

**Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Board Curriculum Committee**

Minutes of September 7, 2023

Ms. Burnett called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the FNSBSD Administrative Center boardroom, 520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, AK.

Members Present:

Leslie Greenfield
Loa Hubbard
Matt Mertes

Devra Norling
Renee Peterson

Nonvoting Members:

Chane Beam
Melissa Burnett

Members Absent:

Suzanne Richards (excused)
Alexis Walker

Guests:

Tara DeVaughn
Andrea Wade

Committee Support:

Jen Morgan

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Norling moved to accept the September 7, 2023, agenda; Ms. DeVaughn seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Norling moved to accept the minutes from the April 20, 2023, meeting; Ms. DeVaughn seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Ms. Burnett informed the committee that the 2023-24 meeting schedule, committee information sheet, and a quick guide to the Alaska Open Meetings Act and Robert's Rules of Order were provided for them in their packet. Mr. Beam briefly went over each of these documents, along with the policies and Administrative Regulations about the committee.

CURRICULUM PROCESS

Mr. Beam explained the curriculum process is on a six-year cycle, and what that looks like for each stage. He mentioned the admin team brings curriculum plans to this committee that are developed by teachers and community input. He explained the community provides feedback on each draft of the curriculum, and the curriculum writers review the feedback and consider it when writing the next draft. The committee recommends the final draft for approval by the School Board. Mr. Beam informed the committee that this year, the district is revising its Science Curriculum, and beginning the research stage for the Art, Music, and World Language curricula.

Ms. DeVaughn informed the committee that Art, Music, and World Language teachers met on September 1 to discuss if the currently adopted courses are working for teachers, students, and the community, what skills and content we want students to learn, and if there are any courses that should no longer be offered.

Art teachers agreed that the current course offerings are meeting the needs of students, and had conversations around which courses can be stacked well together. They discussed that foundational courses are necessary and are where students should start, and the need for digital art courses. They also discussed the lack of elementary art specialists.

About 67% of music teachers agreed that current courses are meeting students' needs. They discussed the need to shift how courses are structured, and that band, orchestra, and choir are the core courses and should be offered at all schools before other electives are considered.

Four Spanish teachers got together and agreed that the current course offerings are meeting students' needs. They

discussed that high schools are offering Spanish, although other world languages are included in the curriculum, and that it would be nice to see high school Spanish 1 offered at middle schools. They talked about how, when World Language teachers retire, it is hard to replace such a specialized focus (e.g. French, Japanese).

Ms. Norling mentioned that colleges require world language, and students will need this. Ms. Burnett inquired if online course have been considered. Ms. Peterson stated that she knows someone who took online French, and they were unable to have French conversations with other students.

Ms. DeVaughn mentioned that this year a public survey will be sent out for feedback on the Art, Music, and World Languages curricula. Also, during the second semester, the district will begin reviewing new materials.

Ms. Wade informed the committee that CTE will be working on revising the Architecture and Construction curriculum and the Engineering curriculum. They will also start developing Education and Agriculture curricula. Ms. Burnett stated the School Board has discussed a pipeline for Education, and thanked Ms. Wade for working on this.

SCIENCE CURRICULUM

Ms. DeVaughn informed the committee that last year, during the first year of the curriculum process, the district adopted new Science materials; this year, we are revising the curriculum. She then highlight the major changes in draft one, and the following questions that curriculum writers would like feedback on:

- Should we increase the graduation requirement from three to four credits of science?
- Should the list of course options be expanded to include CTE courses?
- Should a literacy focused Life Science course be added to the curriculum?
- Should Honors Biology be replaced with the purchase of Pre-AP Biology?

Ms. DeVaughn then shared a summary of the feedback received from the community and teachers on draft one, and the number of people that approved of the above changes. Science teachers met during professional development on September 1 to discuss the draft curriculum and review all feedback. They decided, based on feedback, to not increase the graduation requirement. Teachers would like more input on the CTE courses before deciding which, if any, should be included in the science course list. Once September 1, the science teachers learned the district is developing a literacy course at the secondary level, and determined a Science literacy course is not the way to go. Also, after learning that Pre-AP Biology cost \$3000 per school and per class, they decided to not replace Honors Biology.

Ms. DeVaughn then went over the middle school curriculum for grades 6-8. She explained that last year, middle school science teachers discussed whether the curriculum should remain domain specific or be integrated. Teachers decided it should remain domain specific, and they wrote draft one on September 1. Draft one contains references to the newly adopted science materials, the Alaska State Standards adopted in 2019, and a recommended order of units. She mentioned that only two people left feedback on the middle school curriculum.

Ms. DeVaughn informed the committee that the curriculum writers will be done making changes to draft two soon, and it will then go out for public comment during the first two weeks of October.

GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

Ms. Burnette thanked Ms. DeVaughn and Ms. Wade for all the information, and stated she is feeling excited about this curriculum this year.

Ms. Norling is excited also. She stated it is nice to see positive changes, and is excited about the agriculture curriculum.

Mr. Beam stated that in the future he will provide a report on the new pilot course Amped on Algebra offered at North Pole High. Ms. Wade stated it might be nice to have a field trip to the school to see what students are doing.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Greenfield moved to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objection or further comment, the meeting was adjourned 7:12 p.m.