

CPDC UPDATE NOTES FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

November 22, 2013

Curriculum Update

- K-6
 - Have established curriculum groups for the year. Half of the teachers at each grade level are developing the ELA units & the other half are developing the math units
 - Each K-4 grade level group is comprised of teachers from RBS & PGS
 - Schools combine for professional development days
- ELA
 - Continuing to create new units plus reviewing & revising units upon completion of implementation
 - Focusing on creating quality evidence of learning tasks – performance tasks, “messy” problems, common formative assessments, unit assessments, etc.
 - Meeting was held with the principals at the elementary level to systematize the ordering of resources to avoid delays in getting needed materials & to establish a dollar amount for each grade level to work within
- Math
 - Stage one is pretty much completed for all grades/levels
 - K-6 is continuing to create new units & review & revise units upon completion of implementation
 - 8th & 9th grade Algebra I teachers have been working together for course & instruction alignment
 - Grade 8 standard math & 1 course at the high school still need to begin
- Science
 - K-12 Committee began work in July
 - Long term transfer goals have been developed
 - Working on developing general understandings & essential questions
 - K-5 will be involved in the work until the K-12 content, skills & understanding are identified by grade level. Science unit work will be put “on-hold” until the ELA & math units are established
 - Grades 6-12 will proceed with the unit work
- Social Studies
 - Work will begin in January with a K-12 committee following the same format as math & science
- World Language, Unified Arts & Guidance
 - A small group representing each discipline will meet with Allison in December to receive an overview on UbD & discuss how to structure the department work in preparation for upcoming curriculum reviews

- This year we added:
 - Full day Kindergarten & Spanish K-6
 - New HS electives: 3 English electives (Critical Reading, Intro to Film Theory & History, Writing & Rhetoric Workshop) , 2 social studies electives (Current Issues & Events, Sport & Society) & Astronomy
- Next year’s proposed budget supports more incremental growth but on a smaller scale – recognizing the need to support & continue the work (curriculum work/Common Core State Standards, Teacher Evaluation) we are doing without overtaxing the “system”. The proposed budget includes:
 - Mandarin Chinese: K-2, 2 courses at the high school & after school at AMS (will start this January at AMS as a feeder program to AHS)
 - New proposed electives at the high school – Scientific Principles of Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, Architectural Construction, Architectural Design, Technical Theatre
 - 12-month position to coordinate & oversee internships, student seminars & transition planning
 - Elementary math coach
 - Identify & implement a curriculum management software system
 - Begin exploring a data management system
- Smarter Balanced Field Test
 - Districts were given a choice for 2014 to administer the CMT/CAPT or the Smarter Balanced Field Test or both based on a waiver submitted by the SDE to the federal government (SDE still awaiting waiver approval but moving forward as if waiver has been granted)
 - Avon has chosen to administer the Smarter Balanced Field Test in grades 3-8, 10 & 11
 - This will provide students & staff a direct experience with the assessment prior to full implementation in 2015-16, it will provide data by grade level for us to assess our curriculum alignment to the assessment & will allow us to see if our technology & infrastructure can fully support the on-line assessments
 - The testing window will be primarily in May. We will administer the ELA assessment first & then math
 - The assessment is computer based & will be adaptive in 2015. There is an ELA & math in-class activity where a computer is not needed. The assessment is untimed & all grade levels do not need to administer the assessment at the same time so there is flexibility in scheduling. Approximate testing times for both ELA & math are 7 hours for grades 3-5, 7-1/2 hours for grades 6-8 & 8-1/2 hours for grades 10-11
 - Grades 5, 8 & 10 still take the CMT/CAPT Science assessment. The timeframe for that assessment to occur has not yet been released by the SDE

