

CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Committee Minutes
November 9, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sharon Collopy, Chair
Karen Smith
Dennis Weldon
Jerel Wohl

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Beth Darcy	Mr. John Kopicki	Ms. Stacy Gray
Glen Schloeffel	Dr. Bolton	Mr. Scott Berger
	Dr. Davidheiser	

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

None

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes from the October 5, 2016 meeting were reviewed and approved without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Spanish 1 Series Course Recommendation and Textbook Adoption—Ms. Gray, World Language Curriculum Coordinator, presented on the course revision for Spanish 1. This course is offered in 8th grade and at the high school level. As explained in the presentation this course of study is separated into four strands using the Understanding by Design model. *Strand 1: Leisure Activities*, *Strand 2: Social, Personal, School and Professional Life*, *Strand 3: Health and* *Strand 4: Nature and Environment*. Each strand includes essential questions and enduring understandings that reinforce the World Language Learning Principles and National World Language ACTFL Standards based on the five C's: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons and Communities. Each strand includes recurring themes throughout the course. The five teacher-created, skills-based components that comprise our final exam are also included in the course of study. These assessments were created in order to promote fluency in the target language as well as cultural proficiency. The new course of study will include authentic perspectives and students will have access to updated cultural information as well as the option to access all resources online. The new course of study will be aligned with the AP curriculum beginning in level 1 in order to ensure vertical articulation. The new course of study will also include many of the 21st century skills that are essential for learners today.

Ms. Gray also presented a new textbook for Spanish 1—*Santillana's Español*. The Spanish teachers attended presentations by five publishers beginning in February of 2016. In August of 2016 they voted and narrowed the choice down to four. Those four publishers then presented again on October 5, 2016. A Quia survey was then used so that the teachers could vote on their preferred series; Santillana's Español was the program that emerged as the superior resource. The Spanish teachers were given a rating form to fill out during each presentation so that they could compare and contrast each publisher's product. They were also given a trial period so that they could explore the online resources offered by each publisher and a page in One Note to offer feedback. This series aligns with the AP Spanish course beginning in level one, contains enrichment libraries with authentic sources and more than 60 multimedia speaking and listening activities per unit. It also contains the largest collection of authentic Spanish literature in the world. This textbook is unique in that it presents a journey in each unit that involves four challenges that are presented within a cultural context. Students are using vocabulary, grammar and culture in order to problem-solve and predict the outcome of each challenge presented. The four

challenges are reoccurring throughout the book. Ms. Gray explained that this new textbook also includes listening and reading components that our current textbook does not offer. Teachers found this to be very valuable.

Ms. Collopy questioned if the goal was still communication and Ms. Gray expressed that communication in the target language has always been one of the goals and will continue to be. Mr. Schloeffel questioned that on the slide presentation one of the essential questions in the Nature and the Environment strand it talks about 'global stewardship' and ask what that means. Mr. Weldon expressed concern that more and more subjects are now focusing on environmental issues. Ms. Gray explained that the Nature and Environment strand also includes animals and habitats in the Spanish culture not just the environment. Ms. Gray gave an example that students could pick the topic of recycling and would need to know how to explain the topic in the target language. Spanish, and the other languages, are always trying to be more cross-curricular.

Ms. Darcy asked about Spanish 1 and how does the class differ when it is 8th graders in the course versus when a high school student takes the course. Ms. Gray explained that at the high school level that many of the students that are in Spanish 1 are mostly students that are at different learning levels, these students are often taking a language for this first time at the high school level. Ms. Darcy asked if the classes are grouped differently at the high school level to have all the students who are taking a language for the first time in a class versus a class of students that are switching to a new language. Ms. Gray explained that every effort is made but scheduling will at times not always work to have those very specific groups but Ms. Gray explained that most of the special education students will have an aide with them for additional support.

