

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Notes
May 18, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sharon Collopy, Chair
Karen Smith, Member
Dennis Weldon, Member

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Meg Evans	Dr. David Bolton	Jonathan Taylor
Paul Faulkner	Matt Gale	Jonathan Boyle
Glenn Schloeffel	Richard Kratz	

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Jerel Wohl, Member

PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES

The meeting notes from the March 9, 2016 and April 14, 2016 meetings were reviewed and approved without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brady Boylan, Eileen Henry-Plante and Nancy Santacecilia spoke about the weighting of courses in 9th grade. Cheryl Giacomelli spoke about the Everyday Math 4 program.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

Proposed Approval of Technology and Engineering Courses:

Mr. Jonathan Boyle, Assistant Principal at Tamanend Middle School, Mr. Matt Gale, House Principal at Central Bucks High School South, and Mr. Jonathan Taylor, Technology and Engineering Education Teacher at Central Bucks High School West presented two revised courses for middle school and four revised courses for high school. The middle school courses were revised to incorporate units in coding. The high school courses were revised to combine current architecture courses with engineering topics. The new high school course will be about 50% of each content area.

The courses presented were:

1. Foundations of Engineering (Middle School)
2. Principles of Engineering (Middle School)
3. Exploring Engineering and Architecture (High School)
4. Engineering and Architecture 1 (High School)
5. Engineering and Architecture 2 (High School)
6. Engineering and Architecture 3 (High School)

All courses were recommended to be placed on a future Board meeting agenda for consideration of approval.

Everyday Math 4 – update on material review:

Mr. Richard Kratz, District Math Supervisor, presented an update on the review process of the Everyday Math 4 program. Twenty-two teachers have met since February to review the materials and incorporate some of them in to their classroom. The committee was impressed by the resources and quality of the activities. They found the program very different in terms of content covered and that it would require extensive training for teachers to implement effectively.

The committee unanimously voted to recommend that the district not consider Everyday Math 4 at this time and, rather, to follow the normal Math curriculum review cycle. During the 2016-2017 school year, the district will select programs to pilot during the 2017-2018 school year. Teachers will be fully trained during the 2018-2019 school year with the new program implemented for the 2019-2020 school year.

Questions were asked by the Board regarding the timing of the pilot, other programs that may be considered, strengths and weaknesses of the current program, and details for addressing traditional algorithms in the current program.

Response to Public Comment – High School Music Scheduling:

Dr. Bolton presented an overview of music scheduling at the high school level and the research he did regarding two issues raised during public comment in January and February: Can core subject classes be offered during A/B schedule? and Are music students at a disadvantage in terms of GPA because of the A/B scheduling?

Dr. Bolton ran a sample schedule in which he scheduled the most common Honors course on an A/B schedule for the current 10th graders at Central Bucks High School West. His research found that:

1. The best case scenario is that 43% of music students could take the Honors course.
2. The class size for non-music students would increase by 2 students per section.
3. The number of scheduling conflicts would rise for both music and non-music students.
4. Both students and core teachers would have more classes – lessening one of the benefits of block scheduling.

In looking at GPA and class rank data from the past three school years, Dr. Bolton reported that music students are well-represented. On average, music students are 25% of the total but they represent 31% of the top 20 students in any given year. Accommodations are routinely granted for music students who are looking to schedule 27 week Advanced Placement courses.

Update on the Elementary Reporting System – adding parents to the revision committee

Dr. Bolton presented a proposal regarding revisions to the Elementary Reporting Document. For the 2016-2017 school year, he will meet with the current Advisory group to lessen the number of Success Standards and Learning Descriptors. Grades will be added to the report for students in grades 5 and 6 and Dr. Bolton will meet with those teachers to discuss this change and how best to accommodate both letter grades and standards on the same report.

A group consisting of teachers, parents, administrators, and Board members will begin meeting in June in order to make a recommendation on a new elementary reporting document for the 2017-2018 school year. Committee members stressed the importance of parent involvement and communication throughout this process. Regular updates will be shared through the Curriculum Committee and Home and School Associations.

Update on the Weighting of 9th grade Core Courses:

Dr. Bolton reported that the curriculum supervisors met with 9th grade teachers in March and all agreed to develop weighted Honors courses in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies for the 2017-2018 school year. Curriculum development will begin in the summer and continue through next school year. New courses should be ready for consideration in the spring of 2017. Ms. Collopy asked Dr. Bolton to consider if Spanish 2 should also be offered as an honors course.

NEXT MEETING

Date and time of a potential June meeting will be determined at a later date based on availability and agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

Notes submitted by Dr. David Bolton, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education