

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Minutes
October 5, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ms. Sharon Collopy, Chair
Ms. Karen Smith

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Mr. John Kopicki Dr. Davidheiser Dr. Bolton
Ms. Beth Darcy Mr. Glenn Schloeffel Mr. Jason Jaffe
Mr. Richard Kratz

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mr. Dennis Weldon
Mr. Jerel Wohl

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes from the September 14, 2016 meeting were reviewed and approved without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

INFORMATION DISCUSSION ITEMS

“OneNote for a Paperless Classroom Environment” Jason Jaffe, Director of Technology and Innovation, reviewed the *OneNote* Microsoft Suite software component as the web application that has a wide potential for use in classroom instruction. A video illustration of *OneNote* classroom use (St. Thomas School in North Carolina) demonstrated the software effectiveness connecting teacher, students, (and parents) in instruction, notetaking, collaboration, real time comment on student work by the teacher, and even voice feedback which expanded paths to learning. Jason introduced Josh Hoskins, Social Studies teacher at CB-East, as a best-use example of effectively supporting instruction in the new “paperless” environment. Josh’s students are all online. He explained the development of his full integration of instruction into the *OneNote* base over the last two years and how it has organized his instruction and response to student work, facilitated keeping instruction materials current, speeds up his daily preparation of lessons, and documents by daily agenda with links to what is covered in each lesson keeping students fully informed. Each student has access to the daily lessons, can copy documents and annotate notes directly on those documents in their own *OneNote* notebook. The student notebook becomes the submission tool for homework. Monitoring student collaboration in *OneNote* in real time, the teacher is able to view student work and as a “fly on the wall” provide redirection, comment, and student accountability. As Jason noted earlier, use of *OneNote* is not mandated at this time, but the hope is that in the future it will become the instructional tool of choice. Video of a CB student testimonial acknowledged how very helpful use of the *OneNote* was in easing the classroom focus on notetaking by students, freeing their attention for more complete engagement during class time. Mr. Kopicki asked whether all students could access the *OneNote* outside of the district. The full current class has access, however if situations arose where a student did not have access, this could be accommodated by download of document hard copies, or by accessing online through library computer. Mr. Kopicki asked about the transition to the online format for students—were

there difficulties adjusting? Josh indicated the beginning of the school year showed a two- to three-week learning curve was all that was required. Mr. Kopicki asked if it would be worthwhile to initiate the paperless classroom in earlier grades? There are seventh grade classrooms where this format is in the experimental stage. Ms. Darcy asked what equipment could be used to access the classroom *OneNote*. Josh indicated the *OneNote* was accessible by smartphones as well as computers. In his classroom, some students bring their own computers to class. (Smartphone use is discouraged in the classroom as the potential is greater for distractions to arise.) Jason Jaffe added a technical feature note that within *OneNote* there is a writing tool that facilitates annotation on documents within the notebook as well.

Elementary and Secondary Music Technology Update Michael Gruver, the new Music Curriculum Coordinator, began his update with focus on the use of new software at the middle school level. Three software titles are currently being piloted in the seventh grade choirs in all five middle schools. *Soundation4Education* is a music-making application that enables students to create, record, edit, and mix their work. It is accessible to students at home as well. *Musitian First* teaches students lessons in chords, scales, terms, rhythm, cadences, and melody. Instruction includes identifying instruments and understanding their range and function in full composition scores. Assessment tasks are accessible by students in school or at home. *Noteflight* software is an amazingly flexible music annotation tool that gives users the ability to compose in a variety of different formats, adjust, record, mix and save the compositions. Performance and assessment tools round out the features of this software. Mr. Gruver noted that these three software selections offer differentiated instruction that engages a wide range of learning styles.

The second music technology program being piloted in three elementary schools this year (Cold Spring, Barclay, and Doyle elementaries) focuses on use of electronic keyboards to instruct second through sixth grade students in concepts of rhythm and melody. The music keyboard lab at Cold Spring was purchased with B101 Choir Competition prize money, while district funding for the Barclay and Doyle keyboard labs was approved by Dr. Bolton as a pilot project for this year. The teachers chosen to implement the pilot all have strong keyboarding skills. Results of the pilot application will determine whether the program is expanded to other schools. Mr. Schloeffel asked if there is keyboard instruction beyond the elementary level? If not, he would like to see whether keyboard instruction could be incorporated into the curriculum to build student confidence in public performance.

Mr. Gruver noted that other software that has facilitated formative assessment in the music classrooms includes the iPEVO application—an example would be taking photograph of a musical score then making annotations on the classroom screen while explaining the components of the score, and the Garage Band application that can play what is on an iPad through a keyboard, or record keyboard performance to an iPad. Mr. Gruver thanked the Board for their support of these pilot programs and endeavors.

Ms. Darcy commented that the middle school software features would enable student musicians in piano and guitar to develop their skills outside the classroom as well.