Ms. Smith asked about the strands and asked if the 'arts' can be brought into the course of study. Ms. Gray explained that the 'arts' are brought into the course during the colors and numbers unit. The arts are also covered in more depth in the culture unit at the higher levels of Spanish.

Ms. Collopy asked if there was a workbook available. Ms. Gray explained that this textbook does not come with a workbook and stated that many of the students in the past have not been buying the workbook. This textbook comes with an online workbook option and other online resources. Ms. Gray explained that for those families that cannot access the online materials, teachers will have the ability to print out what is needed for those students.

Ms. Darcy asked if there are online resources available and Ms. Gray explained that this textbook comes with several online resources.

Ms. Collopy questioned if the new course of study and textbook would be used through levels 1-4 starting in 2017 and would these resources be available to be used with our current students. Ms. Gray explained that if approved by the Board then we would move forward with implementing these changes beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and would not recommend trying to implement these changes with the current students.

Mr. Weldon asked if an order for textbooks go out for quote—Ms. Darcy explained that we are not required to go with the lowest bidder for textbooks.

Mr. Kopicki questioned the review cycle for our courses and textbooks. Ms. Gray explained that the language teachers are consistently reviewing materials but courses are reviewed formally every four years. Mr. Kopicki also questioned why the current textbook is from 2006 and why wasn't the book revised when the course was revised in 2012. Ms. Gray explained that the course was revised in 2012

to be in the Understanding by Design format and Dr. Davidheiser explained that most of our textbooks can be used for a cycle longer than four years.

Mr. Schloeffel questioned the book cost, the quantity of books that would be needed, and is there any negotiating with the publisher on the cost. It was explained at this time we are estimating that we would need to purchase approximately 1288 books based on our current enrollment and price is always negotiated with our publishers when it comes to large quantities.

The Committee has agreed to move to the Course of Study revision and the textbook to the full Board in December.

AP Psychology—Request for Approval—Mr. Scott Berger, Supervisor K-12 Social Studies, presented information on Advanced Placement Psychology. We currently offer a Psychology elective course and Mr. Berger showed the enrollment in this course over the years at each of our high schools. Ms. Collopy questioned why the enrollment at Central Bucks East was higher. It was explained that this is an elective course and more student chose the course at East and also the overall enrollment is higher at East. Dr. Davidheiser explained that course enrollment is driven by course selection based on what a student elects.

The course overview as explained by College Board is that this course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the psychologists and studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with such topics as the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatment of abnormal behavior, and social psychology. Throughout the course, students employ psychological research methods, including ethical considerations, as they use the scientific method, analyze bias, evaluate claims and evidence, and effectively communicate ideas. Mr. Berger explained that this course is very challenging, similar to the other AP course offerings. Mr. Berger reviewed the exam explaining that this exam has two sections—Section 1 is multiple choice and Section 2 is free response.

This course would be offered to students in grades 10, 11, and 12. This course will still be an elective course and will count towards elective credit. The AP course can be used as a 12th grade Social Studies credit. This course will be a 36-week course and would be offered on A/B day. If approved, a team of teachers will develop the course syllabus, course of studies and review textbook options. Teachers would also be required to attend College Board training sessions in the summer and throughout the year.

Ms. Collopy asked who will teach this course. Mr. Berger explained that this is still a Social Studies course and just like the regular Psychology course this AP course will also be taught by a Social Studies teacher. Ms. Collopy question if the regular Psychology course would be pre-requisite for the AP Course. Mr. Berger explained that there will no pre-requisites for the AP course.

Ms. Collopy questioned why are we offering this on the A/B day schedule. Dr. Davidheiser explained that this option would appeal to the music students who are currently on the A/B schedule and this option would also appeal to other students who would like to have more elective choices on the A/B schedule to be able to fit more into their schedule.

