

BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: Curriculum Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 3/28/22 Minutes submitted by: Tim Blair
Members present: Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Stephanie Strazza
Members absent:
Other attendees: Julie Luby, Alyce Misuraca, Deanna Rivers, Jessica Pratt, Ed Sbordone
Meeting Access: Curriculum Subcommittee (3/28/22 at 7 p.m.)
Web: <https://zoom.us/j/96885656981> Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 968 8565 6981

Meeting called to order: at 7:01 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 28, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion: To approve the minutes of February 28, 2022, as presented

Made by: Stephanie Strazza

Approved by consensus

III. ACTION ITEMS - none

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

Motion: To move Information Item IV.D. Strings Update to the top of the Information Items list of discussion

Made by: Stephanie Strazza

Second: Tim Blair

Recording of vote: All in favor

A. Item IV.D. Strings Update - Julie Luby provided an update, along with information from teachers Deanna Rivers and Jessica Pratt. They gave current numbers on students currently enrolled with one of the string instruments and its potential challenges to carry on the program as a music option going into middle school and beyond. We do not currently have a full-time strings teacher and that provides a challenging situation to also incorporate band instruments. Third and fourth grade string enrollment is high but some thinking is because they have the ability to have smaller instruments at that age group makes certain strings more appealing at the younger age. Overall discussion will continue to continue strings program as is, potentially add a dedicated strings educator or focus all the resources into the band program which can be enhanced. We currently have 65 band students in grade 5. Our goal is to maintain as many of them as possible so that ideally, our high school band would have 100 students. We currently have 18 strings students in grades 5 and 6 of whom also are playing a band instrument. We have to commit to adding staff for the coming year and for each of the several following years, if we wish to offer strings. There is currently no staffing above grade 5. We can make that commitment, or, we may want to consider, based on our size, starting band instruments earlier and investing our effort in growing one large, strong program. We will gather information about what other DRG and other similarly sized school systems offer.

B. Website Update - Julie Luby shared more detailed information and improvements to the website, including a complete core resources review that will be accessible to all teachers, students and parents. Two new sections have been added. The K-8 Art continuum is now on the Curriculum Overviews page. A new section, Curriculum Resources, has been added and includes links to all of our core programs.

C. Secondary Math Resource Update - Julie Luby and Alyce Misuraca presented the update. Recently we decided to move to a new program and explore options. We are piloting several programs that we are considering as replacements for our current secondary math resource. The goal is for the resource to provide the highest quality education and ensure we can do that with unnecessary distractions. Teachers grade 6-12 are in the beginning stages of the pilot process. Desmos is currently being piloted in

8th grade, and our 6th grade teachers are piloting Illustrative Math. Desmos is more digital intense at about 80% digital and 20% paper/pencil, and Illustrative Math is more paper/pencil. We are finding that Illustrative Math is a common program that is used in neighboring districts.

D. Core 21 Update - Julie Luby shared potential changes to the structure of this class; using what worked best and eliminating what would not be needed going forward. Core 21 involves a series of units of instruction designed around problem-based learning tasks. There will likely not be a designated period of the day for this next year; rather, the instructional model and units will likely be shifted into the core content classes.

E. Bridges Implementation - Alyce Misuraca explained the timeline and progress made in the implementation of this program. Materials will arrive for teachers in April and full implementation of the program is in the fall. We took a team to visit with neighboring district Newtown who began using Bridges this year, and feedback from educators is very positive regarding student interaction with this program. It was very valuable to see it in action and to be able to learn from their experience. We are setting up two spotlight classrooms this spring in order to pilot Bridges units of instruction. We have implemented Number corner this year, which is a standalone component of our soon to be implemented math program. It already is showing great shifts in our students' thinking, and it is helping teachers become familiar with the Bridges program. All members expressed excitement of this upcoming program.

V. OTHER - Stephanie brought up two agenda items for next meeting:

A parent from a meeting earlier in the year expressed concern about a couple of the books her student was reading in class. Who is the decision maker for these books and for the books on display in the library and how is that process decided?

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Kathy Baker
Recording of vote: All in favor

Seconded by: Greg Flanagan
Meeting adjourned at: 8:23 p.m.