AP Reader Program for Teachers David Scarpill, math instructor at CB-East, described his experiences as a College Board AP statistics reader. His experience as an AP statistics instructor for 19 years notwithstanding, his overall enthusiasm for the experience led to his recommendation for all AP instructors to participate as an opportunity for personal instructional development. He has participated in the experience for the past two years. Last year's experience took place in Kansas City, Missouri. There were 850 AP reviewers (college professors and high school instructors both) who were trained for four hours to

evaluate two of the six free response questions on the AP statistics exam. In 2015 there were 250,000 AP statistics test takers. Over a seven-day period these reviewers graded their assigned questions according to the established response rubric. All costs for the experience are covered by the College Board. Reviewers work from 8 a.m. to 5 pm. each day, and have professional development offered in the evening that included panel discussions with former chief AP readers, best practices sharing, and additional review training on those questions that were not specifically assigned to you as a participant. The experience provided Mr. Scarpill greater understanding of the AP exam expectations and overall positive professional development. Mr. Scarpill noted there are a number of subject areas where there is need for AP readers. Mr. Schloeffel asked Mr. McGlone whether he felt the AP reader experience was worthwhile? Mr. Chris McGlone, math teacher at CB-South, who had been an AP reader on four separate occasions, shared that participation by more teachers could enhance professional development within CB. Mr. Schloeffel noted that timing of the AP reader sessions, the first two weeks of June, would be a stumbling block since the district is still in session, and the vacancy rate is high during that time. Ms. Darcy asked how is this handled by other districts—are other districts approving AP reader participation? Mr. Scarpill indicated the co-readers he had spoken to from neighboring districts were approved as conference attendees by their administrations.

Update on the Middle School Survey Dr. Scott Davidheiser indicated that the survey is in its final stages of preparation and should be transmitted within a week in a community blast, through the web, and Facebook. The survey will be open for two weeks, then the results of the survey will be shared with the community in the form of a white paper. Continued review will include groups of teachers, high school students, and a parent advisory group. We are in the fifth year of the schedule change initiated in 2012. Ms. Collopy indicated that this survey would be of the current grades 7 to 12, and she would like to see that responses could also be included from those who are current college freshman for their perspective on the schedule before and after the schedule change. Dr. Davidheiser indicated that the depth and scope of the survey questions will be eliciting more in-depth view by students of their current experience by nature of the questions. Mr. Kopicki noted that research has been done for qualitative questions in the survey that will provide good solid data for an improved schedule down the road.

Update on Elementary Math Curriculum Selection Mr. Richard Kratz noted that the variety of math program options to be reviewed has been increased from nine to 11 with the addition of two programs, *Investigations in Number, Data & Space*, and *Bridges in Mathematics*. In the recent trip to the Baltimore School District, their staff spoke favorably regarding the *Investigations* program, and a nearby school district, Avon Grove, is currently using the *Bridges* software—a discussion with their district staff regarding their outcomes is planned for the near future. Special education teachers are included in the math program review committee, as currently special education is using a different program than regular education, it would be more effective if both sides of math instruction participate in the search to see if there is one program that will meet all needs. Ms. Darcy asked if any programs include special education instruction as well as regular education. Mr. Kratz noted that any program can provide additional guidance for special education instruction, however finding one that provides both fully is a ‘perfect world’ goal. The math review committee met on September 29. All 15 buildings are represented in the committee, and discussions elicited information on what the teachers are looking for in their ideal program in order to establish a rubric for program reviews. The committee was apprised of the long term plan for the process, time commitment, and what the pilot timeframe would look like. With 11 programs to review, the goal is for the committee

to carefully review two programs a month. Mr. Kratz plans to have publishers come in and present their programs with prior knowledge of what the district is looking for in their final choice. Each grade level team has selected two instructional topics essential to their grade to sharpen their focus on what is being offered by each potential program. Two key drivers to the process: (1) the program *must* teach all PA core standards, and (2) reviewers must keep open minds when viewing each program. The first two programs for review are already available to committee members digitally.

Ms. Darcy asked whether public comment on technology used to teach basic math facts was taken into account. Mr. Kratz indicated it would be ideal if the program selected would help with fact fluency drills *and* differentiation of instruction. Mr. Kopicki commented on a fourth grade math class he visited working on multiplication, and asked whether alternative algorithms were being taught. Mr. Kratz noted that the “extra math” online program practices math fact fluency up to 12 x 12, a time test done digitally so that teachers can determine where there are learning gaps for focusing extra work. Ten of the 11 math programs to be reviewed by the committee will include alternative algorithms, which teach making sense based on place values.

Update on Elementary Report Card Dr. David Bolton noted that the report card committee is meeting twice a month, and at the last meeting (September 26) reviewed the 42 “perfect” documents that were prepared by each of the committee members. They were able to come up with six consensus documents after working in small groups that Dr. Bolton is pleased to report show further consensus among the six documents. Mr. Schloeffel noted that he has heard good comments regarding the detail, planning, and discussion of the committee meetings coming from parent members of the committee. Mr. Kopicki commented on the good meeting preparation and engagement of all participants. He believes parents will be very pleased with the outcome.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.