



Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

Board Curriculum Committee

Minutes of February 5, 2026

Mr. Doran called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. in the FNSBSD Administrative Center boardroom, 520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, AK. Committee members attended in person and via Zoom.

Members Present:

Allyson Nicholson

Beth Zirbes

Heather Stewart

Ed Paxson

Lynsy Carrell

Elisabeth Nadin

Shiela Paraggua

Nonvoting Members:

Chane Beam

Tim Doran

Members Absent:

Heather McFarlin

Kenli Donahou

Joshua Peter

Hannah Harp

Guests:

Tara DeVaughn

Andrea Wade

Committee Support:

Pamela Metzger

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Shiela motioned to approve the February 5, 2026 agenda, Ed second.
- Agenda unanimously approved.

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Shiela moved to approve January 8, 2026 minutes, Allyson second.
- Without objection the minutes from January 8, 2026 were approved.

-Roll call completed, quorum established. Land Acknowledgement and Mission Statement read by Mr. Doran.

D. CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) UPDATE

Andrea Wade gave the following update:

CTE is reviewing and rewriting three curriculums making sure they meet industry standards, cultural standards, science requirements, ELA, math, etc. CTE is bringing Business back, some of business has been around. Example, accounting stayed when business went away last time because math took it under their wing, now it will be going back under business. Hoping to see more amped on algebra and geo in construction. Arts A/V is rebranding to Multimedia Design & Marketing, so they are cleaning up their classes guaranteeing they align with industry standards. Hospitality and tourism is being refined, hoping to bring back Alaska railroad connection. The first draft is to go out for public comment this month.

Chane: Could you explain or tell us more about amped on algebra and geo in construction?

Andrea: These are great courses developed by teachers and taught in pairs. So our district had two teachers that taught thirty to forty kids per class. Classes lead to business opportunities. The amped on algebra class made t-shirts for their program and other programs within the district which allowed them to calculate cost of materials, production, etc. They got to make money and support the program they were in. Geo in construction built various items such as dog houses and chairs to sell. There has been a shift for the students that take these classes, they truly enjoy math and putting their math skills to use. These classes also have very low fail rates.

Elisabeth: This is a high school program, any plan to make it into a middle school program as well?

Andrea: We would love that, space is a big factor for this. Currently this is only at the high school level, but it is open to all levels of students.

Beth: NPH offers this, who else offers these classes?

Andrea: At the moment, only NPH is offering this class.

Chane: I personally have purchased items from this class and they were great, the products were great and the kids are learning all aspects of math and business at once.

Tim: You mentioned in Hospitality and tourism, that you are re-establishing a partnership with the AK railroad, any plan to develop partnerships with other tour companies.

Andrea: Yes, Explore AK is looking over our curriculum and will be providing feedback. CTE also works with Princess and Holland America.

Tim: Will there be materials to review for these CTE curriculums?

Andrea: These curriculums don't have textbooks as of now and there haven't been any presented. These curriculums are heavy with textile materials more than text books.

E. CURRICULUM UPDATES

Tara provides a brief overview of the timeline and where the writers are within it. Tara provides a brief description of our district's current graduation requirements in social studies and what that looks like in draft three.

Ed: I am curious as to why the writers decided to change U.S. History back to two semesters, but not world history?

Tara: Public comment influenced that decision. World history already has a lot of choices and some of those choices are not in the current draft of social studies, like global issues. The writers feel world history needs three semesters to do justice for the material.

Chane: Ms. Wade, would you give us some insight to what this could look like from a counselors perspective?

Andrea: We have lots of students in and out, placing a kid at the right class with the right timing can be difficult. Even kids that transfer between schools within our district can lead to gaps. We saw this when the district had two years of math. Choice is good but from a scheduling perspective, it can be challenging.

Tara: That is the feedback from counselors via public comment. If modern world history would be required to meet graduation and maybe prevent gaps. But military moves out of state or even to the valley will have concerns as typically nationwide there are only two semesters of world history.

Elisabeth: There is a spelling error on the graduation page, it says AP Word History. My question is will this go out for public comment?

Tara: Yes, it will go out as a whole the last week of February through the first week of March.

Tim: There is so much content in World History, teachers have to make choices.

Andrea: A counselor will try to match the years covered, timeline, and we don't typically. The military compact helps the military children in and out of our district, but civilians don't have that. So we need to match the timeline as closely as possible.

Tim: Within our schools we work better at this.

Andrea: Yes, we are accommodating.

Tara: Tim brought up a very good point that teachers make choices individually and commit to what falls within world history one, two or three.

Tim: I do like the flexibility this gives.

Elisabeth: I see no issues with U.S. History being two semesters due to the requirement of another U.S. component.

