October Curriculum Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 1, 2026 5:00 PM Eastern

District Office Conference Room
180 West Bridge Street
New Hope, PA 18938

1. **Meeting Opening**
    - 1.A. Call to Order
        - 1.A.1. 01 Notice of FERPA and Audio Recording of Meeting
2. **Approve Minutes**
    - 2.A. Approve Minutes from the September 3, 2026 meeting
3. **Old Business**
4. **Public Comment**
5. **New Business**
    - 5.A. Education Office Update
    - 5.B. BCIU Student Assistance, Behavioral Health, and School Climate Assessment Contract
    - 5.C. Navy Partnership Programs
    - 5.D. K-12 Educational Technology Programming
6. **Adjournment**

Curriculum Advisory Committee (Thursday, September 3, 2026)

Generated by Amanda Benolken

1. Meeting Opening

1.A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM. It was noted that, per Board Guideline 006.2, all public meetings of the Board of Directors, including committee meetings, are audio recorded.

2. Approve Minutes

2.A. Approve Minutes from the May 7, 2026 meeting

The committee was asked if there was any discussion regarding the May 7, 2026 Curriculum Advisory Committee minutes. No comments or revisions were offered. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes.

May 7, 2026 minutes approved.

3. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

4. Public Comment

- Andrew Warner of Solebury, a parent of an 8th grader, asked the committee to implement an immediate moratorium on the use of AI and chatbots in the classroom until their safety and effectiveness as educational tools can be established.
- Jessica, a parent of a rising 8th grader, proposed converting a portion of the district's campus to a native meadow as an educational and ecological resource. She noted that the idea was well received when first raised in June, and that Dr. Lentz and Director of Operations Mr. Radaskiewicz have both expressed support. She described potential curricular connections in science, math, and sustainability, including opportunities for students to calculate carbon impact, and asked that the committee discuss how a meadow project could be meaningfully incorporated into the curriculum.
- Mel Band of Solebury raised several items: a question about AI funding for kindergarten classes that he understood had been advanced at a recent Finance Committee meeting; a recent article ranking the district's high schools, including a comment on declining science and math graduation requirements; a follow-up request for detail on the computer-use survey for grades 3 through 12, referencing a prior response he felt was incomplete; and a letter he published in the Bucks County Herald regarding recognition of parents' role in student success
- Jenna Young of Solebury, a parent of three middle schoolers, spoke in support of the meadow proposal. He noted several Pennsylvania grant programs for lawn conversion, environmental education, and watershed forestry, and suggested opportunities for student involvement through the APEX internship program, capstone projects, and student-led grant writing. He referenced similar native meadow and rain garden projects at neighboring districts, including Lower Merion and Hatboro-Horsham.

No additional public comments were made.

Dr. Benolken responded to the public comment. She noted that the topic of technology and AI use will be a focus of the October Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting, and thanked Mr. Warner for his perspective. She expressed enthusiasm for the meadow proposal, noting its connection to the state's new environmental literacy standards, and asked to be connected with Jessica and Glenn Young to discuss next steps. She indicated she would follow up separately on the kindergarten AI funding question raised by Mr. Band, and clarified that the district's graduation requirements exceed the state minimum by a full year of credits, with the honors diploma option recognizing students who choose to take on additional coursework. She confirmed the K-12 technology use survey went out this week, is due September 11, and includes an open-ended section where families may share thoughts on AI. She thanked the speakers who raised the lawn conversion and Bucks IU consortium points for sharing those resources.

A committee member noted that the district already makes creative cross-curricular use of the campus, including for art and STEAM classes, and that a native meadow could offer similar opportunities, particularly for students who might not otherwise engage with environmental topics.

5. New Business

5.A. Approval of New Committee Members

Dr. Benolken introduced two applicants for new committee membership: Kathleen Given, the district's reading specialist and RELA curriculum lead, and Robert Whelen, a parent. A motion was made and seconded to approve both new committee members, with formal appointment to be finalized by the full Board.

Motion approved.

5.B. 2026-27 Educational Initiatives and Curriculum Advisory Committee Topics

Dr. Benolken shared highlights from the district's opening week, including building- and district-level initiatives, the opening breakfast and Longevity Awards, an address from Dr. Lentz, and professional development led by Dr. Keiper.

Dr. Benolken reviewed the district's five-year curriculum renewal cycle. This year's focus areas are math and world language, closing out the current five-year cycle. She noted that the Pennsylvania Department of Education has signaled it will revise state math standards within the next several years, and that the district will therefore hold off on a major elementary math curriculum adoption to avoid readopting shortly after state standards change. The district will continue to explore ways to strengthen math thinking and problem solving, and will review secondary-level math programming. For world language, no textbook changes are planned; the district will evaluate adjustments made to the middle school program last year before determining next steps.

Other initiatives and professional development priorities for the year include:

- STEM and STEAM programming updates, with two new programs presenting to the committee next month
- ParentSquare training and continued work on family communication practices
- Artificial intelligence,
- Small group instruction
- Inclusive practices
- Conscious Discipline,
- literacy practices,
- MTSS

- Middle school advisory,
- inclusion and belonging

Dr. Benolken outlined the committee's topics by month: October will include a STEAM team presentation and a discussion of the technology survey results; November will include the annual Future Ready data presentation; December has no meeting due to two board meetings that month; January will focus on the high school program of studies; February and May will include equity updates; March will cover international travel proposals for 2029; and April will include any curriculum adoptions for board approval. She invited committee members to share additional topics of interest.

5.C. 2026-27 Assessment and Professional Development Calendar

Dr. Benolken presented the annual Assessment and Professional Development calendar, which will go to the Board for approval. The first three pages list the assessments given in each building and their administration windows; the final page lists professional development days and topics for the year, which align with the initiatives discussed under item 5.B. There are no major changes to the assessment calendar this year, aside from the district evaluating whether to use the CDT or Firefly assessments to generate data aligned with state testing. Dr. Benolken noted the calendar includes a number of acronyms and offered to provide a glossary for community members; the document is posted on the district website.

Discussion included:

- A request that teachers remain mindful of other exams scheduled around assessment windows, particularly at the middle and high school levels, to avoid overloading students during the same week
- A suggestion to open the new middle school STEM lab for a community or parent tour, potentially by hosting the October Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting there
- A question about where social-emotional and behavioral screening appears on the calendar; Dr. Benolken confirmed a behavioral screener is administered three times a year, results reviewed through the MTSS process, and agreed to add the middle school screener and the district's climate and hate-free school surveys to the document before it goes to the Board

5.D. Approval of Middle School Speaker

Dr. Pedersen, joining virtually, presented a proposal to bring in Chris Balme, founder of the Argonaut Training and co-founder of the Millennium School, to support the middle school's advisory program. Dr. Benolken outlined the funding: the Middle School PTG has committed $6,000, the building will cover $6,500, and the Education Office will cover the remaining $4,500, for a total cost of $17,000, or approximately $50 per student.

Dr. Pedersen explained that the engagement includes two full-day visits, on November 3 and in February, along with a parent evening on November 3 and ongoing virtual work with the advisory coordinators, Jeff Petzak and Heather Derby. He described the goal as building teacher capacity to facilitate meaningful advisory conversations consistently across all 23 advisory sections, particularly given staff turnover in recent years.

In discussion, committee members asked about the purpose of the advisory block and how its effectiveness will be measured. Dr. Pedersen confirmed that student surveys will be administered before and after implementation, and that he and Mr. Barth are developing a short observation rubric covering connectedness, teacher facilitation, and student ownership. A committee member, noting professional experience in the field, questioned whether the cost was reasonable and whether other vendors had been considered; Dr. Pedersen responded that the district did not issue a formal RFP but conducted an extensive search, and that Mr. Balme, who serves on the board of advisors for the Association of Middle

Level Education, was the strongest fit for the program's current stage. Committee members also discussed the value of tracking teacher and student feedback over time to assess impact.

As noted, formal approval of the expenditure will occur at the Board level; the committee's discussion reflected general support for the proposal.

5.E. 2026-27 Equity Goals

Dr. Lentz introduced the district's building-level equity coordinators, who provided an overview of plans for the year.

- Sarah O'Hara Donetelli, High School Equity Coordinator, reported that the high school's student-led equity committee is holding its first planning and interest meeting next week. The group will continue its work with the Sandy Hook Promise/Safe Promise Club curriculum, including Start With Hello Week during the last week of September, which includes trusted-adult poster activities, and will coordinate with student government on overlapping fall activities.
- Stacey Haferl, the new Equity Coordinator for the Lower and Upper Elementary Schools, reported that the Lower Elementary School will participate in Sandy Hook Promise's Hello Week and the Upper Elementary School will run the Great Kindness Challenge. The Upper Elementary School was again designated a No Place for Hate school and will display its banner. She noted coordination with the wellness specialist, the library, and a restarting kindness club for 4th graders.
- Haley Escogido, Middle School Equity Co-Coordinator, reported that the middle school will continue Sandy Hook Promise/Safe Promise Club programming, with a scaled-back Start With Hello Week given other priorities already underway, and additional advisory-linked activities planned in coordination with the middle school advisory initiative described under item 5.D.
- Sam Paglione, Middle School Administrative Assistant and Equity Co-Coordinator, reported that the middle school will again pursue No Place for Hate recognition and is focused this year on building student leadership, with outgoing 8th graders helping recruit and train 6th and 7th grade members. Membership has grown from roughly 25 to a projected 30 students. The group is planning a schoolwide No One Eats Alone Day during a lunch period, paired with a short morning advisory activity to prepare students.

Dr. Lentz provided background on the district's equity work, which began roughly six years ago in response to a community petition and was initially guided by a standalone committee that examined curriculum, professional development, and representation across the district. That work has since become integrated into standard district practice, prompting the decision to bring equity updates into the Curriculum Advisory Committee going forward. He highlighted two ongoing partnerships: the Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity, based at the University of Pennsylvania, which is hosting a regional United Way program this year focused on the needs of lower-socioeconomic students, and the Anti-Defamation League, through which Dr. Lentz serves on an education advisory committee and the district gains early access to new resources.

In discussion, committee members welcomed the integration of equity updates into the committee's regular agenda and asked that a district-wide communication go out to inform parents and community members of the change, particularly given the new full-year meeting calendar. A member also asked whether Lunch and Learn sessions are publicized through ParentSquare; Dr. Benolken confirmed that communication is underway, including posters already posted in the building and inclusion in daily announcements.

5.F. 2026-27 Federal Programming

Dr. Minniti provided the district's annual public report on federal program funding, as required for districts receiving Title I, Title II, and Title IV funds. She explained that the district combines its Title II and Title IV allocations into Title I to fund small group reading instruction at the Lower Elementary School, and that this year the program will expand to include small group math instruction as well, without reducing the existing reading support. She also reported that the district, whose Title III allocation falls below the threshold required for direct access, has joined a consortium through CSIU, giving the district's ELL teachers access to money in Title III funding this year. She noted that a resource, SummitK12, currently paid for separately under a three-year contract will be covered under this arrangement once that contract ends.

6. Adjournment

Dr. Benolken announced that the next Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting will be held October 1, 2026. With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned.

Bucks County
Intermediate Unit

705 N. Shady Retreat Rd.
Doylestown, PA 18901
Tel: 215-348-2940
www.BucksIU.org

BUCKS COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT #22

STANDARD SERVICE AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, entered on **October 20, 2026** by and between the **Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22** located at 705 N. Shady Retreat Road, Doylestown, PA 18901 (hereinafter referred to as "Bucks IU") and **New Hope-Solebury School District** located at 180 West Bridge Street, New Hope, PA 18938 (hereinafter referred to as "Client").

WHEREAS, Client desires the Bucks IU to provide the services outlined herein; and

WHEREAS, Bucks IU agrees to perform these services under the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement.

THEREFORE, INTENDING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND, the parties agree as follows:

This Agreement shall commence on **November 2, 2026** and shall terminate on **May 2, 2027** , provided that either party to this Agreement may terminate this Agreement sooner upon providing 30 days written notice.

1. The following service(s) will be provided by the Bucks IU to Client:

   a) The Assessor will use the criteria for Student Assistance, Behavioral Health and School Climate assessments developed by the School Safety and Security Committee within the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to provide a comprehensive report that identifies the extent to which the school or district has met the criteria, highlighting successes and providing recommendations and resources to address any needs.

   b) Section 1303-B of the PA Public School Code requires that the assessment of the policy and training criteria consists of an evaluation of the school entity's policies/procedures and practices and requires discussions with the school entity's employees. The assessment process includes an introductory session, a meeting with each school building team and a policy/training review.

   c) Client and Assessor will agree upon a timeframe for the introductory meeting and individual school meetings. The final report will be submitted to Client between 60-90 days from the last building's interview.

2. Client shall pay the Bucks IU the following compensation for the service(s) provided under this Agreement.

a) Amount: **$5,000.00**

b) Invoice(s) will be submitted to the Client by the Bucks IU by 10 days after receipt of report.

c) Payments shall be made within 30 calendar days following the Client's receipt of invoice(s) by the Bucks IU.

3. Client agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Bucks IU, its Directors, officers, agents, workers, servants, contractors, subcontractors or employees from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, suits, damages, costs, expenses, including attorneys' fees, which arise directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, as a result of any willful or negligent act or omission of the Bucks IU.

4. Bucks IU shall not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, gender or handicap/disability in performing the duties and/or services required by this Agreement.

5. Client acknowledges and agrees that Bucks IU has developed writings, drawings, designs and other works of authorship that Bucks IU may use in the course of performance of this Agreement. Client agrees that all such materials developed by and/or used by Bucks IU are not works for hire and that Bucks IU is the sole and exclusive owner of all such materials and any copyrights therein.

6. Any change in this Agreement may be accomplished only by a written amendment executed by both Client and Bucks IU.

7. This Agreement may be terminated upon 30 days written notice by either party. If the Agreement is terminated, the Client is expected to pay Bucks IU for services rendered up to the date of termination.

8. Neither the Bucks IU nor Client may assign or transfer any interest in this Agreement without prior written consent of both parties.

9. It is understood and agreed that during the course of work under this Agreement, Client may become aware of confidential information about the Bucks IU, including but not limited to information regarding a Bucks IU employee, information about a Bucks IU student, information from a student's educational or medical records, software and computer programs, and knowledge, skills, and abilities of personnel. It is understood that Client may also become aware of similar confidential information belonging to Bucks IU and/or Bucks IU clients. It is understood and agreed that all such information is considered to be confidential and privileged under the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and cannot be disclosed for any reason. If Client uses, discloses, copies, removes, shares (either verbally, physically, or electronically) confidential information in any way that is

determined by the Bucks IU to be improper or non-work related in any manner, Client will be held liable. It is agreed by both parties that any such disclosure is grounds for immediate termination of this Agreement.

10. Any notice permitted or required under this Agreement shall be in writing and signed by the party giving or serving the same, and shall be served by either by personal delivery or certified mail to the following persons and at the following addresses:

Bucks IU:	Client:
Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22	New Hope-Solebury School District
Attn: Beth Kramer	Attn: Dr. Rose Minniti
705 N. Shady Retreat Road	180 West Bridge Street
Doylestown, PA 18901	New Hope, PA 18938

11. This Agreement includes the terms and conditions set forth in this document. This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding and agreement between the parties.

THIS AGREEMENT is signed below by the duly authorized representatives of the parties:

New Hope-Solebury School District
180 West Bridge Street
New Hope, PA 18938

Contact Name: **Dr. Rose Minniti**
Title: **Assistant Superintendent**
Phone:**215-862-5372 ext. 3294**

Email: **rminniti@nhsd.org**

Authorized Representative:

(Signature in Blue Ink)

(Date)

Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22
705 N. Shady Retreat Road
Doylestown, PA 18901

Recommended By:
Name: **Beth Kramer**
Title: **Supervisor of Safety Services**
Phone: 215-348-2940 ext. 1615
Email: **BKramer@Bucksiu.org**

Approved By:

John D'Angelo, President
Bucks IU Board of School Directors

Attest:

Michele Ruggiero, Secretary
Bucks IU Board of School Directors

(Date)