

Suffield Board of Education
Teaching and Learning Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2016

Present: Brian Hendrickson, Lori D'Ostuni, Jeanine Rose, Jeanne Gee, Kris Pryce, Sara Baranauskas, Natalie Semyanko, Esther Boakye-Datthey, Susi Keane, Steve Moccio and Damon Pearce

I. Call to Order – 7:34 a.m.

II. Review Summer Reading List and Math Information – Grades K-5

- Reading K-5 will be communicated through report cards with multiple lists of book suggestions for all levels of readers. Participating in the Governor's Reading Challenge with an incentive for each student turning in their logs. There was a discussion of a disclaimer for lists created by outside entities (i.e. Newberry books).
- Math K-5 along with Reading will utilize a summer website they created. Students will be able to use apps to keep up their math skills and use in fun, interactive ways (i.e. coding).
- Social media will be used by instructional leaders. Also hyperlinks to Ted Talks on Reading and math will be on the website.
- Reading 6 – 12 will be about student choice. Each library is putting out a top 10 list. A letter on literature and/or optional video book talk is part of the program. AP courses will still have specific summer requirements.
- Math 6-8 will also have fun, interactive activities linked from the website.
- There was a discussion on future summer camps/courses to keep skills current and as a prep option. These have budgetary implications and require further conversations

III. Review K-12 Program of Studies Document

- A draft of a K-12 document for parents to know what skills students should be able to do by the end of a grade/course was distributed.
- Discussion included making sure all points were printed in a quick, easy to read format and to include the units of study as well.
- Another discussion included a desire for a parallel path with the vehicle to develop skills to the underlying meaning of the skills (i.e. students recite the Pledge of Allegiance every day but do they know what it means).
- There was a thoughtful discussion on the amount of content used to meet the external/state standards in subjects such as science and social studies/history (i.e. amount of time on Western Civilization vs. Eastern Civilization).

IV. Review Curriculum and Instructional Improvement Plan Progress Year to Date

- There was an overview of the plans and progress in teaching and learning this year for the four strategic goals. Highlights include the tech committee's work and the readiness for the tech integrationist, PDEC's evaluation work, the need for teacher induction for nuts and bolts protocols, coherence planning and organizational health at McAlister and the high school, readiness for elementary instructional coaches and consultant in PBIS and the coaching, the reduction of chronic absenteeism (a separate discussion on the communications taking place and needed with truancy and chronic absenteeism), communication with PBIS and PLC's, need for a custom data management system, improvement in interventions (separate discussion on parent communications on intervention steps they should know), future plans for report card revision along with grading philosophy/understanding and class rank issues, Rubicon Atlas Pilot, Curriculum Leader PLC, and K-12 library media common planning.
- There was a discussion of the need for more collaboration time for teachers
- A recap of the student voice sessions about their high school experiences and the final session with faculty hearing from the students. Brian will send feedback of the overarching notes from the responses from the teachers. Information from teachers on how to improve the student voice session for next year was given.
- The discussion went back to the report card revision and the overall discussions taking place related about grading philosophies. The subcommittee was very pleased with faculty discussions on these issues that affect students and families. Points were made regarding "what does a grade mean," do grades reflect what students know and can do and apply, assessments and implications, class rank implications and calculations, and student goals for learning.

The meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.