

**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee**

Minutes of the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting held on November 12, 2014, at 10 a.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room, 3 Primrose Street.

J. Erardi	L. Gejda	M. Ku	J. Vouros
D. Ryan	J. Haggard	P. Greenfield	A. Uberti
A. Hall	J. Cavallaro		

The Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

Motion: M. Ku moved to accept the minutes of November 3, 2014. J. Vouros seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Participation: none

J. Haggard presented an update on Homebound Instruction (tutoring) explaining that last year they received 157 new referrals to the Sp. Ed. Department, 100 from the NHS alone. Increased referrals may have resulted in an increase in tutoring. This had caused them to be over budget at the end of last year. It is very hard to predict how many of these referrals are due to the 12/14 tragedy. This year, proactive measures are in place to deliver, monitor and track the need for tutoring across the district. Tutoring options include the use of staff, WISE Sp. Ed. Tutoring, and Excel Tutoring. A suggestion to use our substitutes as tutors was mentioned.

D. Ryan set forth a proposal for a Childcare/Preschool Program (Birth to 5 years) for all Newtown Board of Education staff. The center will provide a cost effective service and will offer the NBOE a financial benefit that will provide consistent revenue every year. The center will follow the State of Connecticut Frameworks for Preschool. Currently, this program is being offered to Monroe BOE and has been well received. J. Erardi will move forward with a review of this proposal by legal counsel.

P. Greenfield, World Language Chair at the high school was present and asked her thoughts on piloting a Spanish program at the elementary level for Grades K-2 beginning next year. Principals at the elementary level are very enthusiastic about the idea. J. Erardi asked if P. Greenfield, M. Ku and J. Vouros would be willing to visit the Southington School System to observe their program. Arrangements will be made for this to take place in the near future.

A. Uberti reported on the advanced math program at Reed school. Advanced fifth grade will include more in-depth study of each unit and several units of the sixth grade curriculum. Advanced sixth grade math will include the 6th grade curriculum and key 7th grade units with the goal of preparing students for possible algebra placement in seventh grade. A. Hall was also present for any questions.

J. Cavallaro presented the 7th grade, accelerated 7th grade, and 8th grade curricula for a first review.

M. Ku asked why students would progress from advanced 6th grade to advanced 7th grade (or algebra) when previously students had progressed from compacted math to 8th grade math (or algebra). J. Cavallaro said that the accelerated 7th grade curriculum now contains more of the eighth grade units of instruction.

L. Gejda indicated that as a compliment to the most recent Superintendent's Community Forum, which covered Language Arts curriculum, the math curriculum should also be presented. The next meeting on instruction is likely to be in January.

M. Ku asked that the math curricula from Reed and the NMS be approved and presented to the Board of Ed.

L. Gejda gave an update on the GATES program. Paula Knight, Consultant, held a six hour workshop with the GATES teachers on Nov. 4th. Nancy Bradley has been keeping us informed on the Wednesday morning gathering of all elementary GATES students which is being held at Reed.

Two out of the three teachers will be attending the National Asso. For the Gifted Children in Baltimore the week of Nov.13-16, 2014. It was suggested that building subs meet with GATES teachers to be prepared to step in if a GATES teacher is absent. These classes should not be cancelled.

M. Ku handed out information pertaining to class size and what research says and what it means for state policy. By comparing Newtown with other districts in DRG B we are not all that different in class sizes.

What does matter is the number of special education students and IEPs that are in a classroom. What does the teacher have to do different /extra for these students? Samples of IEPs should be shared with those not familiar with what this involves.

Discussion and identifying questions regarding the school calendar was started. J. Vouros suggested that Culture and Climate committee needs to be included in this discussion. Attendance records pertaining to professional development days on Fridays needs to be looked at. Moving PLC days to the AM and having a delayed opening was another suggestion. Another suggestion was moving these days to the middle of the week. It was the understanding of the committee that the PTAs will be surveying sample calendars.

Public Participation: none

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Schaedler

