

BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: Curriculum Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 10/28/19 Place of Meeting: Central Office Conf. Rm.
Minutes submitted by: Rick Regan
Members present: Dominic Cipollone, Kimberly LaTourette, Rick Regan, Kathy Baker
Members absent: None
Other attendees: Julie Luby, Pat Cosentino, Lori Ferreira, Ed Sbordone, Ernest Fabrizio-Garcia, Jean Gephart, Kimberly Salta, Catherine Hall

Meeting called to order: at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 23, 2019 – Regular Meeting

Motion: To approve minutes of September 23, 2019

Made by: Rick Regan

Seconded by: Kathy Baker

Recording of vote: All in favor

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. New Course Proposal: Human Genomics - Kim Salta and Jean Gephart discussed this new semester-long elective course in the life sciences. The newly compressed science sequence in the high school leaves room for students to take an elective science course in their senior year (it's primarily open to seniors but qualified juniors could take it as well). Students will get lab experience, learn to interpret statistics, and discuss bioethics. There is industry need for the skills taught in this class.

Students would test specific genes in their own DNA, although it would be anonymized with their classmates' samples. The testing will be done largely in class, although there will be one sample that gets sent for testing at Jackson Labs. There was a discussion about privacy of a student's medical information. There is a course waiver that parents must sign, but details of privacy have to be worked out with legal counsel and our Director of Technology.

The intent is to offer this course starting in school year 2020-2021, both in the fall and spring semesters. There would be approximately 24 students per class. Students have expressed interest in this course. Biology and chemistry are prerequisites, although advanced students may be able to take this concurrently with chemistry. In the future they would like to offer an honors version, which would entail independent research.

Motion: To recommend to the full Board the new course - Human Genomics.

Made by: Kathy Baker

Seconded by: Kimberly LaTourette

Recording of vote: All in favor

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Update on the Science Course Continuum – Jean Gephart gave a brief update on the compression of the high school science curriculum to make physics available to students earlier (11th grade).

B. Update on the World Language Course Continuum - Ernest Fabrizio-Garcia spoke of compressing the World Languages curriculum to make room in the schedule due to the change in graduation requirements for the class of 2023. For example, Spanish 1 - 5 would become Spanish 1-4, with some content being removed entirely, and some content being moved into the AP World Languages course.

C. Proposing a New Graduation Credential: the Seal of Biliteracy - Ernest Fabrizio-Garcia spoke of offering the "Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy" to our students. (We already have a policy that we will now implement.) This is a mark on a student's transcript, and possibly their diploma as well. Students can achieve the seal by passing either the online AAPPL test or the AP World Language exam (score of 3 or higher). They are looking into offering this seal for any native language a student may speak, regardless of whether we teach that language in our school.

D. Pilot Adjustments to High School Geometry to include more Data, Statistics and Probability - Cathy Hall spoke of changing our geometry curriculum to remove some geometry topics and replace them with topics on data, statistics, and probability. The Common Core Standards contain a lot of geometry that is not tested on the SAT, whereas data, statistics, and probability are topics on the SAT. The committee agreed that it was important to teach these new topics, not just because they are on the SAT, but because they are important skills for our graduates.

In the last quarter of geometry class, a "data science" unit is proposed to cover these topics. To help the current junior class get up to speed for this year's SAT, a "data boot camp" will be offered as a mini-unit in Algebra II for this year only.

V. OTHER -

Kathy Baker spoke of how disruption due to student vaping is eating into instruction time, and that we need to make sure there are consequences for vaping.

Rick Regan asked about changes to our computer science curriculum resulting from PA 19-128, "An act concerning computer science instruction in public schools." Lori Ferreira said that they are aware of this but that there are higher priority curriculum updates in the queue.

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Rick Regan
Recording of vote: Aye – Unanimous

Seconded by: Kimberly LaTourette
Meeting adjourned at: 8:35 p.m.