

Curriculum Committee
Minutes of June 2, 2014

PRESENT: Larry Breech, Cheryl Kessler, Susan Myers, Frank Suchwala, Kathee Stark. GUEST: Karen Sullivan

The meeting began at 6:00 pm with a discussion of changes in Policy 217 on graduation requirements which are required by the passage of Chapter 4. There are required and optional changes. The committee recommends that students be given the opportunity to test out of courses for which Keystone exams exist. This will be incorporated into the policy which will be sent to the Board for approval.

While the Graduation Project is no longer required, it is felt that the project offers students a wide range of educational experiences related to English Language Arts as well as the new guidance program statute. There are some minor typographical errors, but there are structural changes which need to be made. The committee recommends that this be Pass/Fail, rather than something for which students will receive a grade. They also recommend that the project presentations be during the first semester of the senior year, thus allowing sufficient time for a student to revise the project, if needed. The name of Penn Tech needs to be revised, and the committee members indicated that they believe that mentors be assigned and remain with the student for at least grades 10 – 12. These mentors should be from a subject area related to the career interest of the student. The committee then reviewed the policy about the ACE program. This needs to be revised to include in-school opportunities such as the Penn College NOW program. This will also be sent to the Board.

The new reading materials for grades K – 3 are already here. There will be professional development on using the materials prior to the end of school. There will be follow-up training in the fall. During the last Board meeting, the question was asked about reading in grades 4-6. Members of the committee were given a copy of Module 1 for grade 4. This is part of the ELA curriculum which has been developed by teachers across the state. Members were also given copies of Lexile tables, and the nexus of the two was discussed. The committee affirmed the plan.

The committee also discussed the use of online resources for summer reading assignments, as well as the purchase of Tech books (online science K-6) and IXL access for math. We are still awaiting the final data on BrainWare SAFARI, but it is suggested that the third graders use the software, and fourth graders use it to reinforce the effects.

Copies of two modules of the model Pre-K curriculum were distributed. The committee is concerned about the level of knowledge that is required of students to be successful. There needs to be a meeting with day-care and nursery schools in the area, and the committee recommends that a Pre-K program be opened this fall. Preliminary work to determine

requirements of the state funding and determine other costs will begin immediately. Research will also begin on the exact steps needed for the district to utilize the advantages that can come with a 501C3 designation.

The committee was updated on a revised NJHS selection system which will begin with evaluation of grades and character prior to issuance of the forms. The elementary teachers are going to be using Planbook.com next year. It is recommended that some of the book purchases be put on hold until the teachers can review resource materials available on iTunes U. It was noted that CSIU is part of the development process in which PDE is modeling materials after those created in Texas. Another concern was workshops for which teachers receive equipment as part of their participation. It is felt that when the district pays for the conference, workshop or course, the equipment should be retained as district property.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathee Stark