

BOARD CURRICULUM COMMITTEE Minutes of April 29, 2013

PRESENT: Larry Breech, Cheryl Kessler, Susan Myers, Frank Suchwala, Kathee Stark. There were also more than fifty guests.

The meeting began at 6:30 pm. Several of those in attendance had questions or comments. The topics included: LCCC courses and demotion of our teachers, the offering of a retirement incentive, lack of Anatomy/Physiology, need for co-teaching, online courses as replacement for teachers, and the need to retain faculty for electives.

The agenda items began with a review of the proposed Differentiated Supervision Plan. This is based on guidelines provided by PDE and a format developed by curriculum coordinators in IU 16. This will place most teachers on a 4-year rotation of formal observation with opportunities for action research, peer coaching, or portfolio development in the intervening years. The committee had been given copies of minutes of the Faculty Curriculum Committee which was held last week. There will be another meeting of that committee to finish a discussion of 1:1 computing and teacher concerns.

The committee was updated on scheduling at the high school. The only courses (with the requests in parentheses) being deleted are:

Office Competencies (1)	Environmental Science 12 (1)
Boutique Arts (3)	Parenting (2)
Economics (2)	

Biology (27) and Chemistry (32) will be two sections each due to the nature of laboratory activities and the need for teachers to be able to interact with students and encourage them to synthesize information. We expect to offer Anthropology (6) this year, and while only three have signed up for Accounting I and II, every effort is going to be made to offer these courses. The committee also reviewed the key slides of the presentation on furloughs/demotions.

The discussion then turned to LCCC courses. In response to questions about using our faculty, everyone present was informed that a request had been made to all the teachers asking for those who had at least 15 hours of content courses beyond the bachelor's level who might be interested in teaching as an adjunct faculty. Six people have indicated an interest, but there is some uncertainty about the appropriateness of the certifications of some. They will be evaluated by LCCC. Decisions on the exact courses to be offered also need to be made.

A representative of LCCC is willing to administer a placement test to all students who have not taken SATs. She is also willing to meet with students and parents. Students were initially informed of the availability of these courses at the start of the course selection process. Generally, these will be 11th and 12th graders. Committee members were also provided with the Executive Summary of a study in Texas on the statistically significant likelihood of a student graduating from college who had at least one dual enrollment course while in high school. There were concerns about transferability to other colleges and universities. There is a function on the PDE website which allows anyone to determine the transferability of a course (PA-TRAC). College while still in high school is one of the categories on the PA School Profile which will be 15% of every teacher's overall evaluation rating.

To make these post-secondary opportunities available to students in a district with increased poverty may be alleviated through the use of scholarship funds. Last year the district received about \$22,000 in funds from an estate and were only designated for scholarships. The committee recommends using these to help defray the costs of in-school courses for students. It was also mentioned that the district might wish to consider establishing a fund as a 501C3.

The committee discussed the 1:1 computing initiative. We currently have laptops in grades 11 and 12 and are operating a pilot for the use of iPads at 6th grade. The expectations for Common Core are that 4th grade students are going to be required to do research and produce projects. Technology needs to be as much a part of school as paper and pencils. Pricing for iPads 4-12 with carts for K-3 will be prepared. This will include training by content teachers.

PDE will be releasing K-12 curricula for math, ELA, and science this summer. The possibility of offering some teachers time to work on these curricula this summer was discussed. Their work would include a stipend. A proposal will be prepared, and this will be discussed with the Faculty Curriculum Committee. A Summer Learning Camp program has not been offered for a few years. It was suggested that we need to offer this again. Mr. Fetterman has teachers who would be interested in this project. This is not summer school for students who failed classes, but rather a chance to reinforce skills in a different environment. The district will prepare specifics for approval while moving forward in the planning.

The committee reviewed a job description for gifted education teacher(s). It is based on the proficient level of a new rubric for this position. This will be brought to the Board for approval at the next meeting. There will be a meeting of parents of gifted students tomorrow night. A report will be given at the next meeting.

In response to a question at the beginning of the meeting about finances, it was explained that there have been virtually no changes to the budget since it was originally prepared. Since then, we have had the governor present his budget, and there have been meetings with state legislators concerning their expectations. In addition, we do not necessarily spend all the funds which are in the budget. Therefore, a deficit of \$ 300,000-400,000 is manageable. A committee member made a request for an update on cyber school expenditures.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathee Stark