

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
POLICY AND CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING**

MINUTES

June 7, 2021

A meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee was held virtually on Monday, June 7, 2021, via Zoom Conferencing. Subcommittee Chairperson, Carly Reich, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:02 p.m.

Present:

Subcommittee: Carly Reich, Chair and Sarah Bullard

School Committee Members and Administrators: Nicky Piper, Tara Thibaudeau; Jonathan Brice, Ed.D., Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent; Mary Ann Carroll, Esq., District Solicitor; Rose Muller, Technology Director;

Guests: Joyelle Greenway, Wayne Lima, Mary Cabral, and Ann Corrado; Diana Campbell, Recording Secretary

I. Approval of Minutes:

A. May 12, 2021

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from May 12, 2021; seconded by Ms. Bullard. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Discussion and/or Possible Action

A. Illustrative Math Curriculum Adoption

Assistant Superintendent Sanna introduced the Math Curriculum for the Middle and High Schools that has been piloted by the District in the past year for approval and to be sent to the full School Committee for its approval so that it can be implemented at the start of the new school year in September. She introduced Mr. Lima and Ms. Greenway to explain the curriculum to the subcommittee.

Mr. Lima explained that the RI Legislature requires that all schools adopt a high quality math curriculum by September 2023. Assistant Superintendent interjected that it is part of the District's Strategic Plan that all teachers have access to a high quality curriculum that is consistent across the District.

Mr. Lima explained the process that RIDE uses to determine if a curriculum is high quality. They use EdReports, a non-profit, independent organization that

uses teams of trained teachers to review various curricula and create a list of programs that it identifies as “Green” (meets all its standards for depth, quality, and usability of instructional materials) that school districts can choose from. The Illustrative Math Curriculum, which was already being used in the District, received a perfect score using EdReports Standards.

The High School has been using Illustrative Math (IM) for a number of years since the inception of Common Core. Ms. Greenway added that the Middle School has been using IM for 3 years, but was not able to formally adopt it due to the COVID situation. They are hoping to do so in September. Illustrative Math offers an accelerated pathway, beginning in the 2nd semester of Grade 6 to prepare students for IM Algebra I in the 8th grade. This ensures that students receive instruction of all standards for grades 6-8 before taking Algebra I. This better aligns the curriculum with the RICAS tests.

Mr. Lima explained that the IM curriculum is a problem-based curriculum. At the high school they are teaching about problem solving first, then the application of the math skills to the problem. Ms. Greenway walked through a typical math lesson.

Superintendent Brice asked how the curriculum assures parents that this is going to work. Ms. Greenway explained that the kids are comfortable after their lessons. They are going home knowing and sharing with their parents. There is a change in typical attitudes about math. Mr. Lima further stated that the students have a better conceptual understanding of what they’re learning.

Superintendent Brice asked if students can use their Chromebooks to use the QR codes that are included in the textbooks. Ms. Muller responded that she would have to do some research for an App that would allow for that.

Assistant Superintendent Sanna explained the costs associated with the IM Curriculum. For 2021-2022, the cost at KMS will be \$17,000. At MHHS, the cost for Algebra I only will be \$5,324. For 2022-2023 the cost will be approximately \$11,000 for Algebra I and Geometry, and for 2023-2024, the cost will be approximately \$17,000 for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. Superintendent Brice noted that the District may be able to use ESSER III funds to cover the costs.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if the HS will still be offering other courses. Mr. Lima stated that this curriculum will be used for Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. All other math courses, Trigonometry, etc. will stay the same.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if all Grade 8 students will be taking Algebra I. Superintendent stated that not all 8th graders are ready for Algebra. They will

need to fill in some gaps for them to be successful on the RICAS tests.

Ms. Muller asked if the curriculum is digital like the iReady curriculum. Mr. Lima stated that it is all on-line, though he has been using an App for some assessments. There is no plan to use it with technology at this time.

There was further discussion on the rollout of the curriculum. Superintendent Brice suggested that the District provide parents an opportunity to see and use the curriculum to get a better understanding of it and to be reassured that their children are learning.

MOTION:

Ms. Bullard made a motion to move the Illustrative Math Curriculum to the full School Committee for approval; 2nd by Chairperson Reich. The motion was approved unanimously.

Superintendent Brice stated that a copy of the books will be available for the public to view at the Administration building.