Shiela: Is there a clear scope and limitations based on the choice of what to teach, in regards to which semester they teach?

Tara: Yes, the curriculum document specifies what to cover each semester.

Tim: Do we need direction on what to do with three semesters from this committee?

Tara: No, we just needed to have the conversation in case the committee had a strong opinion on two or three semesters.

Ed: I have a public comment. And a question. What years does U.S. History now cover as two semesters?

Tara: Same as now but updated to meet new standards.

Ed: I feel we need to revert world history back to two semesters, I am still confused on why the writers didn't make the change along with the U.S. History. There is a lot between 500 and 1900, a lot of boring things. There are also a lot of things that happened between 1450 and 1900 that I could spend a week, maybe a week and half, but with it being broken into three semesters, I could spend two to three weeks per event. But by week two students would be asleep. Fifteen year old brains won't hang on, we need the ability to skip across the pond when dull versus let it sink when interesting. At the university level it is all pretty modern stuff, research papers, etc. We are never going to be able to cover the entire world's history. Converting the three semesters back to two will prevent unnecessary complications.

Elisabeth: Do we come back to ancient civilizations in high school?

Tara: Nope, that is why we brought it back in middle school.

Chane: I looked up the years covered per world history semester: 500 - 1450, 1450 - 1900, and 1900-current.

Beth: State of Alaska requires three credits, but we require three and half?

Tara: Yes, as a district we can require more than the state but not less than the state.

Ed: The fourth credit of social studies most likely refers to Alaska Performance Scholarship, that requires four.

Tim: We try to offer courses based on student interest and staff, while still getting a good chunk of understanding in history. What is world history one or two? Could we name them something more specific?

Tara: There could be a work around naming conventions, could lead to having four drafts. The timeline can be tricky because we would need feedback.

Ed: To clarify, if the writers wanted to change world history from three semesters to two, they could? Before draft three goes out?

Tara: Yes.

Chane: What would the work load look like to convert world history back into two semesters. Would it be a complete re-write?

Tara: It would not be a complete re-write, more a formatting concern than a content concern.

Ed: So at this moment there doesn't seem to be concern about three semesters of world history with public comment.

Tara: Public comment had the same concerns about both U.S. History and World History.

Ed: Does anyone have strong feelings about this? It should go back to two semesters.

Elisabeth: I think the writers should look at naming conventions, for sake of work load stick to three semesters.

Tara spoke to materials review and selection process online access is expiring for social studies, which prompted the need to review and adopt new materials now. Currently Ms. Metzger and I are rotating physical books between the middle schools and high schools. I also have some of our publishers scheduled to show our teachers how their online access works and what they can do with that.

Tim: Material presentation from publishers over zoom?

Tara: Yes, so across the district can have an opportunity to hop on from where they're at.

Chane: Driving around materials is a lot but we started doing that about four years ago as we received more input on materials when they were available at school sites instead of downtown.

Elisabeth: I remember getting the opportunity to look at science materials last year and being told it was unlikely the district would purchase due to budget constraints. Will that happen again this year?

Chane: It always depends on the budget from the district. A conversation has taken place letting the board know that the smaller dollar numbers for materials will not work due to the content area being written. This goes for the next couple of re-writes.

Elisabeth: Will this committee have any say in what the books contain.

Chane: We are hoping not to have that conversation. As the content will have been looked through by teaching and learning and teachers.

Tim: The budget is always a concern but the district is aware of materials needed, and we won't have our finalized budget until June.

Chane: Historically speaking, five years ago the material budget would have been \$900,00, then four years ago it was cut to \$500,000, then \$215,000, and followed by \$276,000. But they are tracking that we would need \$8 - \$900,000 for the material budget.

Elisabeth: Will the books be able to get here by the beginning of the school year if the budget isn't approved until June?

Tara: Once the budget is set and we get the go ahead to purchase, on July 1st we order. Even before July 1st though we have been in communication with whichever publisher we go with and they will be expecting that order on July 1st. Then there is a lot of communication within our district as well, books come to our shipping and receiving then sent to schools where the librarians take them and put them in the system.

Tim: Principals go through and know what the building needs as well. So everything will be ready to go even if the governor or legislation veto or things are held up.

Beth: Teachers are given one week to review the materials at their school, is that enough time to give it justice? Would it be possible to schedule a PD day to review and discuss materials?

Tara: There are no PD days in the second semester. We do have some flexibility to bring books back to school sites.

H. GENERAL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Tim went around to each member present and online asking if they had any other questions or comments. No one had any.

I. ADJOURNMENT

-Shiela moved to adjourn the meeting. Lynsy seconds the motion.

-Without objection, motion to adjourn moved.

Tim adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.