

Holmdel Township Board of Education
Curriculum and Instruction Committee
Meeting Notes
February 17, 2010 – 6:00PM
Central Office Conference Room

Present

Board Members: Ray Tai, Mary Hartnett, Ana Vander Woude, Mike Collins

Administrators: Barbara Duncan, Mary Beth Currie, Brian Schillaci, Elizabeth Giacobbe, Meryl Gill

Student Articulation from Village to Indian Hill – The principals of Village and Indian Hill Schools, Elizabeth Giacobbe and Brian Schillaci, gave the Committee an overview of the process for third graders moving into fourth grade at Indian Hill. Ms. Giacobbe and Mr. Schillaci meet throughout the year regarding special education articulation to ensure that programs are developed based on the individual needs of students. Teachers from Indian Hill also come to Village to take notes and give feedback in the development of programs.

Donato Saponaro, the Indian Hill assistant principal, together with Eileen Calvert, the guidance counselor, also visit Village during the year to discuss children referred to the I&RS Committee. They take notes on particular accommodations which may be necessary for children with 504 plans or unique needs.

Ongoing contact concerning the rest of the third grade population continues throughout the year. There are separate orientations for third grade students and their parents at Indian Hill and a joint letter from Ms. Giacobbe and Mr. Schillaci is sent home with the third quarter report card. In this letter, parents are asked to write to them with any thoughts they may have about their child's particular needs or learning style for consideration in the placement process.

On the first Friday in June, third grade teachers meet and form groups of four to seven students whom they feel work well together. These working groups are forwarded to Indian Hill. Many factors go into formulating the new classes and in the end, groups of two to five students will transition together from Village to their new fourth grade classes at Indian Hill.

Pre-school Curriculum – Meryl Gill, the district's Director of Special Services, presented information concerning the curriculum for Village's new preschool program. As the board may recall, the district was able to fund the expansion of this program through its receipt of ARRA funds. All start-up costs including the classroom set-up, the purchase of curriculum and professional development are funded through ARRA.

When the curriculum was being chosen, a committee composed of preschool teachers, child study team members, Mrs. Currie, Mrs. Gill, Ms. Giacobbe, a liaison from the State of New Jersey, and a preschool expert hired by the district met to go over the goals of the program. They agreed that they wanted a high quality inclusive preschool program that would meet the

needs of children at all levels. After reviewing the curriculums of several state-approved programs, the Committee felt that they preferred High Scope's curriculum.

High Scope is a state-approved, research-based program for three to five year olds which uses carefully arranged "centers" to promote active learning. For example, there is a block area, a house area, small toy area, sand-and-water area and art area. The program encourages learning in specific content areas and has a strong character education component which helps children learn how to resolve conflicts. It also has assessment tools to measure student progress and a strong professional development component. Our teachers and monitors will be spending seven days training in the program this spring.

The preschool classes are now fully enrolled for next year with a lottery for admittance. The program should be self-sustaining next year when the ARRA funds are gone.

Policy Regulation 6142.10 (The Use of Information Technology in Education)- The Committee discussed a revision to our regulation on The Use of Information Technology in Education. The district's Technology Committee will be considering more substantial changes to this policy over the coming year, but an immediate addition concerning the filtering of internet content was necessary. This change will make us compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act and states as follows:

Internet Content Filtering: In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and universal service requirements, the District will enforce a policy of Internet safety and put into operation measures to monitor the activities of minors and protect against network access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors.

Textbook Adoption: The Committee recommends the adoption of a new textbook for AP Psychology entitled 50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology: Shattering Widespread Misconceptions about Human Behavior, by Scott O. Littlefield et al. (at a cost of \$20 per book, 100 books needed.) This is a college level text, which Mrs. Currie stated uses current research to support the information presented and is recommended by the AP Booklist.

Donations - The Committee recommends the acceptance of the following generous donation of an HP ScanJet 4400c Flatbed Scanner valued at \$30 to the Holmdel School District from Matthew Goetke.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 17th, 6:00PM, Central Office Conference Room.