

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Minutes
May 8, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Gamble, Chairperson
Steve Corr, Member
Kelly Unger, Member
Jerel Wohl, Member

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Jim Duffy	Dr. Rod Green	Dr. Alyssa Walloff
Paul Faulkner	Dr. Nancy Silvius	Stacy Gray-WL Coord.
Geri McMullin	Jason Bucher	
Tyler Tomlinson	John Murtha	

There was a community member present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Curriculum Committee Minutes from April 10, 2013 were approved as presented.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Revised Course of Study for 4521 – Study Abroad: Spain—Stacy Gray presented the revised course of study which includes an academic portion to the study abroad program. Approved students will attend academic sessions in the morning while in Spain and then participate in a related excursion in the afternoon. There is a final project which involves an online portfolio and the completion of a pre and post online survey. The estimated cost of the trip is approximately \$3,500 and students will receive .25 elective credit for the completion of the course. A board member asked what the prerequisites were for being selected for the trip. Ms. Gray explained that there is an application process and that students must have completed Spanish 2 with a C or better and be enrolled to take Spanish in the following school year. Students will be selected for the trip by grade order with rising seniors first, then rising juniors and finally rising sophomores. Another board member asked whether there were universities that CB could contact to provide housing. University connections are currently being investigated. A board member also asked who funds the trip and what happens to families who cannot cover the cost. Ms. Gray stated that the sole cost of the trip is on the parents and that fundraising would not be provided for the course. Another board member asked how any native speakers who would be involved as teachers for CB students would be obtained and screened. This would be completed by the tour company. A board member also asked if CB students will have the chance to intermingle with the native Spanish speaking students. Ms. Gray acknowledged that these interactions would occur during both the academic portion of the course and the excursion portion of the course. A board member asked for clarification on when this course would begin. Ms. Gray stated that since there is a lot of organization connected to Study Abroad Spain Course so the first group of students would not travel until the summer of 2014. A board member asked for clarification on what the final reflection will contain. Ms. Gray explained that the final project will be dependent upon the research style the student selected. She provided one example of creating a video journal. Students will also be responsible for completing the post online global awareness survey, and they will present the final project to the teachers leading the course. A board member also asked how evacuations and medical emergencies will be handled while in Spain. Ms. Gray explained that the tour company has plans for all emergency situations. These emergency plans would be discussed during the pre-travel parent/student meetings. The course of study will move to the next board meeting for approval.

Revised Course of Study for High School English—Dr. Walloff presented revisions to the following English courses: 0660 Becoming a Better Writer, 0674 Media Production 1, 0675 Media Production 2, and 0676 Media Production 3. Dr. Walloff explained that the 0660 course replaces the course formerly known as Academic Writing. The Becoming a Better Writer Course will focus on real-world writing. The course will begin with an emphasis on how powerful and relevant writing is to life. A large portion of the course will be based on a writing workshop where students will be able to review examples of real world writing, participate in writing real world writing pieces and conference with the teacher. The course is based on the work of author Kelly Gallagher. A board member asked how this course will address the point raised during the Alumni Panel Session which involved students needing more exposure to sophisticated research journal text during their years at CB. Dr. Walloff explained that there is a reflection component to this course and that the journal articles would be used as the real-world writing examples that students would be required to reflect. A board member also commented that Mr. Gallagher was well-received by CB teachers when he visited the district a few years ago.

Dr. Walloff also explained that the three media courses replace the communication courses. They were revised into UbD format and address the more sophisticated technology that is now available for students. Many technological skills that were in the more advanced media classes have now been moved down to the lower levels. One board member wanted verification that these courses underwent a name change. Dr. Walloff verified that the media classes replaced the communication classes. Another board member commented that perhaps students in these classes could conduct interview on CBTv. Dr. Walloff explained that the Media 2 class would involve primarily the in-building on air announcement show where as the Media 3 course contains three course assessments that could be aired on CBTv. A board member also questioned if students could test out of these courses due to their already acquired skills. Dr. Walloff and Dr. Silvius stated that there would be no testing out of these courses, but that students could take more than one course in a year, thus accelerating coursework and that assignments in the class are differentiated according to student ability level. These courses of study will move to the next board meeting for approval.

