

WBOE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2019

Present: Lynn Piascyk, Chair; Dan Cowan, Maegan Genovese, Dr. David Ross, Joyce Shavers, Dr. Michael Strambler, Dr. Jeffrey Townsend, Board Members; Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Cheryl Mammen, Special Services Director; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Doreen Merrill, Assistant Principal; BeeJ Ahern, Maria DePalma, Robin Gerber, Louise Golden, Kris Hart-Rooney, Monique MacDonald, Lanna Moore, Kayla Widmeyer, Cathy Zdrowski, Teachers.

Ms. Piascyk called the meeting to order (4:32 PM).

Public Comment – None

Special Education Program Overview: Ms. Mammen presented an overview on the services provided to students in the area of Special Education. Mandated services fall under the auspice of CSDE requirements and the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act that mandates children with disabilities must be educated in their “Least Restrictive Environment” to the maximum extent possible with children not disabled. Removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the regular classroom with the use of supplementary aides and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Eligibility for special education services is determined through a Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT) process with development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that articulates clearly the level of services. The IEP process includes an annual review and triennial evaluations to ensure student needs are met and the programs utilized are successful. The differences between an IEP and 504 accommodations were also explained. Under an IEP students between the ages of 3-21 are deemed eligible for services as determined by a multi-disciplinary team, have one or more disabilities as outlined in the 13 categories of disability and require specialized instruction. Under a 504 any student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity qualifies for accommodations in general education. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself and/or performing manual tasks.

Other related services under the special education umbrella could include speech / language as well occupational therapy and/or physical therapy (OT/PT). To qualify for OT the decision is based on data and how the performance impacts the student on a daily basis and whether they can access their special education services. Eligibility for PT is focused on gross motor skills and based on safety, accessibility and mobility within the school environment.

Out-of-District placement occurs when all options to meet a student’s need are exhausted or when the least restrictive environment is the out-of-district placement or if a student new to the district is already out-placed through the IEP process. Estimated cost for out-of-district ranges from approximately \$90,000 to \$200,000 inclusive of transportation.

BRS also utilizes a tiered intervention model that provides supports both in and out of the classroom for behavioral concerns. Students with behavioral challenges usually referred through the Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) process that provides supports / services between home and school, i.e., lunch groups, behavioral resources, social skills/coping strategies, child-led play, one-on-one student support etc. There are many variables that determine student success including utilization of one-on-one teacher assistants. Recent changes to the TA structure has had direct impact on individual classrooms. Discussion ensued for how often calls are made, are students suspended, is it usually the same students causing disruption, are staff injured when supporting students and does responsive classroom provide adequate support for students with high needs.

Next Meeting(s): Given the lateness of the hour, it was agreed the TAG presentation would be deferred to the December meeting and Math/ Math Enrichment/Differentiation would be shifted to January. Other topics for consideration include ELA/Enrichment in the upper grades. As part of preparation for future meetings, CAFE sample questions were shared, to ensure teachers feel comfortable sharing perspectives/ideas and are respected as experts within their field.

Adjourn: 6:03 PM