

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Minutes
March 13, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kelly Unger, Member
Stephen Corr, Member

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Paul Faulkner
Joe Jagelka
Geri McMullin
Dr. Rod Green
Dr. Nancy Silvius
Dr. David Weitzel
Mr. Richard Kratz

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

John Gamble, Chair
Jerel Wohl, Member

There were community members present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marianne Schmidt commented on eight graders taking both Advanced Science and Advanced Social Studies and also on a sequence chart for 7th and 8th grade math courses.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Curriculum Committee Minutes from February 13, 2013 were approved as presented.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Accelerated Algebra Pre-requisite—Richard Kratz, K-12 Math Supervisor, presented data findings on the pre-requisite for Accelerated Algebra is 90% or teacher recommendation. Parents of students with B+ or higher may request an override to place students in Accelerated Algebra.

One board member asked if parents have taken advantage of this override and Mr. Kratz responded that a few have with differences in their grades compared to those students who had met the 90% pre-requisite.

Accelerated Algebra is the complete course in algebra presented in one year. There are eleven fast-paced units and the Keystone Algebra is taken at the end of the course. Proficiency on this exam is a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2017.

The 90% pre-requisite was determined by looking at projected data and historical data. We sought to verify the 90% pre-requisite by looking at current data through the end of first semester 2012-2013. Recent Keystone Algebra results show 85% of students with a 90% pre-requisite scored proficient/advanced while 52% with a B average in Pre-Algebra scored proficient/advanced.

One board member asked what happens to a student's schedule who decides to 'double-up' on math in a high school year. Mr. Kratz and others responded that this does take up more spaces in the schedule but there are sufficient open spaces to allow this and these are students who like math.

One board member commented that a 'take-away' for parents from this 90% pre-requisite discussion is the extreme importance of this algebra course—whether taken in one year or two years.

Teacher Effectiveness—Dr. David Weitzel presented the latest updates on Teacher Effectiveness. Much of the information from PDE regarding the new teacher effectiveness or teacher evaluation system has been changing in the past year.

Act 82 of 2012 states that teachers will be evaluated on 50% from observations and 50% on student achievement by 2015-2016. We will gradually ease into this model with 85% observations and 15% student achievement for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

One board member asked if the principal completes the in-class observation. Dr. Weitzel confirmed that principals and supervisors who are classified as administrators complete observations.

Act 82 requires four levels of ratings: Distinguished, Proficient, Needs Improvement and Failing. (Only Failing is Unsatisfactory). A second Needs Improvement in ten years will convert to an Unsatisfactory. Ratings for teachers are not subject to a Right-to-Know request.

One board member asked if Teacher Effectiveness was approved by the Union (PSEA). Dr. Weitzel confirmed that PSEA was involved with PDE in writing the guidelines.

Many questions were asked by board members including:

- Who would police the implementation rubric to evaluate teachers? PDE
- Are penalties built into the evaluation system for districts? NO
- Will the implementation of Teacher Effectiveness in September 2013 affect the agreement with CBEA now in effect? This is not subject to collective bargaining. Act 82 supersedes the collective bargaining agreement.
- Under the new system, if a teacher receives a Needs Improvement, will a needs improvement plan be written? YES

One board member commented that the similarities in Central Bucks' present observation system and the new PDE "Danielson" framework provides affirmation for us.

Adjustments to 9th Grade Assessment—Dr. Nancy Silvius provided information to the committee on meetings/discussions in progress with middle school teachers and administrators to make adjustments to the ninth grade assessment. Board members commented on the credit requirement. Dr. Green added that the credit value may be adjustment also. We expect any charges to be brought to the Curriculum Committee by June 2013 for implementation next September 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

Minutes submitted by Dr. Nancy Silvius, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education and Administrative Liaison to the Curriculum Committee.