

CURRICULUM COUNCIL MINUTES

February 8, 2010

Present: Mr. Jeff Pammer, Mrs. Deb Alder, Mr. Sam Varano, Mrs. Tracy Cole, Mrs. Cheryle Radcliff, Dr. Dale Burkhard, Mrs. Donna Huff, Mr. Bernie Currie, Mrs. Rebecca Lemieux, Mrs. Dona Italiano, Dr. Pat Mathues, Mrs. Maryellen Myers, Mrs. Arlene Buchman, Mr. Dan Stover, Mr. Frank Gallagher, Mr. Tom Kwiatkowski, Mrs. Megan Zweiback, and Dr. Jack Silva.

Dr. Silva brought the Council to order at 10:03 A.M.

Revised Elementary Physical Education Program

Mr. Dan Stover, Coordinator of Elementary Wellness, presented the revised program for Elementary Physical Education. Specifically, Mr. Stover reviewed how:

- The K-5 curriculum fosters the creation of healthful, physically active environments in which students can develop the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue lifetime wellness.
- A greater emphasis has been placed on physical fitness opportunities for children throughout the program so students can experience a moderate to vigorous heart rate and can identify the large muscle groups targeted in specific exercises.
- Starting in Kindergarten, students are exposed to health-related fitness concepts throughout the year, and as a result, are able to identify, experience, and explain changes to the body as a direct result of exercise. These changes include, but are not limited to heart rate increase, heavy breathing, and increased perspiration.
- Assessments are clearly defined and measureable, but afford the flexibility for staff members to conduct their own unique programs. On the 3rd grade benchmark assessment, one educator may assess during “Partner Follow-the-Leader,” whereas a different teacher may use a movement map.
- The Prudential Fitnessgram is a testing program designed to provide relevant feedback to students based upon their performance in a series of physical challenges. Each segment of the testing is geared towards a different key area of physical fitness (muscle strength, muscle endurance, cardio-vascular endurance, flexibility), and allows students to participate at their individual ability level. “**Healthy**” and “**Above Healthy**” ratings have been identified based on age and gender. Students are provided an instant snapshot of their overall fitness in these areas and can identify areas of personal strength as well as areas in which they would like to improve.

- The Standards and Performance Indicators list was generated by the elementary P.E. staff and offers a comprehensive list of every skill and concept a student can expect to encounter throughout the K-5 program. The list also provides expected proficiency levels by grade.
- Financial Considerations: \$3000 towards the purchase of developmentally-appropriate fitness equipment; \$3000 towards the purchase of consumable supplies The dollar amount allotted for each school varies according to the resources made available to the P.E. teacher by the building principal.

The Council reviewed the planned program document and recommended its presentation to the Education-Personnel Committee for review.

Recommendation: forward to E-P Committee for Review

Update: Language Arts Program Evaluation K-12

Dr. Pat Mathues and Mrs. Dona Italiano, Supervisors of Elementary and Secondary Language Arts respectively, reported on the progress of the K-12 Program Evaluation for Language Arts. The program evaluation is a district goal for the 2009-2010 school year. Dr. Mathues reviewed the orientation of the evaluation team of outside evaluators that took place last week, and announced that the evaluation chair, Dr. Jack McGovern, will be making a presentation of recommendations to the elementary and secondary faculty on February 9th at 3:00 PM (secondary) and 4:00 PM (elementary). Mrs., Italiano reviewed the scheduling and work of the evaluators in the secondary schools on February 2-5.

Dr. Mathues and Mrs. Italiano will be making a more comprehensive presentation of the program evaluation team's recommendations to the Curriculum Council on March 8 and to the Education-Personnel Committee on March 17th.

Recommendation: None. Item Presented for Information.

Update: Revised Chapter 4 Regulations and New High School Graduation Requirements

Dr. Silva presented a review of the new Rules and Regulations (effective January 9, 2010) for Chapter 4 of the State Code affecting high school graduation requirements for students. The State Board of Education published changes to Chapter 4 that set stronger, more consistent high school graduation requirements for students, beginning with the class of 2015. Under the new regulation, students can meet graduation requirements through any or a combination of the following:

OPTION 1 – DEMONSTRATE PROFICIENCY CORE SUBJECTS:

For the class of 2014-15 (current 7th Grade), students will demonstrate proficiency in English Composition, Literature, Algebra I and Biology, with a Keystone final exam counting for one-third of the final course grade.

