeting Norms’ as listed at the end of the Agenda.
It was noted that video access to the meeting is not working for all individuals. It is hoped that this issue will be resolved prior to the Board Meeting on 06/24/21.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes -

4.1 April 27, 2021 Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2021 BUUSD Curriculum Committee Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Review of Grant Expenditures 2021 – 2022

Ms. Simmons advised that the BUUSD is in the process of looking at Federal Grants, part of which involves reviewing the Recovery Plan, the Vision, Mission, and Strategic Planning Plan, and the Transition to All In-person Learning Plan. The Business Office and Ms. Simmons have been working closely to coordinate the effort so that resources can be maximized. The Consolidated Federal Grant is written prior to the ESSER grant. Grant planning also involved gathering community in-put, including feedback from the Design Team, the Barre 35 Recovery Planning Team, and the Equity Team. The Grants include four focus areas: Student Achievement, Student Engagement, Social/Emotional Support/Health & Wellness/Equity, and Capital Improvements. There is data to support each of the sections. The total Consolidated Federal Grant is \$1,689,058 (which is lower than last year’s grant of \$2,373,069). This year, all three buildings are considered Title I schools and all are included in the grant. Ms. Simmons advised that she received a large report, citing multiple reasons for the reductions. One of the largest reasons is that the free/reduced lunch population is down, but it was noted that the ‘count’ does not accurately reflect the number of students who qualify. Only families who return the required paperwork can be included in the count, and many families did not submit the required paperwork. This may be due to the availability of free lunches for all students, and it is known that many high school students, fearing stigma, do not return forms. Next year it will be important to put a strong emphasis on returning forms, so that the counts will be accurate for the following year. It was noted that the student count for free and reduced was calculated prior to BTEMS being added to the grant. A large part of the grant this year is to gather community input, and there is a formal process for entering feedback on a survey located on the BUUSD web site. In response to a query, it was noted that grant funding cannot be utilized for staff pay increases. The grant

has not been approved yet, but the BUUSD would like to continue working with Great Schools Partnership. A recent feedback form reflects very positive feedback regarding the work GSP is performing in the schools.

5.2 Data Reports from Spring Assessments

Karen Fredericks, MTSS Coordinator, (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support), beginning on 07/01/21, will be presenting on this topic. It was noted that the standard protocol is to include copies of all presentations/documents in the Committee packet. Ms. Fredericks will forward the information to Jess Adams and Josh Allen, for posting of an addendum. Ms. Fredericks began the presentation which included an overview of the BUUSD Assessment Framework (local benchmark assessments are performed 3 times per year – STAR 360 for Math and ELA). Additional local assessments are also performed throughout the year, as well as SBAC testing, which is state-wide testing. These assessments are used to gather data, which drives curriculum and instruction. Ms. Simmons advised regarding where the detailed assessment framework can be located on the BUUSD website. Ms. Fredericks advised that there is a strong focus on student growth, which involves using data to identify effective strategies, measure student progress, and help build momentum. It was noted that grade 3 is a critical point in students' educational trajectories. The Committee was advised regarding grade levels tested, and information relating to the availability of historical data. Historical data is not available for STAR360 Math assessments because this the first year that this test has been used for math. Summative Data for Reading and Assessments was displayed. It was noted that some specific grades show significant deficits. The data being displayed is not disaggregated (includes regular education students, and students on IEPs). Previous reports do disaggregate data several different ways. It was noted that SBAC testing was not performed during the height of the pandemic (Spring 2020). It was stressed that data is vital to informing curriculum/instruction. Ms. Fredericks advised regarding priorities for using data in the upcoming academic year. Throughout the presentation, Committee and community members offered comments and asked questions, including a query regarding the availability of previous assessment data that can be used to correlate new testing tools with previous testing tools (pre-pandemic vs post pandemic). It was noted that SBAC assessment results were received very recently, and have not yet been thoroughly analyzed.

