

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES
Meeting of March 1, 2012

PRESENT: Larry Breech, Cheryl Kessler, Susan Myers, Frank Suchwala, Kathee Stark

The meeting began at 6:00 pm in the high school library. Approximately twenty parents and two students were present to discuss field trips for grades K, 1, 3, and 5. Mr. Fetterman was also present for this portion of the meeting. Trisha Whispell used a power point presentation to introduce the merits of field trips for students. This was followed by a lengthy discussion. Parental concerns included:

- Students work hard all year, and look forward to the trips.
- They should have been notified when the trips were cancelled.
- Students believe it is unfair for some to have a trip and others do not.
- They believe the trips are good for all students, but those who misbehave during the year should not be allowed to attend.
- If the Board had issues with the trips, they should have told the teachers what needed to be corrected.

Parents were informed that the Board had addressed very specific concerns when trips needed to be reexamined. For example, while making change is a valuable skill, it was not seen as a good use of educational time for students to spend over an hour of a three hour trip in the gift shop. The Board members stressed that the decisions on field trips were made on the basis of educational value. The cost of the trips was only a small part of the decision process. Mr. Fetterman will look for the documentation of field trips from the 10-11 school year. The Board will consider the request for reinstatement of field trips at the above-mentioned grades at their next meeting, March 12.

The committee then discussed revision of the policy on graduation requirements. As per their previous discussions and those with the entire Board, it is recommended that physical education credits be increased to 0.5 for each course. While the credit change would occur for next year, the overall requirement will be phased in over time. The committee also recommends inclusion of language which encourages all students to participate in an online course prior to graduation. This change would be effective for the Class of 2016.

Kathee indicated that eight students had lunch at the District Office, and they talked about the 1:1 Computing initiative. The committee was given a summary of all the discussion. Students were very positive, and they would like to see the program expanded. Kathee will obtain financial information on this. Faculty opinions will be researched. Other issues will be professional development for teachers, as well as the use of computers in the classrooms of all faculty members. The online courses were discussed, and the Comprehensive Planning committees will be asked to consider appropriate models for the integration of online courses into the curriculum of the schools.

In other matters, the committee recommends inclusion of a Board member on the athletic interviewing committee. They also recommend that the spring all-sports banquet be held with the district paying for students, but parents and children must pay for their meals. A request was made to donate money to help a needy family pay for lunches. The members prefer that the donation be given to a needy family in the specific church.

The meeting ended with an update on the status of furloughs. As of the time of the meeting, the enrollment for Kindergarten was 37. This is only two sections and will result in the furlough of at least one classroom teacher at the elementary level. Teachers who are subject to furlough will be informed next week. Action will be taken by the Board at the March 26 meeting. This is after any retirements have been submitted and prior to the deadlines set by law.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathee Stark

HIGHLIGHTS OF CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING—IU 16
February 29, 2012

Standards Aligned System (SAS)

- There are two online courses available for teachers re: Danielson model. They are under Teacher Tools and PD Center.

PA School Report Card

- It is likely that this will be ready by fall. It will include financial information such as cost per pupil.

Keystone Project-Based Assessments

- Overview at March 7 IU meeting with Field Test in April

PSSA/Common Core

- All teachers of students taking PSSA-M are to complete the survey.
- Last year of PSSA-M is 2013 (at this time).
- Common Core Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content are due out any day.
- CC aligned PSSA—Grades 3-5 will be field tested in 2013 and operational in 2014, while grades 6-8 will be field tested in 2014 and operational in 2015.
- Reading and writing are going to be consolidated into English Language Arts.
- Science will continue in grades 4 and 8.
- Students currently in grade 3 will be taking revised PSSAs.
- There are rumors of PA asking the feds to eliminate grade 11 PSSA in 2013, but there are also rumors of PSSA proficiency levels being frozen, upon approval of USDOE.

High School Feedback Reporting

- 261 districts signed up for this
- Will eventually be put into Comprehensive Plan

Teacher Evaluation System (Teacher Effectiveness)

- Uses Danielson Framework and is a highly collaborative model.
- All principals and other evaluators will need to pass a test.
- Principals will identify issues for improvement, and the teachers will go to SAS and develop a plan for excellence.

Comprehensive Plan

- Online tool training is set for May 4.
- A sample school action plan is available—it is 9 pages.

Student Meeting
March 1, 2012

1:1 Computing

- The students like the initiative and enjoy having their own computers. One of the students chose not to participate and indicated that she wished she had done so.
- They suggested better anti-virus protection on the laptops.
- The track pad is too sensitive, but some indicated they just turned it off.
- They would like to be able to access their school files from home.
- They did not indicate a preference for different hardware, such as a Nook or Kindle.
- They would like to see a pilot of online textbooks.
- They suggested that the program be expanded to all juniors and seniors, as well as honors students in grades 9 and 10.

Courses

- They like the addition of AP European History.
- Several found the library time to be of great value for projects and to complete the extra work of AP courses.
- Rumors surrounding electives were clarified—unless there is low enrollment or a conflict, students should expect to have the range of options continue (except Keystone issues).
- They recommend that Physics be 1.5 credits and scheduled accordingly.
- They agree that there needs to be more class time for students as they prepare for the Keystone exams.

Schedule

- They would like to see Meeting period more often, possibly once a week through shortened periods.
- PSSA remediation should be scheduled for last period, with the seniors allowed to leave at 2:15.

Miscellaneous

- They like the idea of a yearly retreat for each class to build camaraderie and reduce bullying, etc.
- They like the Grab-and-Go breakfast, but they would like more ham, egg, and cheese sandwiches.