

Curriculum Committee Minutes February 23, 2009

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Pana High School Library

Chairman Mizeur called the meeting to order.

Members present: Mizeur, Dively, Duez, Hankins, Dodson, Hahnenkamp, Hicks, McRoberts,
Metzger, Nicolas, Rodman, Schafer, Wysong, Zueck

Members absent: Ade, Kettlekamp, Lauff, McClure, Osborn

Superintendent Present: Yes

Visitors: Tiffany Daniel, Dena Hardy

The committee discussed the following:

1. Approval of Minutes – April 30, 2008
2. *Abstinence Program for Jefferson School* – Tiffany Daniel reviewed the abstinence program that will be presented to 6th grade students in P.E. The program consists of 8 30 minute sessions and utilizes the Game Plan curriculum that is currently used at the Jr. High. Ms. Daniel indicated that although it is the same curriculum it will be tailored to 6th grade students. Next year the curriculum will be taught in health class. Ms. Daniel will also be teaching the abstinence program to Jr. High students. The program is funded by a federal grant and there is no charge to the district for the materials or the teacher.
3. *Jefferson Reading Enrichment Program* – Dena Hardy made a brief presentation on the new Reading Enrichment Class for students at Jefferson Middle School who are struggling in reading. The program serves Title I students and students who did not meet standards on ISAT reading. The class is intended to develop reading skills and give students more confidence in reading. Currently the program serves only 5th grade students who are pulled from their special classes (art and music) each day for 9 weeks. Student progress is assessed based on the attitude they demonstrate in class and the STAR Reading assessment.
Mrs. Hankins asked if there was an enrichment program for advanced readers. Ms. Hardy and Ms. Zueck indicated that at the present time there wasn't. Janet Hicks commented on how she had increased the collection at the library, especially for young students. She also expressed concern over the lack of a high school librarian and questioned how students were able to get needed resources. Ms. McRoberts indicated that in addition to the materials in the library, students were able to get books through Lake Land.
4. *Update on Response to Intervention* – Mr. Nicolas presented a brief review and update on the RtI initiative at Washington and Lincoln School. The RtI pilot program started with one classroom in grades K-4 in 2007-08. It was expanded in 2008-09 to include all classrooms at K-4. Mr. Nicolas shared the results from the sweeps conducted in the fall and winter. There will be one more assessment in the spring. In general, the assessment results show significant progress with a number of students moving from Tier 2 to Tier 1 and Tier 3 to Tier 2. Mrs. Wysong indicated that the process is "still not perfect" and that they will "continue to tweak the program", but

the results have been very encouraging. Mrs. Rodman said that she really liked the guided reading because it permitted students to read at their level of ability. Mr. Nicolas closed by explaining that there were two components to RtI yet still to be implemented, a math component, and a behavior component.

5. *High School Curriculum Proposals for 2009-2010 School Year.* Ms. McRoberts reviewed with the committee their charge to examine the block schedule at the high school to determine if a change in the schedule could have a positive impact on student performance. She indicated that after much consideration the high school administration and staff felt that what was needed was a change in curriculum rather than the schedule to increase student motivation and to improve student performance. Mrs. Strom reviewed data from the 8th grade ISAT and the PLAN for the current sophomores and juniors. Results indicated that there were a significant number of sophomores and juniors in need of additional instruction in reading and math. In addition, the percentage of students requiring additional instruction in reading and math increased between the sophomore and junior year. Based on these results, the following recommendations were reviewed with the committee:
 - a. Increased focus on Freshmen – Implement a freshman academy. Required one semester course for all incoming freshmen focusing on the following: self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, responsible decision making, and study skills. Research-based program would be offered 1st semester during the 1st or 2nd hour of the day.
 - b. Increased Focus on Reading – Ms. McRoberts explained that improving reading was the only goal listed in the School Improvement Plan for the High School. Mr. Dively, Mrs. Strom, and Ms. McRoberts shared information on the Autoskill program. Mr. Dively explained that Autoskill is a computer based intervention program that teaches students the fundamental skills needed to read. It is self-paced and provides a diagnostic tool to determine the student's strengths and weaknesses. The program is research-based and has been very successful in improving the reading skills of students when used regularly. The program would not be used for all students. Students would be screened and referred to participate based on previous assessment results. This program could serve as a key RtI intervention for the high school level. Mr. Dively indicated the cost of the program would be discussed later in the presentation.
 - c. Increased Focus on the WorkKeys – Ms. Strom explained that they would like to implement the use of the National Certificate of Career Readiness. This certificate would serve as an incentive for students to score higher on the Day 2 portion of the PSAT. Students that scored a 5 or higher on the WorkKeys would take a third test (Locating Information) to obtain the National Certificate of Career Readiness. This certificate would indicate to prospective employers the student's readiness for work. Ms. Strom pointed out that local employers would need to be informed of the meaning of the certificate. Mrs. Strom also recommended the implementation of the WIN program – a required skills assessment program for all students that did not meet or exceed on the PSAT. Ms. McRoberts pointed out that Chatham has been using this program and requiring it for graduation for those seniors who failed to meet on the PSAT. This would be a way to insure that students leaving high school have the necessary

skills for the work place. It would also serve as a motivational tool to have students try their best on the PSAE. Mr. Duez asked if successful completion of the program would be a graduation requirement. Ms. McRoberts indicated that they would be in favor of this, but it hadn't been decided yet. Mrs. Rodman indicated concern about students who would simply choose not to complete the program and fail to graduate. Mrs. Hankins expressed concern that the program was not going to be part of a scheduled class and students may not have access to computers. Committee members seemed to agree that the program was a good idea, but there were details that needed to be worked out. Ms. Zueck suggested that the program be piloted first while trying to work out some of the details. Mrs. Strom did a brief demonstration of the program.

6. Mr. Dively shared with the committee that the cost for the Autoskill program for a 20/20 license for the High School would be a one-time cost of approximately \$30,000. He pointed out that some of the cost of the program could be paid for by RESPRO funds and possibly Perkins Funds. Ms. McRoberts and Mrs. Hankins pointed out additional computers would be needed. The cost for these would be \$10,000 to \$12,000 dollars. Mr. Metzger and Mr. Schafer indicated they wanted more information on how to finance the Autoskill program. Dr. Lett stated that in addition to the possible outside sources, the program could be paid for from funds in the existing Computer Assisted Instruction budget. Mr. Dively also stated that Autoskill could be paid for over two fiscal years. A motion was made by Nicolas and seconded by Zueck to recommend to the Board of Education that the High School be permitted to move forward with 1) the Freshman Seminar, 2) the National Certificate of Career Readiness, and 3) the Autoskill program (depending on a satisfactory means of funding).

A motion was made by Hicks and seconded by Rodman to adjourn the meeting of February 23, 2009 at 8:20 p.m.

Member

Member