Indicators of a Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum

- First “formal” curriculum reviews are scheduled for next year
- ELA, Math & School Counseling are up for review in 2014-15
- Ultimately there will be three reviews a year with English, math, science & social studies not occurring in the same year to reduce potential budget impacts with new materials, texts, etc.
- Council members worked to identify & define the indicators of a rigorous & relevant curriculum for curriculum reviews
- Indicators were identified as:
 - Content, Skills & Understandings
 - Curriculum Alignment
 - Assessment
 - Learning Experiences
- Each group (one per indicator) began work on:
 - Developing a short definition that will be broad enough to work for all disciplines
 - Creating a detailed, elaborate description of the definition using key words & phrases that had been generated by the entire group
 - Ensuring that the definition & description reflect the expectations defined in the district’s mission & beliefs
 - These indicators & definitions will form the basis for the rubric by which the curriculum area under review will be critiqued

Professional Development

- Common planning time, data teams & half-day/full-day curriculum work all constitute professional development in addition to the full & half-day PD built into the district calendar
- Based on CPDC’s feedback last year:
 - We have scaled back at the district level to 2 major initiatives – the Common Core State Standards (curriculum work) & the new Teacher Evaluation Plan. Both mandates which we are required to do
 - We are working with building administration to continue to try to create the structures for more grade level/department common planning time within the school day – this has been accomplished this year at TBS & AHS
 - A calendar was distributed in August with building & department/grade based days indicated & CPDC/Tech Council days delineated to address the lack of planning feedback
 - An administrator has been assigned to each department to provide assistance & oversight for the curriculum work & to be the liaison with the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning
 - More department/grade level based professional development this year
- Council members shared what is working, areas for some changes or improvements & suggestions for the second half of this year or future years

Teacher Evaluation

- Review of the process/timeline:
 - Avon’s Teacher Evaluation & Development Model, developed by a committee of approx. 20 teachers, was re-submitted to the state in June after initial feedback from the SDE was incorporated into the original plan
 - We contacted the SDE at the end of July & then received their final input on the plan
 - The SDE came out with recommendations for “improvements” to the SEED model based on the feedback from the 10 pilot districts at the end of August
 - Avon committee reconvened in Sept. to review the SDE input, SEED revisions/modifications & finalized Avon’s plan
 - While we were late in the creation of our plan, our lateness actually benefited us in terms of being able to incorporate the revisions & modifications to the SDE SEED plan based on feedback from the pilot districts & other districts that started the process earlier
 - One major change to the SEED model was that the Area of Focus section of the plan no longer had to be written as a SMART goal that was measureable which then was reflected in our plan
- Training of administrators & department supervisors
 - SDE offered “free” training over the summer for administrators but Avon chose not to participate in the training as we wanted to train both administrators & department coordinators but had not budgeted funds to cover extra work days. Also, we were concerned about a training that encompassed the SEED model, modified SEED models (such as Avons) or district created models being too generic
 - In September/October a 5-day in-district training tailored to the Avon plan was provided for all administrators & department coordinators. The primary reason for doing it in-district with a CREC trainer was to calibrate our practice among ourselves & not with individuals from other districts
 - While department coordinators are trained in the evaluation model, evaluation and supervision rest solely with administrators
- Rollout of plan
 - Recommended by committee to do at building level, not a full district-wide meeting
 - Common powerpoint with key speaking points was created to use for presentation
 - Focus this year is on the process – encouraged common SLOs, focus areas
 - Used Election Day to provide time & support to create SLOs with consultants from CREC
- Bloomberg vs. Protraxx
 - District chose to stay with ProTraxx as individuals were familiar with the system & ProTraxx had been used in many of the pilot districts
 - While Bloomberg is provided through the SDE this year, there is no guarantee that funding will be there in future years so didn’t want to make change for possibly one year
 - ProTraxx provides the certification component which Bloomberg does not
 - ProTraxx provided in-district training for all of the administrators
 - ProTraxx has been very responsive to questions & suggestions

- We will reassess at the end of the year after we have completed a full evaluation cycle
- Teacher Evaluation Committee will reconvene in the Spring to provide feedback on processes & document plus review any SDE updates. Agreed upon revisions will be reflected in the document & go back to BOE for approval
- Council members shared what is working, areas for some changes or improvements & suggestions

New Course Proposals

- 16 course proposals were presented to the Council for their recommended approval to the BOE