In 2017 (current 5th Grade), requirements under this option will be expanded to include:

- passing 2 English courses (Composition and Literature);
- passing 2 math courses (Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry);
- passing 1 science course (Biology or Chemistry); and
- passing 1 social studies course (options include Civics, American History or World History).

Keystone Exams are subject-specific assessments that students take at the end of a course. Keystone Exams will be approximately 2 to 2 ½ hours in length and will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Students will be able to retake the assessments in whole or in part and students who do not test well can complete a project-based alternative assessment.

OPTION 2 – PASS LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

Local Assessments would need to be independently validated. This regulation preserves local control but sets consistent standards for locally-developed measures to ensure rigorous assessments, fair administration, and reliable results. The state will share validation costs with local districts.

OPTION 3 – PASS RIGOROUS NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

These assessments include Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams. Under this plan, beginning the 2012-13 school year, three Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Literature and Biology will replace the 11th grade PSSA tests. This change would reduce annual testing time by the equivalent of three school days in Grade 11.

The Council reviewed “Frequently Asked Questions” asked about the Keystone Exams. Specifically, the Council discussed the courses and content associated with each exam, the exam’s relative weight and influence over the student’s grade, the effect of the Keystone Exams on a school’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and issues related to options and alternatives to the use of Keystone Exams.

The PSSA will be retained for use in the elementary and middle grades.

The Council reviewed the Keystone Exam Development Schedule that describes the development of the 10 Keystone Exams as well as their field testing and availability to the schools:

KEYSTONE EXAM DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE		
Keystone Exam	Field Test	Available for all schools...
Algebra I, Biology, Literature	Fall/Winter 2010	Spring 2011
Algebra II, Geometry, Composition, US History	Spring 2011	Winter 2011/2012
Chemistry, Civics & Government, World History	Spring 2015	TBD
CLASSROOM DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE		
Content Area	Field Test	Available for all schools...
Mathematics	Spring 2010	Fall 2010
Literacy: Literature	Fall 2010	Winter 2010/2011
Science	Fall 2010	Winter 2010/2011
Literacy: Composition	Spring 2011	Fall 2011
Social Studies	Spring 2011	Fall 2011

OTHER GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Council reviewed the requirement for a culminating project for graduation. Beginning in 2014-2015, the requirement will read, "...completion of a culminating project in one or more areas of concentrated study under the guidance and direction of the high school faculty. The purpose of the project, which may include research, writing, completion of a college application, or some other appropriate form of demonstration, is to assure that the student is

able to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and communicate significant knowledge and understanding.”

The Council reviewed the new rules and regulations related to supplemental instructional support for students who do not pass the Keystones or Local Assessments. The new Chapter 4 regulations read, “Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, a student who does not demonstrate proficiency in any of the ten courses or locally-validated assessments specified in subsections B and C shall be offered supplemental instructional support by the student’s school entity. The supplemental instructional support must assist the student to attain proficiency in the State academic standards.”

The Council discusses the process of communicating with stakeholders and making SASD decisions related to new graduation requirements. Dr. Silva will continue using the Curriculum Council, or a sub-committee thereof, to make subsequent recommendations to the Board of School Directors.

Recommendation: Dr. Silva will make a presentation at the March 17th Education-Personnel Committee Meeting

SASD Planned Course Format

Dr. Silva recommended that the SASD adopt a new planned program/planned course format that is consistent K-12 and aligns to the Standards Aligned System (SAS). He supported the idea that with more prescribed state assessments comes the challenge/need to align SASD curriculum to “state-wide model curriculum” and Web-based tools provided to PA districts. He suggested that the Curriculum Council, or a sub-committee thereof, should begin the research and development of a new planned program/planned course format, and that a new format be an SASD district goal for 2010-2011.

Recommendation: Go Forward as Discussed.

With no further business to address, Dr. Silva thanked the Council for its work and adjourned the meeting at 11:11 AM.

Next Meeting: March 8, 2010 at 10:00 AM in the Lowell A. Tinner Board Room