Ms. Collopy expressed that she would prefer that both the A/B, 36-week and the everyday 18-week option be offered. Ms. Collopy expressed that she does not want to cater to just the music students. This prompted much discussion among the committee members and it was asked if both an 18-week course

and a 36-week course could be offered. Dr. Davidheiser explained that offering both options will create scheduling conflicts and we would not have enough students to fill both course offerings but will offer the course both ways in the first year to see how successful it will be.

Mr. Schloeffel asked if we could survey our current music students, including the 9th grade music students, and see what they would be interested in taking the AP Psychology course on the A/B schedule opposite of their music classes. Dr. Davidheiser said that this could be done.

Ms. Darcy asked if we can offer more courses on the A/B schedule. Dr. Davidheiser explained that we are looking into offering other courses on the A/B schedule to appeal to the music students. Beginning 2017-2018 we will also offer AP Language in 11th grade on the A/B schedule. Ms. Collopy expressed that the guidance counselors need to do a better job of letting students know that some courses are available on the A/B schedule.

Mr. Schloeffel asked about the AP Psychology course development. Mr. Berger explained this is a College Board course and that College Board dictates what will be taught in the course. Teachers will work on the course development to make it their own, but the overall course is already developed by College Board.

It was asked when this course would begin. The hope is to begin offering this course in the 2017-2018 school year. Dr. Davidheiser is bringing this course to the committee now so that the full Board could approve in December because program planning begins in January and we would need to include this course offering in our program of studies booklet for the 2017-2018 school year.

There was much discussion around scheduling. Ms. Darcy expressed concern that there are issues with music students and the block schedule. Non-music students have a study hall and are not always able to get the courses they want and that we need to look into other A/B options. Mr. Schloeffel asked if we are considering any other AP courses. Mr. Kopicki asked if we cap the number of students in a class. Mr. Wohl asked about courses with low enrollment. Dr. Davidheiser explained that we do have a max seat count for courses and that we do have courses that will run below 20 students in a class. Core courses try to stay within the max seat number while some courses will have an odd number of student requesting the course so the split is not always equal in a class to run two sections. It is decision on a case-by-case bases on what class will run when the split is not equal. Dr. Davidheiser cautioned having too many offerings when our enrollment is dropping—we are not gaining any more students so the number of students we have are just being reallocated. The more we offer can be harmful because not all students will be able to get courses if enrollment is not sufficient enough to run the course. Every effort is made to settle conflicts with students' schedules.

The committee recommended that the AP Psychology course be sent to the full Board in December for approval. Ms. Collopy emphasized again that she is only approving this course if it will be offered in 18-weeks.

AP Capstone—Dr. Davidheiser present information on the AP Capstone Program. The course overview, as explained by College Board—AP Capstone is a College Board program that equips students with the independent research, collaborative teamwork, and communication skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. It cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical, evidence-based decisions.

AP Capstone is comprised of two AP courses — AP Seminar and AP Research — and is designed to complement and enhance the discipline-specific study in other AP courses. Participating schools can use

the AP Capstone program to provide unique research opportunities for current AP students, or to expand access to AP by encouraging students to master the argument-based writing skills that the AP Capstone program develops.

Some of the benefits of AP Capstone—Distinction—stand out in the college admission process and have the opportunity to earn valuable college credit or placement. Critical Skills—students acquire rigorous college-level analysis, writing, and research skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. Choice—students choose their own research topic and study issues of interest and importance to them.

Students would have the opportunity to achieve either a AP Capstone Diploma or an AP Research & Seminar Certificate. The AP Capstone Diploma is when a student earns a score of 3 or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research Exams and on four additional AP exams. The AP Research & Seminar Certificate is when a student earns a score of 3 or higher only on the AP Seminar and AP Research Exam. Currently we have a number of students with four or more AP Courses at each of our high schools and many our current seniors are currently taking their fourth AP course.

