

Board of Education  
Newtown, CT  
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

Minutes of the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee meeting held on December 11, 2015, Conference Room One, 3 Primrose Street

M. Ku   J. Vouros   J. Evans Davila   J. Blanchard   T. Einhorn   J. Ross   L. Rodrigue

M. Ku called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion: M. Ku moved to approve the minutes of November 10, 2015 with the addition of Skeff Bisset's name included in the attendance. J. Vouros seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Participation: None

J. Blanchard reported that she has met with Dr. Kanaan regarding "sleep study," which is now under both the Health curriculum and Recovery Project. Dr. Kanaan provided a workshop for Sandy Hook staff and shared resources and websites which can be included in the Health curriculum. Age-appropriate resources are needed at each grade level; however, because we are lacking an Interim, this project has been placed on hold. In addition to updating the Health curriculum, we need to develop parental involvement through such means as parent newsletters and information provided through the Community Forum. Another suggestion is to investigate the cost of returning to a four-tier bus schedule to allow a later start time.

T. Einhorn and J. Ross discussed potential enhancements that can be achieved through a restructuring of the rotation model at Newtown Middle School. The advantages to be gained through a shift in the current structure include greater alignment with class size guidelines, extended number of instructional periods for each of the offerings within the rotation, and increased cohesion of curricular content.

L. Rodrigue provided an update on Newtown High School PLC days, which have a dual function as Personalized Learning Communities for students and Professional Learning Communities for staff. Survey data was presented as one of the components for evaluation of the PLC model. A variety of ways in which students make use of PLC time was discussed PLC for students are held 8 times a year for one hour. Students take this time to finish assignments, use the computer labs, access the Library Media Center, meet with Guidance Counselors, make-up incomplete assignments or assessments, and engage in quiet study. In addition, discussion was presented on ideas currently under consideration for expanding options available to students during PLC time, such as Advanced Placement review sessions. It was noted that PLCs provide students with a pre-college experience in developing the skills associated with self-direction of learning tasks and assignment completion. Staff has reported students arrive in the classroom after a PLC session with enhanced readiness to engage in learning tasks and increased preparation for the lesson. The NEASC Visiting Committee had an opportunity to observe PLCs at

Newtown High, and members of the team expressed enthusiasm for the model and have inquired about obtaining more information from the administration to enable them to explore the model in their own schools.

J. Evans Davila provided an update on a proposed change to a Steering Committee Model for curriculum development. Points emphasized in the discussion included the articulation of a 5-year Curriculum Cycle, prioritization of core subject areas placed within the curriculum development phase of the new cycle, streamlining of the existing curriculum committees to supplement the new model, and the development of full-day Steering Committees. The Steering Committees build capacity for professional learning in the following areas: concept-based curriculum design, assessment and rubric development, Common Core-aligned instructional practices, and teacher leadership skills. The model is anticipated to provide enhanced management of curriculum projects and funding, curriculum and resource alignment, and efficiencies in the District's capacity to update and develop curriculum and instruction.

Public Participation: none

Agenda recommendations for January 7<sup>th</sup> was discussed with tentative items being discussed that include Kindergarten update and B.E.A.T. Curriculum.

M. Ku motioned to adjourn. J. Vouros seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Schaedler

*These are draft minutes and are subject to the approval of the C and I Subcommittee*