B. ELA Curriculum

Assistant Superintendent Sanna provided some background on the ELA curriculum research, stating that for two years, a BW team has been working with other districts and an Advisory Board, piloting several curricula in the District, and making the final decision to use the StudySync curriculum at the middle school and elementary school level.

Assistant Superintendent Sanna requested that Ms. Cabral provide the subcommittee with an overview of the curriculum. Ms. Cabral explained that, like the math curriculum, the District is required to adopt a high quality curriculum by 2023.

She first reassured the Subcommittee that the big textbooks are designed to stay in the classroom, eliminating the need for students to carry heavy backpacks home to do their homework. She went on to explain that the StudySync ELA provides a way for students to connect their learning across all curricula. The curriculum uses high quality full & short texts to build knowledge of all topics. It integrates reading, writing, vocabulary, phonics, language, and grammar. It has built-in support for diverse learners and aligns with the K-2 philosophy, supporting an active learning environment with critical thinking, academic risks, and developing applied applications.

The StudySync curriculum offers scaffolding at 3 levels, IEP, MLL, and those approaching proficiency. Students who read above grade level begin at the analysis and application level. Students who need to synthesize ideas will access a text with strategically leveled questions, comprehension, analysis and application. It was noted that, according to research, improving the quality of a curriculum is 40x more cost-effective than reducing class-size alone. For KMS, studies have shown increased proficiency levels at middle school levels for students who have already implemented StudySync.

Superintendent Brice asked if this will be the de facto curriculum or will teachers/students have to supplement with other texts? Ms. Cabral explained that the curriculum is very comprehensive, providing a lot of materials and texts, meeting all educational standards. Superintendent Brice added that if students are able to achieve the standards for their grade level there will be a decrease in the need for special needs assistance.

Superintendent Brice stated that this will provide the District with a consistent curriculum across all elementary schools in the District. Ms. Brown explained that the curriculum spirals, offering multiple ways and practical applications to learn based on students' learning styles and interests.

There was discussion on professional development, connection to existing programs and processes, and relation to social emotional development. Ms. Porrado explained that once teachers buy-in to the curriculum, they will see that there is so much to offer that they will be able to find something to excite their students.

The estimated costs of the curriculum at the middle school is estimated to be \$31K, budgeted for FY22 or allowable under ESSER II grant. For the K-5 curriculum, the cost is estimated to be \$170K and will be funded completely through the RIDE CLSD grant. The cost at the elementary level is higher because it covers materials for 6 grades and contains multiple types of materials.

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to accept the ELA Curriculum and to recommend it to the full School Committee for adoption; 2nd by Chairperson Reich. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. Title IX Policy

Assistant Superintendent Sanna created a form to be an Exhibit related to the policy. The form will need to be reviewed by Attorney Carroll before approval.

Additionally, References to the Exhibit should be added to the Policy.

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to move the Title IX Policy to the full School Committee for a 2nd reading, with the changes and the addition of Exhibit A. Motion was seconded by Chairperson Reich. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. RWU Memo of Understanding

Superintendent Brice explained that the Memo of Understanding will allow students to receive 3 college credits for two courses offered at the High School: Precalculus and College Algebra. The total cost of the MOU is \$5K. The more students enroll in the courses, the lower the cost/credit for the students. For Roger Williams University, they are promoting interest in their school.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if the course will run if there are 12 students enrolled and will Roger Williams train BW staff to teach the courses.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked what would happen if only one course was offered. The answer is that the District would only pay half the amount, \$2500. Attorney Carroll will review the MOU to make sure there is an “out”.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if the credits are transferable. The answer is they are transferable wherever RWU credits are accepted.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked if these courses are taking the place of AP courses. The answer is, “no”.

Ms. Thibaudeau asked for the source of the funds. Answer: Title IV Grant.

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to send the Memo of Understanding on to the full School Committee for discussion and approval; 2nd by Chairperson Reich. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. Elimination of Policies: DLA Payday Schedule and DLB Salary Deductions

Chairperson Reich explained that the policies related to the Payday Schedule and Salary Deductions are no longer in effect.

Chairperson Reich made a motion to eliminate Policy DLA Payday Schedule and Policy DLB Salary Deductions; 2nd by Ms. Bullard. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Bullard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m., seconded by Chairperson Reich. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Carly Reich, Chair
Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee of the
Bristol Warren Regional School Committee

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