

Woodbridge Board of Education Curriculum Committee
South Assembly Room
October 5, 2023

<https://woodbridgeps.webex.com/woodbridgeps/j.php?MTID=m4332f47a33d28beb083c49003c5fc06c>

Meeting Number: (access code): 2482 904 8797

Meeting Password: nB3RPgPa34Z

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Strambler, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM.

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr. Michael Strambler, Chair (in person); Sarah Beth Del Prete (in person 4:17 PM); Mr. Steven Lawrence (in person); Dr. Maria Madonick (remote); Lynn Piascyk, (in person), Board Members; Vonda Tencza, Superintendent; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Cheryl Tafel, Assistant Principal; Monique MacDonald, WEA Liaison; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

Dr. Strambler noted receipt of three (3) emails and a petition regarding Math offerings.

Public Comment

Cindy Kruger spoke regarding the lack of advanced math offerings for 5th and 6th grade students.

Betty Miller noted the lack of challenge in Math for students advanced in math, the test questions for selection into PreAlgebra and the burden on parents to provide outside resources for these students to ensure they are being challenged.

Anahita Bassir spoke on the importance of these students being adequately challenged and afforded the opportunity to be challenged.

Hillary Drumm noted the need for an equitable and comprehensive math program for 5th & 6th graders aligned with middle and high school standards.;

Azure Onofrey is interested in taking the 5th and 6th grade advanced math.

Kristen Turkosz contacted faculty members in Orange on their advanced math program and their willingness to speak with Woodbridge staff on their program. She noted their process, class structure and testing process.

John Hall extremely important these students are placed in classrooms with similar students rather than enrichment activities.

Julie Pang the potential of students, even at this young age, to excel in math as part of their future academic success and among their peers.

Kindergarten Age Admission – Superintendent Tencza shared recent legislation that changes the date for admission to Kindergarten from January 1 to September 1. The legislation allows for parents to request testing and/or screening assessment to allow their child to be admitted early. To ensure consistency, we are awaiting guidance from the CSDE on what the assessment would be, what the “cut” score would be and the development of a standard assessment with identified benchmarks.

Student Placement Process – Ms. Sherman provided an overview on the revised placement process. Teachers, specialists and wellness team members work collaboratively to balance learning styles, support plans, student friendships, etc. in each classroom in the placement of students in classroom communities. Teachers may not know who the actual grade level teachers are prior to the end of school due to staffing changes and administrative staffing adjustments that occur over the summer. While this information has been shared annually to all parents in the Principal’s Message, a separate message detailing the specifics of this process will be sent out this year.

PreAlgebra: Ms. Sherman presented an overview of the current Math program which allows for vertical alignment, focus on individual grade level content areas, flexible grouping, elementary differentiation and incorporate highly effective instructional strategies. The recent criteria revision in the PreAlgebra test and selection process allowed for alignment to Middle School placement criteria. Also, it was discovered that a 60% on our math assessment meant that our students knew and understood only about 60% of the content for 6th grade math. Students found it difficult to meet the expectations of 6th grade content strands/standards as a foundation of skills to move forward in Math. Standards relate to one another, both within and cross grade levels. Students who took the test in the spring and did not qualify are receiving differentiated

instruction in Math. Students who passed the test are skipping Grade 6 math and jump directly into PreAlgebra. The Amity Middle School criteria was also reviewed. It was noted that students taking PreAlgebra at BRS are not guaranteed a spot in Algebra 1 unless they have met all of the Bethany Middle School criteria. Questions were raised regarding the programming, staffing, testing and enrollment differences between Orange and Woodbridge. It was noted that there has been a continued sentiment that students at the upper end of the academic ability spectrum are not being serviced, if the services being provided are equitable for all students and is differentiation enough to address the needs of the advanced students.

Public Comment

Cindy Kruger – Skipping 6th grade is a terrible idea. Fully ready to go on in Math. There are 15-20 kids at 97 percentile, 5th grade is a talented grade and it might be worth having additional staffing to service these children.

Anahita Bassir – is there a plan to have 5th and 6th grade math mixed.

John Hall – While it is heartbreaking to hear about students who are struggling in math, it is just as heartbreaking to hear about those students who are bored and not being challenged. Students deserve and need to be surrounded by peers at their same level to achieve success. In some classes, students are intimidated by the advanced students and shut down. Not enough is being offered for the advanced students and there are minimal enrichment options. There was an offering in Eday that was eliminated and there was after school math program run by Mr. DePalma that was well attended, however, it has not been run in several years.

Kristen Turkosz – when you send out communication to parents regarding the test it would be helpful to also send the requirements and/or content for the test so those parents who have the resources are able to share this information.

Dan Del Prete – when will swimming be added back to the curriculum and when will the pool be reopen. It was noted that the operation of the pool is the responsibility of the Town and the Recreation Department.

Meeting Adjourned 5:42 PM