

Minutes of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg.org
December 16, 2013

A meeting of the Planning/Personnel Committee of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, December 16, 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, NHS faculty members Taryn Fernandez, Jessica Piel and Ray Robillard; and BoE clerk Deb Carlton.

The meeting came to order at 5:00 pm and concluded at 5:55 pm

The committee heard about new course offerings at NHS.

Ms. Domanico began by explaining the planning that goes into developing new courses, including consideration of logistics, as well as philosophical and programmatic concerns, whether an existing course could be modified, costs, teacher certifications, whether the decision is driven by student need, and whether it is sustainable. Mr. Goeler added that a coherent framework is essential, as well as ties to the Common Core.

The faculty members provided a powerpoint presentation, beginning with Ms. Fernandez who reviewed the work of the leveling committee and its attention to criteria used for assigning levels to courses. They want to ensure our practice does not hinder students in the college application process and are looking at how they can change the process to allow students to take courses of interest to them. Survey results will be analyzed after the holiday break. Ms. Fernandez showed the effect of weighting on GPA and why the committee is discussing lowering the differential.

Ms. Piel discussed the English department's proposal to add AP Language and Composition, which will focus on non-fiction, rhetorical strategies, synthesis, evaluation and argumentation. She offered a course description and indicated the course would be offered as a Junior honors and Junior college prep class with teacher recommendation.

Mr. Robillard discussed two additional math offerings. He explained that 4 years of math is required for graduation and he is concerned that a number of students are not prepared for a 4th year. He proposes a 2 year sequence for Freshmen and Sophomores called Algebra 1A and 1B, two full year courses at 1 credit per year. This would better position students for success in Algebra II. He proposes starting in 2014-15 and would need to write curriculum during the summer of 2014. He also proposed a consumer math, 1 credit course, which Mr. Goeler likened to a personal finance, real world, applications based math course, and another pathway to gain 4 years of math for graduation.

Mr. O'Brien presented a proposal from the Science department which needs more options for college prep students. They propose 4 courses, half year 0.5 credit offerings: Intro Chemistry (instead of Chemistry L3), Conceptual Physics, Astronomy, and Zoology. Changes to AP Physics were also discussed. First year Physics would include AP Physics/Algebra based and conceptual Physics. Second year is AP Physics and Algebra II based.

It was decided that moving forward on the following courses was merited: AP Language and Composition, Algebra 1A and 1B, Anatomy as an L1, AP Physics. Discussion is needed on the consumer math course, as well as the Science electives.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryanne Van Aken

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