5.3 Review Curriculum Committee Work Plan for 2021 - 2022

Ms. Simmons provided a brief overview of the process of developing a month by month 'Work Plan', advising that the topics for discussion in September 2021 include; the Assessment Framework, Progressions of learning in Math, Literacy, and Science. Going forward (starting in October), each monthly meeting will include a presentation on one of the allied arts programs (foreign languages, performing arts, physical education, art...). The Work Plan is a living document and is reviewed and updated throughout the year. Assessment results will be presented to the Committee three times a year. It was agreed that the Committee will discuss how to better communicate with parents and students on the topic of Proficiency Based Grading/Report Cards. This communication will be coordinated with the Communications Committee and Communications Department. It was agreed that some sort of information should be shared with parents/students in October. Ms. Simmons and Ms. Badeau will coordinate on this initiative. Alignment of Curriculum (vertically and horizontally) will be added to the Work Plan. Ms. Simmons advised that there are plans to add vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum (K – 12) to the BUUSD website. Ms. Badeau requested that the August meeting include information on the 'baseline' where students are, and how funding will address identified gaps. The Committee does not plan to meet in July. Concern was raised regarding cancellation of the July meeting, at a time when data shows that students are showing significant learning gaps. It was noted that though the Committee does not plan to meet, many BUUSD employees will be working throughout the summer to put plans in place. It was noted that effective 07/01/21; Ms. Simmons title/role will change to 'Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment'. It was requested that information be provided regarding pre and post pandemic assessment data. Ms. Fredericks does have some information relating to this comparison. It was requested that the topic of Social/Emotional/Behavioral well-being be added to a future agenda. It was noted that social/emotional health will be vital when students return to school in the fall.

6. Old Business

6.1 Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan Update

Mrs. Spaulding advised that a full report will be presented (by the Design Team) to the Board on 06/24/21. The Design Team held its last meeting and finalized the Mission/Belief Statements, Vision Statement, and Strategic Goals. Some minor changes may be necessary prior to presentation to the Board. The goals identified in the final report should be discussed by the Committee at a future meeting.

6.2 Equity, Racial Justice and Inclusion Task force Updates

Ms. Simmons advised that a group of individuals created an equity policy. An Anti-racism policy is also in development. These policies were discussed at the 06/21/21 Policy Committee meeting, where it was agreed that additional discussion may be beneficial prior to these policies being developed. The Equity Policy is on the 06/24/21 Board Meeting Agenda (as a 2nd and Final Reading and adoption). Ms. Simmons advised that although student outcomes can't be determined prior to assessments, it is crucial to provide all students with the supports they need, both academically and social/emotionally. In addition to school counselors, it is critical that teachers and other staff be trauma informed and provide supports during the entire school day (classrooms, cafeteria, recess etc.). A community member voiced concern that these policies may be setting up a double standard, and lowering some students' self-esteem (reverse discrimination), and that every student needs to understand that they are responsible for their own success (hard work results in success). Concern was raised regarding the differences between 'equity' and 'equality'. It was clarified that this item is on this evening's agenda, as an update from the Task Force. The Policy itself falls under the Policy Committee and it is believed that the Policy Committee will be following up regarding input they received at their most recent meeting.

6.3 Barre 35 Growing Learners; Closing Gaps

Ms. Simmons advised that the Plan was submitted to and has been approved by, the Agency of Education, though there is still more work to do (in August). The AOE has approved the data points that were submitted for the four listed categories: Student Achievement, Student Engagement, Equity, and Social/Emotional/Health/Wellness.

7. Other Business

None.

8. Items for Future Agendas

Most of the discussion was held under Agenda Item 5.3.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that the Committee will be discussing SBAC results, and that SBAC results will be presented to the Board. The presentation should include historical test results, and a comparison of older results to post-pandemic results. It was noted that administrators will be analyzing the data prior to discussing it at the Committee level. The AOE has advised that this year's SBAC results should be 'used with caution', as assessments were performed towards the end of the pandemic.

The Work Plan has been discussed and an updated, more finalized version will be presented in August.

In response to a query, it was noted that the protocol is to have Agendas and all supporting documentation available seven days in advance of Committee/Board Meetings. Addendums to Agendas should be the exception, not the rule. Timely Agendas are crucial to allow sufficient time for individuals to prepare for meetings.

It was suggested that the web site be modified to have a more obvious link to Board /Committee business (rather than having it located under the 'District' tab).

9. Next Meeting Date

The July 27, 2021 meeting is cancelled.

The next meeting is Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin