

## Curriculum and Instruction Meeting Notes

November 20, 2007

Attending: Barbara Garrity, Ray Tai, Karen Strickland, Mary Beth Currie, Barbara Duncan

Absent: Mary Hartnett

1. Italy Trip—a teacher of Italian requested approval for a trip during the summer. The Board does not approve this type of trip. However, teachers are allowed to advertise their trip after the flyer has been approved by a supervisor but the Board takes no action so as not to incur any liability for the trip. The flyer must have a disclaimer that the BOE does not sanction the trips.
2. Decades Museum—the Decades museum was created by people who donated items of historical interest. In past years, social studies teachers organized activities to use the donated items to enrich the curriculum. Given space constraints, the museum must be dismantled. In discussion, the members of the C & I committee noted that the board must carefully disburse these since they were donated for a specific use. Items that continue to be used in the Social Studies curriculum will be retained in the school. Susan Alston will follow up on this.
3. Gifted & Talented—Ms. Currie has a meeting scheduled for next week to identify assessment tools and a process to identify the students. The current plan indicates a need for a GT coordinator. There is a possibility of pairing GT coordinator position with another half time position to create one full time position. This part of the plan is **contingent on budget constraints**. Currently we will be looking toward existing staff support to coordinating curriculum. At the next C & I meeting, we will review the plan and it will be reported to the public at the January meeting.
4. Summer Enrichment Program—the program is a joint venture (originally, it was a shared services grant) with the Township. Currently it is completely managed by the Township. The BOE approves the brochure to insure that program does not overlap our curriculum. The township hires the teachers and pays them. The BOE provides buses. The question of getting the brochure out earlier was discussed. Mrs. Currie will review that with the staff.
5. The question was raised as to why the district does not offer summer school. Since the district cannot charge tuition for summer school, it would be too expensive to offer to a limited number of students a range of courses. If students fail a course, they can take it online from certain approved institutions.
6. Program of Studies
  - a. Band Requirements for performing at football games was discussed. The question is whether students who are required to perform at the two concerts should also be required to perform at football games. A discussion followed as to the definition of performance as well as the state requirements, and are we asking that these students devote a disproportionate amount of time to attend football games. Music's role in any event is to broaden the experience and make it richer. The question is do we need to offer more opportunities to encourage the students to perform and improve their craft. The band enrollment over the past few years will be investigated as well as the need to maintain this performance requirement for the band. Topics for future investigation include jazz band requirements and the status of the string program. We will continue to discuss this as the administration investigates the questions.
  - b. Visual and Performing Arts- A discussion regarding the Graduation Requirement too place. The need for a dance class is being explored **contingent on funding**.
  - c. GPA Calculations – It was suggested that there is an open question in the community that GPA should be calculated by using the numeric system. The BOE never committed to that in writing. Is there any push to do this? What would be the reason to do this? This will be an item for further discussion.

- d. Class ranking: We never publish how it is done to meet the state request for Bloustein scholars. It was noted that taking band could affect GPA. As more students take their performing arts requirement, this question will be diminished. Ms. Currie will ask Mr. Swenson to discuss this issue further.
7. The Class of 2007—where are they headed. See handout
8. NJ Assessment – We are 1/10 percentage below other I districts, which statistically is about the same as the other I districts. We are significantly above the state average. Our classified youngsters constitute an aggregate group. As a result, their achievement is reported and used as one indicator for adequate yearly progress (AYP). As reported at a prior board meeting, every sub group did meet the 41 indicators of success in the 2007 testing.
9. Learnia— to address the concern with the NJ Assessment (#8) we volunteered and were selected as a member of a pilot group of school districts to use a computerized formative assessment tool called Learnia. This tool will be used to identify students “at risk” and as a way to target specific areas of instruction. This will be available for fifth through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Susan Alston is following up with this with a committee of administrators and teachers.
10. AP class enrollment: see handout. Teachers should encourage students to take the AP exams.
11. World Language: Ms. Currie formed a task force with the language teachers to identify and address the concerns at each level. She is working on the Satz program first. It was suggested making a high-level view of K-12 program first and then focusing on Satz.
12. To enhance the writing program at the elementary levels, Ms Currie encouraged the formation of book discussion groups to guide the teacher’s discussion on improving writing and creating portfolio assessments. Jill Edwards is facilitating the book club at Village and will facilitate a professional book club at Indian Hill as well.
13. Ms Currie, with Anthony Gattini, is investigating Tech Steps- a technology literacy framework that will support our instructional program. Tech Steps addresses standards in the content areas while simultaneously addressing technology literacy.
14. Test score analysis: Ms. Currie is identifying cohorts to analyze test results over time.

#### Items for approval

1. Course/Program Proposal: Financial Markets – High School
  - a. Course is being offered in place of note taking class, which was under subscribed. This course would address an initiative to make students more financially aware and while meeting multiple core curriculum standards. The students will refer to the *Wall Street Journal*, study financial trends, and play the stock market game.
  - b. Curriculum Guides were approved:
    - Basic Skills Math,
    - Pre-calculus,
    - Science, grades 4, 5, and 6,
    - Social Studies, Grade 4

Submitted by: Karen Strickland