

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2007

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, September 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA.

Board Members Present: Mr. Gatanis, Mr. Mantz, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Reinsmith, Mrs. Ziegler

Administrators Present: Ms. Aponick, Dr. Beauchemin, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Haffner,
Ms. Morningstar, Mrs. Perron-Jones, Mrs. Pfungstler, Mrs. Samide,
Dr. Wright, Mr. Ziegenfuss

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:02 p.m.

2. **WELCOME AND OPENING MESSAGE**

Shift Theme

Dr. Beauchemin welcomed the committee and audience members to another year of working together on behalf of the district's students. Dr. Beauchemin shared her presentation delivered to the district staff on Opening Day. She explained all of the teachers, staff, and board members in the district have been living in the 20th century for a quarter to a half century, and they have been carrying out mission statements which state the need to *prepare* students for the 21st century. The models and realities of the 20th century have been the guides as educators have tried to prepare students for unknown realities and an unknown world.

Dr. Beauchemin explained the mission of schools today has shifted. The realities and challenges of the 21st century are here, and change and growth are occurring faster than ever before due to technological capabilities. Our mission now is to provide students with the thinking, knowledge, tools, and skills to deal with the rapid change. To do so, our focus needs to shift to ensuring our students know how to teach themselves.

Dr. Beauchemin shared a video entitled, *Did You Know?* that presented the complexity, growth, and challenges of the 21st century and the educational and career implications for our students. She provided examples of the shift in thinking and practice which is taking place in Salisbury classrooms. Included in these shifts is the increasing number of sustaining, interdisciplinary student projects that require higher order thinking skills, the development of the *LifeSmarts* class for all grade 10 students, the acquisition of a

Classrooms for the Future Grant, and the district's multi-year focus on academic and primary literacy.

In addition, Dr. Beauchemin explained the need to address social/emotional learning and to provide modeling, demonstrations, and practice of interpersonal skills within the learning environments. This is currently being done through Responsive Classrooms, Character Counts, and the emphasis on the social and personal learning dimensions in the Reading Apprenticeship framework to promote Academic Literacy. Dr. Beauchemin acknowledged the efforts being made to shift our thinking and practices, and she encouraged everyone to become learners with our students to ensure success in the 21st century.

Professional Development

Dr. Beauchemin explained the focus of the professional development for the 2007-2008 school year. The three focus areas are: Academic Literacy, Primary Literacy, and Technology Integration. These are multi-year goals, and the goals are critical to providing our students with necessary 21st century literacies and the creating of 21st century learning environments.

Mrs. Miller responded to the video information stating the number of jobs most students will have by the age of 38. She questioned how this information fits with the emphasis on Career Pathways and the push to have students decide on a career path at an early age.

Mr. Reinsmith asked for an explanation of a Responsive Classroom. Mrs. Samide and Mrs Pflingstler explained the premise of the approach is to create classroom communities where all students feel a sense of belonging and students are taught to care for themselves and others. Mr. Cassidy explained this is continued with the Character Counts program at the middle school, and Ms. Morningstar explained it is embedded in the Reading Apprenticeship framework through the social and personal dimensions.

ID Tags & School Reach

Dr. Wright explained the new staff identification system and the new automated phone system. She explained the increased security measure with the identification system, and the improved communication afforded by the School Reach system. All staff and board members have identification tags, and the phone system has been utilized to welcome staff and students to the new school year.

Student Orientations

Dr. Beauchemin and the principals provided feedback on the student orientations for grades K, 1, 6, and 10. The response from students, parents, and staff was extremely positive. Comments included:

- Students enjoyed being the only students in the school for the first day. It allowed them to acclimate to the new surroundings comfortably.
- Parents enjoyed spending time with their children in their new schools and appreciated the parent information sessions.

- Staff enjoyed being able to support the new students in a variety of ways. Elementary staff rode school buses and assisted in classroom activities. Secondary staff met with students and welcomed them to the building.
- Consider shortening orientation day for students next year.

Dr. Beauchemin stated the administration will discuss plans for next year. They will be shared with the board at a later date.

3. **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

Mr. Ziegenfuss provided explanations on three technology integration initiatives in the district: Smart Classrooms, Classrooms for the Future Grant, and LifeSmarts.

Smart Classrooms

After administrative discussions concerning the use available technology funds, it was decided to provide continuity with students who had been exposed to new technologies the previous year in the HST fifth grade learning support classroom and to provide equity of access within the fifth and sixth grade classrooms through Smart Classrooms. In terms of hardware, a “Smart Classroom” consists of five laptops, an interactive whiteboard, and a multimedia projector. The Smart Classrooms for 2007-2008 are: fifth grade learning support at both elementary schools; sixth grade learning support at SMS; two sixth grade classrooms that provide inclusion and team teaching with learning support; and a sixth grade classroom that supports second language learners and all other sixth grade students. This group will meet monthly as a team to collaborate and to begin developing best practices for technology use in the future.

