

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT

Curriculum Committee of the
Trumbull Board of Education

Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 21, 2023, 8:30 a.m.
Trumbull High School Main Office Conference room

Minutes

- I. Call to Order/Introduction- The meeting was called to order at 8:33am.

Members Present

M. Petitti, BOE Curriculum Committee Chair

J.McNamee, BOE Member

L.Nuland, BOE Member

S.Iwanicki, Ed.D, administrative designee

- II. Public Comment- No public comment was received.
- III. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting June 15, 2023. This item was postponed until the special meeting on September 29th, 2023.
- IV. New Business-- Ms. McNamee motioned to table the elementary curricula to our next special meeting on September 29. Mrs. Petitti seconded.
- a. **Curriculum Guide Approval- Astronomy Grade 11/12**-Department Chair Tom Edwards presented on behalf of the Science Department. He shared that they are offering one section in the Fall and the Spring of Astronomy. They predict it will grow with time. Mr. Albers who wrote the curriculum, has experience running planetariums. The course allows students to experience the NGSS standards and go beyond a general belief “we’re just looking at stars,” to the more complex scientific relationships as well as mathematics concepts which apply. Ms. McNamee moved to recommend the curriculum for Astronomy to be approved by the full Board. Mrs. Petitti seconded.
- b. **Curriculum Guide Approval- Forensic Science Grade 11/12** Department Chair Tom Edwards also presented on behalf of the Science Department. Forensic Science is popular with the students and there are three sections of the course currently running in the Fall and three predicted for the Spring. Jordan Miller who wrote the course shared with the Science Department that he will be setting up mock crime scenes in one of the storage rooms for the purpose of study. Ms. McNamee asked if the course was mostly Biology, but Mr. Edwards shared that there are a lot of different Sciences included. Ms. McNamee asked if THS could offer more Science electives and Mrs. Petitti added that it would be nice as well. Mr.

Manuel shared that the course has brought up conversations in Business Education in relation to Forensic Accounting. Ms. McNamee moved to recommend the curriculum for Forensic Science to be approved by the full Board. Mrs. Petitti seconded.

- c. **Curriculum Guide Approvals- ACP & Honors Italian 3-** World Language teacher Maria Colón and Department Chair Susanna Lavorgna-Lye presented that the curriculum guides for Italian 3 were updated to prepare students for Advanced Placement as well as to correlate with the state Seal of Biliteracy requirements. Speaking, reading, writing, and listening are interwoven into the units. Ms. McNamee asked about the Seal of Biliteracy; it was shared that over 100 students have earned their seal with increasing numbers each year. Students also received a special seal they can wear at graduation if earned. It has proved to be a motivator for the students. It is currently offered in French, Italian, Spanish, and Latin. The test is given during the students' language period at this point. The department is exploring offering it to speakers of other languages as well. Ms. McNamee moved to recommend the curriculum for ACP & Honors Italian 3 to be approved by the Board. Mrs. Petitti seconded.
- d. **New Text Approval: Group Seminar - Grade 9 and 10--Douglas, Julia, Beland, Kathy, and R. Keith Matheny. *School Connect 4.0. School Connect, 2023.*** Principal of B-House, Mrs. Ellen Spark, who also has a background in counseling, shared that THS has been looking for ways to support students in groups that might benefit from additional support in the high school but are not identified as a student through traditional methods. Middle school educators made recommendations for incoming ninth graders and letters were sent to families about the opportunity. The course is in lieu of a student hall, and it is aimed to build real life skills for students. It has been well received. THS has not had students drop it, and it has been going well. Last year, they had piloted the concept during homeroom, but the time was too short. They envision a second semester for grade 9 and 10, identified by looking at referrals to Early Intervention. Mr. Mecca noted that the course allows him to use his background as a general education social worker. The course is capped at 12 and currently has 10 in each section and 5 in the upperclassmen at risk. Mrs. McNamee noted that there are a lot of interesting modules and the text provides a lot of resources such as modules that focus on academic preparation, working in groups, and social emotional learning—some of which could be useful in Advisory as well. Mrs. Petitti commented that Module 6: Building Relationships & Resolving Conflicts would be really important for middle schoolers coming up. She shared that, in her experience, sometimes it is this component that stops them from doing well in academics. Mr. Mecca agreed. Ms. McNamee added that Module 2: Improving Communication is also so needed. She furthered that many of the activities could be used in Advisory such as the lessons on toxic relationships. Mr. Mecca furthered that Advisory doesn't have enough time to cover some of the content with enough depth. Ms. Nuland observed that the skills within the text are really needed and the on-line text has a high level of usability. Ms. McNamee asked about the element of privacy which must be important in the class and Mr. Mecca furthered that it is an important aspect of the class, but he is also experiencing that the heterogenous nature of the class has been helping to build relationships. Ms. McNamee moved to recommend the text *School Connect 4.0* to be moved forward for full Board approval. Mrs. Nuland seconded.

- e. **Curriculum Guide Approval- Unified Physical Education- Grades 9-12** Department Chair Vincent D'Scala and educator Ms. Nitsche presented the curriculum which Mrs. Nitsche has been wanted to put together for four years; she is proud to bring forward. It was inspired by the middle school programming. The course aims to combine general and special education students in a unified physical education course. The students all take a leadership component in the course. Paraprofessionals also play a role. The course uses standards that allow students to demonstrate their mastery. For example, can they use they apply their strength to complete a push-up? Modeling and demonstration between peers are a large component of the course. Ms. McNamee commented that the course integration helps to show that all students have different strengths; students can also help one another and participate. She theorized that students may even want to pursue a career in a similar field as a result of experiences in the course. Ms. McNamee moved to recommend the curriculum for Unified Physical Education to be approved by the full Board. Mrs. Petitti seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39.