

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2008

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, February 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Feinberg, Mr. Frankenfield, Mr. Giordano, Mrs. Heffelfinger, Mr. Mantz, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Reinsmith, Mrs. Ziegler

Administrators Present: Dr. Beauchemin, Mr. Cassidy, Ms. Morningstar, Mrs. Pfingstler, Mrs. Samide, Mr. Smith, