

Minutes of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Board of Education  
Regional School District 14 [www.ctreg.org](http://www.ctreg.org)  
November 4, 2013

A meeting of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, November 4, 2013 in the Conference Room at Bethlehem Elementary School, 92 East Street, Bethlehem, Connecticut.

Present were Committee Chair Maryanne Van Aken, Superintendent Jody Goeler, NHS Principal Andrew O'Brien, Director of Instruction Sue Domanico, Alex DeSorbo and BoE clerk Deb Carlton.

The meeting came to order at 6:02 pm and concluded at 7:15 pm

The committee discussed the following:

#### **Selection of Educational Materials:**

Ms. Domanico offered handouts detailing how classroom resources are chosen and what types are used, including anchor textbooks, e-books, internet resources, single topic books, print materials such as journals, articles, and content related trade publications, and videos. Although textbooks are not the main curriculum resource any longer, resources are still needed to buy a wider variety of materials for classroom use. Textbooks have become very expensive, she said, and are designed to be obsolete within six years. She also offered a handout on choosing materials in line with CCSS and, specifically, anchor standards for reading.

Ms. Van Aken felt the handouts would be valuable to addressing audience questions about textbooks, and Mr. Goeler further suggested posting it online.

#### **Progress of the Economic Development Committee**

Mr. Goeler has met twice with this committee and is working on ways to better prepare students for the business world and to familiarize them with concepts like accounting and marketing, so they understand how business works, what it means to make a profit, etc.

Southington, he said, is 6 years ahead in this effort and we will look at their model for courses of study and tracks for students to gain applied skills. Mr. DeSorbo has expressed interest in this idea, though not through the WBA, and Bill Joyce was also identified as a contact person. Much discussion followed about how students become interested in a line of work, and many do because they know someone who does that job, so exposing them to real world examples will be key to the success of this effort.

#### **Proposal for PE Credit through Athletics**

Mr. Goeler explained a roadblock to this concept is that statutory language from the state strictly limits or even forbids awarding PE credit for athletic team participation. PE is designed around teaching life-long fitness, long after participation on a team is over, and the PE program is a planned one that should be of benefit to all students.

Ms. Van Aken explained that she had been asked by a parent if this would be possible and was just asking the question. Mr. Goeler is interested in ensuring that our PE programs are fulfilling the goal of teaching students to take an active role in keeping themselves healthy.

**Other business:**

The group also reviewed leveling of classes, and Mr. O'Brien indicated this discussion continues at his school. There is ongoing concern that students avoid or are dissuaded from exploring electives for fear their GPA will be negatively affected by a lower level course. Mr. O'Brien reviewed a list of courses for which the L3 designation has been removed. He explained the concern among faculty over which electives should receive an L1 designation and which should not. Many would like to see all electives at an L2. Mr. Goeler felt the question is what determines the level. He would like to see a leveling system that motivates students to stretch. Mr. O'Brien would like to see an end to weighting grades altogether and is only concerned with the quality of instruction. Ms. Domanico added that, since each school weights differently, it is not a meaningful criteria for colleges any longer. She also spoke about a course in personal finance as a graduation requirement in many school systems and Ms. Van Aken agreed this would be a great requirement for R14 students. Ms. Domanico indicated it would be interesting to look at how other districts have handled this issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Maryanne Van Aken*

Maryanne Van Aken  
Chair, Planning/Personnel Committee  
Regional School District 14 Board of Education