



**Board of School Directors Committee Meetings Minutes
Wednesday, September 12, 2018**

Generated by Renai Cardillo on Monday, September 24, 2018

Members present: Nicholas Braccio, Janet Flisak, Matt Holliday, Ken Keith, Thomas Kwiatkowski, Stephen Nelson

Members absent: William Brong, Matt Holliday, Scott Jelinski and Donna Scheuren

Others present: John Franzen, Frank Gallagher, Catherine Heller, Christopher Hey, Raymond Kase, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Fran Masin-Moyer, Katie McCoy, Jeremy Miller, Jeff Pammer, William Stone, Geri Wilkocz, Megan Zweiback,

1. Education-Personnel Committee

1.1 Middle School Curriculum Updates

Mr. Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher announced that for several years the district has been looking very closely at middle school performance data and realized the need to restructure the middle school schedule to meet the needs of the students. The new proposal provides a schedule that is more developmentally appropriate for each grade level and focuses on the transition into middle school. Dr. Gallagher noted that because this proposal encompasses such a large restructuring, the Education-Personnel Committee will be featuring items regularly on the agenda.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed the process which prompted the schedule change, noting that a committee was formed to research middle school schedules and visit local middle schools to compare master schedules. In addition, a survey was initiated to the middle school teachers for input.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the priorities maintained teaming and balanced instructional time in core content areas. A more responsive approach to 6th grade transition will also be incorporated. And in keeping with the mission to provide a safe and nurturing environment, an expansion of social and emotional learning will be included. There will also be time for intervention, enrichment and advisory supports in a daily Focus Period. In addition, there will also be purposeful collaboration time for departments to review data, best practices and child study.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed a comparison of the current middle school schedule with the proposed changes highlighting the increase in core classes instructional time and the off team approach for Mathematics. The proposal also allows for more course offerings for both non-performing and performing arts. The current Flex schedule will be replaced with a daily Focus block offering the supports outlined above.

Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Geri Wilkocz commented that the proposal removes trimester scheduling and puts the middle schools on quarter scheduling within semesters. This change will put all grade levels on the same schedule.

Mr. Braccio asked how will we know if the new middle school schedule is successful and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that there will be many factors which will measure success. Notably, we will continue student-centered learning, setting high expectations and standards for all students. Multiple sources of data will inform, identify and drive improvement.

A timeline for was discussed which moves the proposed schedule forward with additional details at Curriculum Council and E-P Meetings. The goal is to approve the proposed Middle School Scheduling Change at the May 2019 Board Meeting.

Mr. Kwiatkowski praised the aggressive approach and noted that there will be more opportunities for questions at future monthly E-P Meetings.

Board Committee Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2018
Page 2

Mr. Nelson praised the proposed changes. Mr. Keith asked about changes to class sizes and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that class sizes will remain the same, but teams will be smaller. Mr. Keith asked about the need for new teachers and Dr. Gallagher said that the program as it is currently proposed will require 4 new teachers. Dr. Gallagher also commented on the importance of the two person team for 6th grade.

Mr. Keith asked about flex time and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the Focus Block will occur daily, offering more time for advisory, enrichment and intervention.

Mrs. Flisak asked about scheduling for the accelerated student and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly replied that this proposal will allow for flexibility. Indian Valley Middle School Principal, Dr. Pammer noted that this has been a year-long process examined in detail. Indian Crest Middle School Principal Mrs. McCoy discussed the developmental approach that was taken at each grade level and the sharing of ideas with teachers, coordinators and parent groups. Feedback was solicited and all indications are that the proposal has been received well.

Mr. Kwiatkowski thanked the administration for the update.

1.2 Grants and Awards Update

Dr. Gallagher noted that grant opportunities are sought out at all levels within the organization to enhance and support our programs.

Ms. Wilkocz commented on the *Teacher in the Workplace* grant in the amount of \$50,000 which was awarded through the Department of Labor and Industry. It will impact 1,500 middle school students with primary goal of connecting teachers, counselors and administrators with business and industry partners, providing a first hand perspective of the knowledge that students will need for careers in STEM related occupations. The experiences will help to guide the creation of curriculum and build relevance into instruction.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly commented that the introduction of career discussions in middle school enabling students to make educated choices throughout high school and beyond.

Ms. Wilkocz spoke on the *Career Readiness Mini Grant* in the amount of \$5,000 also through the Department of Labor and Industry. This grant will specifically impact grades 4 and 5 as they participate in Minecraft Education Edition lessons. The lessons provide virtual career exploration and the development of STEM skills. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly explained that the Minecraft Education supports inquiry and provides coding and engineering skillsets.

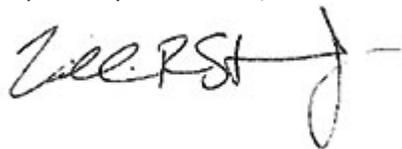
Ms. Wilkocz explained the *Scienceflix* by Scholastic grant which was awarded in the amount of \$3,870. This grant will be a resource for libraries in all six of the elementary schools. Combining content with online support tools it will support all reading abilities, build vocabulary and introduce key concepts that build background knowledge. It is rich in its learning content and is compatible with the existing elementary technology (iPads). The librarians will be collaborating with the teachers to incorporate the learning that is happening in the classrooms.

A member of the public inquired about how Minecraft is useful in the classroom. Ms. Wilkocz responded that it helps to develop digital citizenship, problem solve and collaborate. It promotes innovation and creativity.

Mr. Kwiatkowski thanked everyone for the presentation and commented on the progressive thinking.

Mr. Kwiatkowski adjourned the Education-Personnel meeting at 7:16 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



William R. Stone
Board Secretary