

Minutes of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg.org
February 3, 2014

A meeting of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, February 3, 2014 in the Central Office Conference Room, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present were Committee Chair Maryanne Van Aken, Janet Morgan, Charles Cosgriff (5:25 pm), Superintendent Jody Goeler, Director of Finance/Operations Wayne McAllister, NHS Principal Andrew O'Brien, Director of Instruction Sue Domanico, Vic Losure, reporter Mike Preato, and BoE clerk Deb Carlton.

The meeting came to order at 5:00 pm and concluded at 6:05 pm

The committee discussed the following:

Lacrosse at NHS:

Mr. Losure and Mr. O'Brien provided copies of a powerpoint presentation outlining their proposal to bring Lacrosse to NHS, possibly beginning as a club sport and progressing to JV and eventually a Varsity sport if interest can be demonstrated and financing secured in the budget. Mr. Losure gave the committee a history of the sport; an overview of the basics of the game; growth of the sport at the youth, high school, collegiate, post-college and professional levels; growth as a high school sport compared to other non-traditional team sports; discussed safety issues, rationale for adding a lacrosse program at NHS, and how to get started. He spoke of the strong connection, in skill sets, between lacrosse and other high school sports and considers it a desirable sport for athletes not currently committed to other spring sports. As a Woodbury Park and Rec sponsored team, Nonnewaug Lacrosse is preparing for its 6th season for boys and 4th season for girls, and close to 20 male and female NHS students play each year. Coaches are in place and equipment is available. Mr. Losure's timeline for transitioning the team from Park and Rec to NHS includes a survey of NHS students to assess interest, with the hope of having the team funded through the R14 budget for the 2015 spring season.

Ms. Van Aken requested that Mr. Losure meet again with the committee in March with a total budget number, and the survey results. Ms. Morgan will want to see costs as a club sport and as a JV team. Mr. McAllister added that the budget numbers should include cost for officials, uniforms, transportation, etc., and Mr. Goeler wants indirect costs from Mike Molzon for such things as field use. Most of all, he wants to create programs kids want to be involved in. Mr. Losure noted that participation numbers, particularly for girls, has been strong and he will be able to demonstrate interest. Ms. Van Aken also asked for a plan showing typical progression from a club to a varsity sport. She wants the public to know up front what to expect, and is also interested to know what Bill Nemeč's thoughts are about adding this sport. Mr. O'Brien believes he supports it if the students want it and so long as it doesn't negatively impact other spring sports.

Mr. Losure will be interested to know, if lacrosse is a club sport this spring, will the district allow parents to help out by lining the field, for instance.

District Assessments

Ms. Domanico offered a handout regarding the District Assessment Plan and told the committee that principals had also sent home a letter outlining this information. She explained that the Spring 2014 field test is large scale and still under development. CT has played an active role in the process of assessment planning and this work will benefit students and teachers. She outlined the "who/what/when" for each of three testing areas: State, district and school level. Faculty have all experienced the practice test. She pointed out there is no accountability for any schools this year; it is a no fault test season that will help the state to account for all possible errors. She is trying to quell anxiety in the district by making this known.

All this is being developed under a state contract; there is no cost to the district. Once fully operational, in 2015, the stakes go up. She described the district level assessments we are choosing to use, and reviewed the school level assessments being used in the schools. She will seek to eliminate redundancy in testing and wants to use a few high level assessments that give maximum information with the least lost teaching time.

She reviewed a Smarter Balance fact vs. fiction handout and also offered a handout on assessment terms and their definitions. She noted that consistency and clarity is needed when faculty use these terms. All these resources are being posted on the district website under "district assessment" in order to be as transparent as possible and to show that we are not simply jumping through hoops.

Ms. Van Aken wondered if any sort of final exam exists at WMS to prepare the grade 8 students for mid-term and final exams at the high school – so this concept is not so daunting for them.

Ms. Domanico explained that WMS has its own common assessments used to create a portfolio of student work to assist high school counselors in placing them accurately. There is no culminating test assessing "what do you remember?" This is only one type of test, and is being more often replaced with tests that demonstrate how students can apply what they have learned, more like a performance task.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryanne Van Aken

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