Approval of Textbook for 9103 Algebra Lab—Dr. Silvius explained that previously when students did not reach a level of proficiency on the grade 8 PSSA math test they would be placed in a Math Lab class in high school to better prepare them for the grade 11 PSSA math test. With the introduction of the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam, the Math Lab class will be replaced with an Algebra Lab class so that students who did not reach a proficient level on the test can be remediated before re-testing. As a result of the change in this course, it was necessary to begin researching the purchase of a new text. This consumable workbook was reviewed by Mr. Kratz and teachers, and they feel it is appropriately aligned to the content tested on the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam. A board member inquired about the cost of the workbook. The cost would be \$11.75 and books would not be ordered until late July when we know how many students would need to take the course based on the results of the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam administration coming up next week. A board member also asked how our students performed on the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam when it was administered in the fall. Dr. Silvius stated that they did well. The approval of this textbook will move to the next Board meeting for approval.

Revision to 9th Grade Assessment—Dr. Silvius explained the rationale for the need to make changes to the current 9th grade assessment. In the early 1990's when the 9th grade assessment was introduced, its purpose was to assess the skills of research, collaborating with peers on a task, managing time and workload, synthesizing and analyzing information. Beginning in 2002, core assessments were introduced in all core classes which utilized the same skills addressed by the 9th grade assessment. The same skills that were being measured on the core assessments spanning the course of the 9th grade year were also being measured in the stand-a-lone 9th grade assessment project. Dr. Silvius compared and

contrasted the existing 9th Grade Assessment with the new 9th Grade Assessment by highlighting the fact that the same skills will still be addressed in the new version. However, instead of the skills being measured in isolation, they will be measured through student reflection and through their core subject teachers throughout the course of the 9th grade year. Dr. Silvius shared that there would be many reflection opportunities for students in advisory sessions and in content classes after students completed core assessments. Dr. Silvius also mentioned that the reflection on the 9th Grade Assessment skills will better prepare students as they transition to 10th grade and complete the Career Cluster and Career Interest Finder which are the first stages of the Career Plan. Due to the change in the 9th Grade Assessment and the change in the Graduation Project a few years ago, we are suggesting that credit be reduced from 1.0 to .5 for the completion of both projects. A board member asked whether the completed 9th grade assessment reflection work will be available to the high school. Dr. Silvius acknowledged that it would be possible. Another board member asked how students will get feedback since most of the work being done is reflection. Dr. Silvius explained that the feedback will be given by the content teachers as students reflect on the select 9th grade assessment skills after the completion of the core assessments. A board member also asked how we will get students to take the reflection seriously. Mr. Murtha explained that since some of the reflection will occur during the content classes, the teachers will be able to monitor the reflection, and provide guidance for students on how to improve skills.

Graduation Requirements Policy 217—Dr. Silvius presented the changes to Policy 217 which included changes in some wording as recommended by PSBA, the change in the requirements of the Scholars' Diploma from a GPA requirement of a 3.2 to a GPA requirement of a 3.4 beginning with the Class of 2016, the 2017 requirement by the Pa Department of Education that students must be proficient on all three Keystone Exams (Biology, Algebra 1, Literature), and the reduction of the total performance assessment credit (9th grade assessment and The Career Plan) from 1.0 to .5.

Awarding of Credit – Other Educational Experiences Policy 217.3—Dr. Silvius explained that the revision to this policy was limited to including online classes as one of the only alternate experiences that is typically used by CB students. The changes in this policy reflect clarifying wording.

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes submitted by Dr. Nancy Silvius, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education and Administrative Liaison to the Curriculum Committee. The next meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2013, 7:00 PM.