Mrs. Miller asked Mr. Cassidy for his response to having this initiative in sixth grade. Mr. Cassidy responded positively to the opportunity and indicated the teachers are ready to embrace the initiative. Mr. Reinsmith inquired about how the district is supporting these teachers and classrooms. Mr. Zeigenfuss stated he will have monthly sessions with the group to create a collegial network and to provide training in the emerging technologies. Mrs. Miller asked if the group will be doing any type of data collection. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained we will be doing both quantitative and qualitative data collection to show how student learning has been affected by the integration of technology into the learning environment.

Classrooms for the Future Grant

The high school proposal for this grant was funded in the amount of \$162,577 with an additional \$30,000 to help fund a coach (technology integrator). While this amount is less than originally requested in the grant, it will provide our high school with significant infusion of technology, and it will allow us to develop best practices in a modified 1:1 laptop environment. The allocated funds will be used by the district to purchase hardware for nine classrooms. In addition to hardware, there is a significant professional development program that will be implemented over the course of the year.

The award amount will fund three laptop carts (32 laptops per cart), nine interactive whiteboards, nine multimedia projectors, nineteen teacher laptops, five digital video cameras, three digital cameras and the replacement of the high school server. Purchased computers for this project will be Macintosh. This decision was arrived at based on several factors, primarily the ability for users of this platform to easily produce multimedia content with various included software. Classrooms for the Future plans to avail monies to districts for 2008-2009. The district is prepared to submit a plan for Year 2.

LifeSmarts

Mr. Ziegenfuss explained the LifeSmarts instructional team of teachers spent time during the summer developing the curriculum for the new course. Since the beginning of the school term, the teachers have been working with all tenth grade students to develop social awareness and to build a classroom culture that will support students as they develop career awareness, financial resource management, technology skills, and entrepreneurship. He explained we will be gathering data to show how technology integration in the learning environment can create a difference in our students as learners. Mr. Gatani asked if board members would be able to attend the first student presentations scheduled for mid-October. Ms. Morningstar said she would share the presentation times with board members.

4. LCTI - UPDATE

Ms. Morningstar and Mr. Cassidy provided information on student participation in LCTI programs in grades 9 – 12. Mr. Cassidy explained the ninth grade students seem very happy with their LCTI experience. Ms. Morningstar addressed the decline in LCTI student participation in grades 11 and 12. She explained it is not due to students failing courses at the high school. It is often related to students not getting the labs they want; students not wanting to continue the experience, or poor student attendance which affects the student's ability to complete a sufficient number of competencies. Both principals indicated parent and student information sessions are provided, and students are provided opportunities to discuss options with the schools' guidance counselors.

Ms. Morningstar explained the high school administration and guidance counselors will attend monthly meetings at LCTI to enhance communication and to maintain contact with Salisbury students attending LCTI full time.

Dr. Beauchemin explained our learning support students attending LCTI frequently score proficient or above on PSSA tests. In examining the district data with LCTI administration, Dr. Hornberger acknowledged the proficient scores of many of our LCTI students. Mrs. Miller commented the number of students attending the Academic Center is far below the projected Salisbury numbers when the program was initially introduced. She also stated disappointment in hearing that some students do not get the lab they request.

5. **e-STRATEGIC PLAN – STEERING COMMITTEE AND TIMELINE**

Dr. Beauchemin shared the composition of the steering committee for the Strategic Plan. She requested two board members to be part of the committee. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to guide the process and to develop the mission, vision, and belief statements of the district. In addition, the Steering Committee will review the work of the sub-committees to ensure the recommendations of each sub-committee are consistent with the intent of the Strategic Plan goals.

Mr. Reinsmith asked Dr. Beauchemin to email all board members to solicit their interest in serving on the committee. He also asked that ninth grade students be considered for membership on the committee.

6. **OVERNIGHT EDUCATIONAL TOUR REQUEST**

Dr. Beauchemin presented the request for the Education Tour to Washington, D.C. for high school juniors. She explained it adheres to the district policy for tours. Mrs. Miller complimented the teachers on the early submission of the request. She also stated the need to state on the permission slip that the trip may need to be canceled due to security issues, and cancellation may result in the possible forfeiture of monies. Mr. Reinsmith encouraged the administration to find ways to make the trip available to students who may not be able to afford the cost of the trip. The board approved the trip request, and approval of the trip will be placed on the October school board meeting agenda.

7. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Beauchemin explained the Kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten survey has been posted on the district website, and a copy has been included in the district newsletter that has been mailed to all Salisbury residents. Community members have responded through both venues. The district administration is collecting data on kindergarten/pre-kindergarten options including survey results, student population stability, and incoming kindergarten student developmental readiness. A report and recommendation will be shared with the board at the October District Curriculum Sub-Committee Meeting.

8. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Mrs. Jackie Weilnau explained that guidance had been a topic of a curriculum meeting a year ago. She wanted the board to know that she receives regular information from the department. Additionally, the middle and high school counselors did an outstanding job helping her daughter with a scheduling problem.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

10. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 29, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at Lehigh County Community College (LCCC), Library Building, 4525 Education Park Drive, Schnecksville, PA 18078.