

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2007

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The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, January 8, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Feinberg, Mr. Gatanis, Mr. Giordano, Mrs. Heffelfinger, Mr. Mantz, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Pauloski, Mrs. Ziegler

Administrators Present: Dr. Beauchemin, Mr. Cassidy, Mrs. Perron-Jones, Mrs. Pfingstler, Mrs. Samide, Dr. Wright, Mr. Ziegenfuss

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:27 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting from November 28, 2006 was made and approved as submitted.

3. **e-STRATEGIC PLANNING - OVERVIEW**

Dr. Beauchemin explained that the Pennsylvania Department of Education has developed the e-Strategic Planning (eSP) Process to be used by all public school systems in creating and submitting several mandated plans: Chapter 4 “strategic plan,” professional education plan, teacher induction plan, special education plan, educational technology plan, and if required, NCLB district improvement plan. The intent of eSP is to align and integrate all required plans and planning into one comprehensive strategic plan for the district. Dr. Beauchemin reviewed the planning principles recommended by PDE in formulating the strategic plan, and she explained the planning framework which encompasses five phases. The timeline for our district to complete the eSP is the 2007-2008 school year with final submission of the plan in fall 2008.

Dr. Beauchemin explained that the work currently being done on the District Technology Committee will be integrated into the eSP. Student data from PSSA, Terra Nova, SATs, and PVAAS will be part of the preliminary data gathered for the plan. To assist in gathering data pertaining to school climate, Dr. Beauchemin stated that the district would like to survey students, parents, and staff concerning their perceptions of school climate. Plans are being made to implement surveys in spring 2007.

Dr. Beauchemin stated that the district will begin forming a steering committee in spring 2007. Board members will be asked to participate on the steering committee as well as participate on ad hoc committees that are formed to address particular aspects of the district's strategic plan. Dr. Beauchemin will continue to update the board on the process.

Mrs. Miller explained that twelve years ago the district hired an outside consultant to facilitate the strategic planning process, and many people were involved in the process. Six years ago the district agreed to streamline the process, and the requirements of the plan were met in an efficient manner. Dr. Beauchemin stated that she did not feel an outside facilitator was needed; however, she stated that there will be an articulated process for involving various stakeholders in goal setting and decision-making to allow for an efficient and effective process that will result in providing direction for the district for the next six years. Efforts will be made to align and integrate all the district's plans and goals.

#### 4. **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

Mr. Ziegenfuss provided the board with an update on the District Technology Committee. He explained that the committee materials are located on the web at <http://www.salisbury21.org/blog/>, and he reviewed the Technology Planning Process Diagram that was presented to the board in August 2006. He explained that the committee has been addressing the question: What do we want the classrooms of Salisbury to look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of teaching, learning, and technology? Mr. Ziegenfuss shared some of the ideas that have been generated by the committee. He explained that the next meeting will be devoted to articulating a shared vision and mission and belief statements.

Mr. Ziegenfuss shared a recent article published in *Time* entitled, *How To Bring Our Schools Out of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. He explained that the basis of the article was to explain the disconnect between schools and the real world. Although math and reading are critical, the article states that they are no longer sufficient. In particular, schools need to address four aspects of learning: knowing more about being a global citizen; thinking creatively; knowing how to process and evaluate large amounts of information; and developing people skills.

Mr. Ziegenfuss introduced students from Mrs. Stangherlin's English 10 class. The students presented their original project as a result of being involved in the *Stand Up. Speak Out. Lend a Hand!* Videoconference project. The class was asked to create a multimedia presentation to introduce the speaker, Gerda Weissman Klein, a Holocaust survivor.

Mr. Mantz asked the students if they completed the project on school time. The students explained that all work was done in class. Their class regularly meets in one of the computer labs so they can integrate and use technology in their learning.

## 5. **DOCTORAL DISSERTATION RESULTS**

Dr. Beauchemin thanked the board for their support of her doctoral studies and dissertation. She explained that her research was particularly interesting to her since it involved our district high school students. Dr. Beauchemin explained the results of her study, *The Relationship Between Student Perception of School Climate and Student Achievement*. Through the review of the literature, Dr. Beauchemin focused on the topics of student voice, school culture and climate, and school reform.

Dr. Beauchemin explained that the findings of the study indicated a strong correlation between the following:

- Student perception of school climate and student achievement as measured by PSSA math and reading scores and GPA scores;
- Student perception of school climate and student attendance;
- Female's perception of school climate and GPA scores;
- Male's perception of school climate and PSSA Math and GPA scores; and
- Grade 11 students' perception of school climate and PSSA reading, math, and GPA scores, and attendance

Dr. Beauchemin explained that the students' responses about school climate revealed many positive perceptions particularly in the areas of: physical and emotional safety and attitudes towards learning in general; teacher expectations for students and teachers' demonstrations of caring and concern for students; and positive student perceptions of being ready for the real world.

The least positive student perceptions dealt with student perceptions of classroom instruction, and the students' perceptions that they did not have much choice or relevance in their learning.

Dr. Beauchemin detailed some of the implications of the study as they related to:

- School culture and climate;
- Student voice;
- Professional development;
- Opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative work and observation of good teaching models;
- Utilizing teaching processes that better fit the way work is evolving; and
- Developing student assessments that match 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and skills.

## 6. **KINDERGARTEN RESEARCH**

Dr. Beauchemin explained that the board had requested additional information and research about full-day kindergarten in light of the recent state adoption of kindergarten standards and the district's reconfiguration study. She provided longitudinal research that was conducted since the mid 1990s with large samples of kindergarten students across the nation that supported full-day kindergarten. The research that compares half-day and full-day kindergarten program shows that children benefit from a developmentally,

appropriate, full-day program, most notably in terms of early academic achievement – a foundation for school and life success. The research states that full-day kindergarten can afford children the academic learning time needed to prepare for mastery of primary-grade reading and math skills. In doing so, such programs help circumvent subsequent needs for remediation or grade retention.

Dr. Beauchemin listed the benefits and concerns that were stated in the research. In addition, she explained that 317 of the 501 Pennsylvania public school districts offer full-day kindergarten to some degree. All of the districts use monies from the state's Accountability Block Grant to fund these programs.

Dr. Beauchemin will continue to gather data on the subject of full-day kindergarten. Districts in Lehigh, Carbon, and Northampton counties will be surveyed to determine the scope of full day kindergarten and the documented long term effects on student achievement. Additionally, a cost/benefit analysis will be completed in regards to district implementation. Mr. Pauloski asked if kindergarten was a requirement of the state. Administrators acknowledged that kindergarten programs are not required. Mr. Pauloski explained that the reason for his question was not to suggest that kindergarten be eliminated, but to express the concern that in this era of Act 1, the district may be forced to enact "awful" decisions. Mrs. Miller asked board members if they wanted the administrative team to continue gathering information on full-day kindergarten for continued consideration in upcoming curriculum committee meetings. There was unanimous consent to continue discussion on this topic.

7. **CURRICULUM REVIEW PROCESS - UPDATE**

This agenda item was postponed until the Monday, January 29, 2007 meeting.

8. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Giordano questioned if the budget process will require student course registration to begin before the end of the first semester. Dr. Wright explained that the budget was not responsible for the earlier student registration. She explained that our registration process needed to be adjusted to allow students to have equal opportunity in selecting LCTI programs as well as allowing school decisions to be made concerning schedules and staffing that may have budgetary considerations.

Mrs. Miller posed the question as to the appropriate committee to address food service issues. The board agreed that this topic should be addressed within the Buildings and Grounds Committee since it deals with all district operations.

9. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

None

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

11. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 29, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA 18103.