

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Notes
February 11, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Steve Corr
James Duffy
Paul Faulkner
Geri McMullin
Dr. David Weitzel
Dr. David Bolton
Dr. Nancy Silvious

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beth Darcy commented on the procedure for students who might opt-out of PSSA testing. Dr. Weitzel clarified that those students will go to another space in the building, such as the library. Mrs. Darcy also commented on building substitutes. Dr. Weitzel clarified that many options to increase the pool of substitutes were being investigated.

Sharon Collopy commented on committee meeting minutes now being called 'meeting notes'. Dr. Weitzel clarified that the term 'minutes' only applies to full school board meetings and those are approved. Committee meeting information is referred to as 'notes' because they do not include any action items and only serve as a written reminder of what was discussed. Committee meeting notes do not require approval but are provided as part of the full school board packet each month.

Dr. Weitzel also clarified the term 'pre-deliberation'. It indicates items that the committee is asked to provide input on before it is presented to the full board. To prevent inaccurate information from being disseminated, these 'pre-deliberation' items are only given to the board members present for the deliberation. All of these items are later presented to the public prior to any action being taken by the board. The most common examples of 'pre-deliberation' items are school board policies and courses of study. These items may be presented to the public if the items require school board approval.

PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES

There were no changes

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

Recommendation for Course of Study: Study Abroad France (pre-deliberation)—Stacy Gray presented the course of study for the Study Abroad France elective course. Approved students will attend academic sessions in the morning while in France and then participate in related activities 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 Study Abroad is approximately \$4189 and students will receive .25 elective credit for the completion of the course. Ms. Gray explained that there is an application process and that students must be enrolled in French class. Students will be selected for Study Abroad by grade order with rising seniors first, then rising juniors and finally rising sophomores. The travel portion to France is managed by EF Tours (Education First). They will book all necessary travel and accommodations. Travel is planned for July 25 to August 3, 2016. Students in the course will meet for four months prior to departure and will also present their final project in September 2016. Board members asked if the EF Tour director who accompanies CB students while in France will have necessary clearances. Ms. Gray confirmed that the person is employed by EF Tours, a company in the U.S., and they require the necessary employment credentials. A Board member also asked if there are arrangements to bring students home in the middle of the trip if any need arises. Ms. Gray explained emergency plans are available for different situations. Another related question regarded trip

cancellations due to world events. Dr. Silvius and Ms. Gray explained that if world events created a travel advisory to France, then EF would cancel the trip. It was mentioned by a Board member that trip insurance would cover other kinds of cancellations. This course was recommended by the committee for approval by the Board at a future meeting.

PDE Requirements for PSSA/Keystone Exclusions—Paul Beltz provided an NCLB and State testing update, specifically addressing its mandates for students who are not assessed. Parents may request to review the state test (PSSA or Keystone) to determine if the state test is in conflict with their religious beliefs. Parents must make an appointment to review the test in the school once the tests arrive at the school. Parent must sign a PDE Confidentiality. If parents believe that the test is in conflict with their religious belief, they must write a letter to the Superintendent stating the request for exclusion due to conflict with their religious beliefs. A Board member asked for clarification on how the test could be in conflict with religious beliefs.

If parents waives a child out of a Keystone exam, then the project-based assessment must be completed by the student. The project-based assessment will be completed during a course so the student must take the course. The project is estimated to take 14-20 hours to complete.

A Board member asked about provisions for special education students who do not pass the Keystone exam. Students may graduate based on successfully achieving IEP goals.

Elementary Reading Instruction Using iPads—Mr. Paul Beltz, district Reading Supervisor, presented on how iPads have been incorporated into Reading instruction in grades 1 and 2. The iPads are used during large group, small group, as well as independent practice. During independent practice, the iPads are utilized during every aspect of the Daily 5 Reading routine – reading to self, listening to reading, reading to others, word work, and working on writing. A video created by Ms. Jamie Lemon, a second grade teacher at Cold Spring, was used to demonstrate students using the iPads during each of these five areas.

Mr. Beltz commented that all classrooms, grades kindergarten through second, will have five student iPads by the end of March. Staff development for all teachers is scheduled for Friday, February 13. Dr. Weitzel commented on his recent visit to Pine Run where he observed the iPads in action. He was impressed by the level of engagement and meaningful assessments that were as a result of our talented teachers utilizing an effective technology tool.

Additional Announcements—Dr. Weitzel provided information on a recent meeting with Superintendent Student Advisory where he shared results of the PA Youth Survey. Students talked about the stress they feel coming from getting into “first tier” colleges and from themselves not feeling satisfied with their personal best rather than “the best”.

Dr. Weitzel also reported that Board meetings will be streamed live as well as podcasted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next scheduled meeting is March 11, 2015.

ADJOURNMENT

Notes submitted by Dr. Nancy Silvius, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education