This course is a two-year course that would be offered A/B day all year as an elective credit. The submission date for College Board is in April which would not work with a semester only course offering. This course would also be an additional opportunity for our music students to participate in an AP course. This course would be offered to students in grades 10, 11 or 12 and the course does not need to be taken back-to-back. Students could have the option to take the first course in 10th grade and then elect to take the second course in 12th grade. Students could also elect to just take the Seminar course. Mr. Wohl asked about the submittal to College Board. Dr. Davidheiser explained that the exam is graded by the teacher of record but there is a validation submission to College Board that must happen in April.

Dr. Walloff, Supervisor of Language Arts K-12, has been working with Dr. Davidheiser on researching the local school districts that are currently offering the AP Capstone Program. Currently there are only 22 school districts in Pennsylvania that offer the AP Capstone Program. Local school districts are North Penn, Quakertown and Conestoga. Mr. Schloeffel asked how long has this program been out and why so little schools participating. Dr. Davidheiser explained that the program has been out for three years now and that there is an application required to be a participating school. College Board limits the number of schools to ensure that they have enough training sessions available for those teachers that would be teaching and participate in the program.

Ms. Smith asked what would the class look like. Dr. Davidheiser explained that the course can be very flexible—the course can be co-taught. Many librarians and library resources would be a big part of this course. There is a high emphasis on presentation skills. Mostly English teachers for the Seminar but the research can be any subject—science, math, etc. The course is very independent but there are several skills that are needed to be taught for the course. Mr. Schloeffel asked how many teachers would be needed. Dr. Davidheiser responded that there needs to be a teacher of record but teachers would have flexibility, other districts have had many teachers based on expertise needed for the topic.

Ms. Collopy expressed many concerns. She feels that the course is still too new. She also stated that many schools already offer a research course and colleges will not be impressed with this course. She believes that we can offer a similar course that does not need to be an AP course that come along with all of the restrictions of College Board.

Ms. Darcy also expressed many concerns. Ms. Darcy would like to see this tied into other options like the Science Fair. She also asked about class size. Dr. Davidheiser recommended the class size to be

around 15 students because of the nature and the amount of work on both teachers and students. Ms. Darcy is also concerned that if this a full year course and a two-year commitment, that this is a big chunk of a student schedule and is a big commitment. Ms. Darcy express that the course looks interesting but needs more information and asked what does Capstone get students besides a sticker on their diploma.

Mr. Schloeffel expressed that this would allow students to blossom using many different skills. Dr. Davidheiser expressed that many our students are already high achievers and this would allow those students to grow and allows them to be challenged.

The Committee is not recommending that the AP Capstone be approved and is not recommending the course to the full Board.

Update on Middle School Survey Results—Dr. Davidheiser gave a binder to each of the Board members and a brief update on the process. The binders included information on the survey results based on each focus group. Over the next several weeks, Dr. Davidheiser will be meeting with a small focus group of students, teachers, administrators and supervisors along with parents to ask more in-depth questions and to gain more feedback. A committee will be formed after the winter break to study the data and feedback.

Ms. Collopy asked for clarification on the difference between a Supervisor and an Administrator. Mr. Kopicki is asking the Board to review and analyze the data and to take time to thoughtfully go through the data. He is encouraging the Board to bring questions back to the next Committee meeting in January or to email Dr. Davidheiser and himself. Mr. Schloeffel requested that if any questions or emails are sent, to please included everyone on the Board in the email so that the same questions are not being asked. Ms. Darcy thanked Dr. Davidheiser for his efforts.

Update on Elementary Report Card—Dr. David Bolton gave a brief update on the elementary report card. The report card committee is working on several task and the group is finalizing some of the language. Laurel Podraza and the IT department are working on a final document and the goal is to be able to present in December or January. Ms. Darcy asked if report cards will be sent home. Dr. Bolton explained that the report card will be sent home—this document would include all other marking periods. Dr. Bolton also explained that the report card will be available in the Parent Portal which will be easier to access than the current ‘backpack’ option.

Meeting Adjourned 8:55 PM

Next Meeting — January, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.—date to be determined