

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Notes
May 13, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Geri McMullin Dr. David Weitzel Scott Berger
Joe Jagelka Dr. David Bolton Laura E'Nama
Dr. Nancy Silvious

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES

There were no changes

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

Course of Study for 7th Grade Science: Interactions of Matter, Energy and Life—Laura E'Nama, K-12 Supervisor of Science, presented the revisions to the Grade 7 science course of study. Units on matter, energy and ecology remain with a fourth unit being added on cells and heredity. Greater emphasis is now placed on the inquiry approach to teaching science. Topics previously included in the animal unit will integrate into the ecology unit. In answer to a board member's question, Mrs. E'Nama explained that the constructivist approach to teaching science is teaching through inquiry and problem solving.

7th Grade Science Flexbooks—Laura E'Nama presented the four science resource books from cK-12 Foundation which are being requested for the revised Grade 7 science course. The foundation provides customizable, online tests, called flexbooks. Each one includes images, video and interactives. Several science teachers have been piloting these flexbooks with positive feedback. Flexbooks can be accessed from any computer, tablet or mobile device. They are free to download and print. We will print classroom sets of bound editions.

Because of the spiraling nature of our science curriculum, i.e., exposing students to physical, earth and life science topics with increasing complicity in each grade, traditional texts are not usable. They tend to focus on one discipline and do not cover all of the content in the 7th Grade curriculum.

Teachers who piloted cK-Flexbooks have seen the importance of online flexibility with audios, videos and interactives and the ability to customize.

Board members commented on the flexibility of flexbooks and the quality of contributors to cK-12 Foundation.

Mrs. E'Nama also updated the committee on some science activities going on in middle schools beyond the curriculum, such as The Hour of Code, developed by Erika Gamble, science teacher at Tamanend, who designed this activity for the entire school as a mental exercise during PSSA testing. Holicong also used this activity. Other activities include Science Olympiad, Science Fair, You Be a Chemist, STEM Design Challenge at BCIU, SKYPE in the Classroom, and Family Lab Night.

Both the Course of Study and the flexbooks will be considered for approval by the Board.

Textbook for Geography Elective: *Geography Alive! Regions and People*—Scott Berger, K-12 Supervisor of Social Studies, presented a textbook for consideration for the new Geography elective course. Approximately 55 students in each high school have registered for the new course for next school year. The textbook presented has

an online version for those students who wish to access on personal devices. The textbook aligns with the focus of the course: interpreting maps and geographical data, connections to physical geography, and defining regions. This textbook was reviewed by teachers and received unanimous approval. Textbook will be considered for approval by the Board.

Textbook for AP United States History: *America's History, For the AP Course, 8th Edition*—Scott Berger also presented for approval a new textbook for AP United States History. The course has been updated by College Board and this new text aligns with the shift in emphasis to skill sets. Teachers reviewed a selection of available AP texts for this course and selected this to be piloted at CB East this year. Reviews from the pilot are very positive. Request is being made for a hard cover textbook for course; there are online resources including an interactive ebook. Students in the pilot have preferred having a hard copy text rather than only an online text. This text has the unanimous approval of the district AP U.S. teachers. Textbook will be considered for approval by the Board.

Review of Policy 249—Bullying/Cyberbullying—Much discussion ensued around the topic of bullying and cyberbullying. This policy must be reviewed every three years as required by PDE. Board members suggested some word changes which will be reflected in the copy that goes to the Board for first reading. One board member asked if the district solicitor had reviewed this policy. Dr. Weitzel indicated it was reviewed in November 2012 and would be reviewed again before final approval/renewal. Board members made suggestions affecting implementations practices, such as making a student feel safe when reporting bullying to school personnel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next scheduled meeting is September 9, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

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