

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

Minutes of September 5, 2024

Mr. Burgess called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. in the FNSBSD Administrative Center boardroom, 520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, AK. Committee members attended in person and via Zoom.

Members Present:

Jeremiah Bayles
Melanie Bieniek
Rachel Blackwell
Brooke Freeburg
Hannah Harp
Don Larson

Elisabeth Nadin
Joshua Peter
Natasha Prax
Suzanne Richards
Heather Stewart
Courtney Young

Nonvoting Members:

Chane Beam
Bobby Burgess

Members Absent:

Katina Sammons
Alexis Walker

Guests:

Tara DeVaughn
Mackenzie Staiger
Andrea Wade

Committee Support:

Jen Morgan

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Richards moved to accept the September 5, 2024 agenda; Mr. Bayles seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Bayles moved to accept the minutes from the April 18, 2024 meeting; Ms. Harp seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Mr. Beam introduced district staff that will often be a part of meetings. He went over committee information and the meeting calendar for 2024-25. He then highlighted some parts of the committee Information Sheet, such as which School Board policies and Administrative Regulations details guidelines for the committee, the type of memberships on the committee, length of terms, and other rules (quorum, attendance, etc.). Mr. Beam then mentioned that the committee is subject to the Open Meetings Act and follows Robert’s Rules of Order; committee members were provided handouts with more information about both of these. He reminded members that 2-4+ people sitting down in a non-meeting location to discuss committee business should not happen. He also informed the committee that public testimony is not held during meetings, all meetings are recorded and posted to the website, along with meeting notes.

CURRICULUM PROCESS

Mr. Beam went over the district curriculum process and informed the committee that the administration will present items at meeting for committee feedback. This feedback is taken back to curriculum writers, who then work on the next draft, which will go out for public comment. This process is repeated until a final draft is presented to the committee for their recommendation to the School Board. He went over the six year curriculum revision cycle, highlighted which subjects are up for revision.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) UPDATE

Ms. Wade informed the committee that the revision cycle for CTE curriculum is 4-5 years, and is tied to Carl Perkins Federal Grant funding. The CTE department routinely does a local needs assessment and then bases decisions off of these results. This year, CTE is writing two new curriculum: Agriculture and Education. The committee can expect draft one around October. They will also start the research stage for the Hospitality and Tourism, Arts A/V, and Business clusters. CTE works with local industry partners and teachers during the curriculum cycle.

CURRICULUM REVISION

Ms. DeVaughn went over the revision timeline for the last two years and informed the committee that this year they will be looking at drafts for Art, Music, World Language, Physical Education, and Health curriculum. Draft one for Art and Music is coming soon; draft one for Health, PE, and World Language is now available for review and public comment.

Ms. DeVaughn went over the major changes in the World Language curriculum. Elementary and middle school curriculum were not changed. However, there was a significant structure change to high school. Instead of writing curriculum for each course, the writers developed curriculum for what levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 would look like and then gave course descriptions for each course. Currently, curriculum writers only included those versed in Spanish and Chinese; they did not have the expertise to write curriculum for other languages. The structure change will allow the district to keep world language courses in the curriculum, if a school would like to offer it and has a teacher available to teach it. She also informed the committee that Russian and American Sign Language were added to the curriculum; the district currently has pilot courses for both of these. World language culture courses (Chinese Culture, J-Pop, and Spanish Speaking Countries & Culture) were archived, as the topic of culture was added to level 1-4 of the curriculum. French IV was also removed, as it has not been offered in many years and the district does not have any materials for it.

Ms. Nadin asked the reason why courses were left in the curriculum if there are not teachers to teach it. Ms. DeVaughn explained that these courses will remain in the curriculum for schools to have the option to offer them if they do have a teacher able to teach it. Mr. Peter asked if the goal for middle school is to have them take high school world language course for credit, and if it is a middle school requirement. Ms. DeVaughn explained that it is not a requirement, but it offers the option if there is interest at the school. Students would then have the opportunity to advance to further language courses in high school or it opens up their schedule to other courses. Mr. Bayles mentioned that he took the Russian course while attending Tanana and asked if it will be turned into a semester course. Ms. DeVaughn confirmed that it will have to be a semester course that follows the curriculum for students to receive high school credit.

Ms. DeVaughn then went over the Physical Education draft, and explained that K-12 courses are now aligned to the new SHAPE Standards release earlier in the year. SHAPE is a nationally recognized organization. Ms. Staiger highlighted the major changes in the elementary curriculum. Ms. DeVaughn explained that instead of the 6-8 or 7-8 Integrated Health and PE courses that is currently available in the district, the writers developed three separate Integrated Health and PE courses, one for each grade level. Their reasoning is that there are distinct topics covered in Health 6, 7, and 8. Middle School PE was also added for schools that would like to offer a 6-8 PE class. The curriculum also clarifies that Health will be offered for one quarter and PE for three quarters at the middle school level.

Ms. DeVaughn explained that the current high school PE curriculum has about seventeen courses, and the writers decided to reduce this, as schools do not offer all of these options. The following high school courses were archived: Dancing, Fencing, Integrated Fundamentals of Health and PE, Fitness-Outdoor Pursuits, Fitness-Team, Individual-Outdoor Pursuits, and Team-Outdoor Pursuits. She mentioned that most schools offer Fundamentals of PE, Weight Training, or Yoga.

Ms. DeVaughn then went over the major changes to the Health curriculum, explaining that it is aligned to the new SHAPE Health Standards released in spring 2024 and the National Sex Education Standards. There is also a new format to make it more user friendly. At the K-5 level, disease prevention and personal wellness replaced personal health and development topics. A section on health advocacy was also added to K-5, and a topic was added to human growth and development in grades 3-5.

Ms. Nadin asked why nutrition and fitness is not required on page 18. Ms. Staiger explained that Suggested Activity columns are just some activities that teachers can use to teach the curriculum and meet the standards. Ms. DeVaughn mentioned that standards are broad statements and the curriculum is how the district and teachers meet these standards. Ms. Richards stated that when she started teaching, they were not given suggested activities; these are just a way to “steer the boat”, especially for new teachers.

At the middle school level, there are stand-alone 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Health courses. Students will be required to take one quarter of Health. The following topics were added to grade 7 Health: goal setting and decision making, healthy relationships and communication, safety and first aid, and physical activity and health lifestyles. Addictive substances, mental and emotional health, and sexual health were added to 8th grade curriculum. This is directly related to SHAPE standards. Sexual health was moved from other grades to 8th grade, so students will be prepared to cover this topic in high school Health. At the high school level, Health Leadership Skills and Applied Health Skills were archived.

Mr. Bayles suggested adding to the high school Health curriculum how to use Naloxone nasal spray. He stated that health is taught in every high school in the state, is a graduation requirement, and it is important to introduce this topic in Health class so everyone knows how to use it; it can save lives. Several committee members agreed with him. Mr. Bayles mentioned that he submitted a student council resolution on this topic; Ms. DeVaughn requested a copy of this

resolution be sent to her so it can be shared with the curriculum writers. Mr. Burgess also requested that it be sent to the School Board. Ms. Young appreciates that mental health is in the curriculum and asked if it is appropriate to submit public comment. Ms. DeVaughn confirmed committee members can submit public comment and encouraged them to fill out the online form.

GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

Members introduced themselves to the committee, stating a few details about themselves.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Peter moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Richards seconded. Hearing no objection or further comment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.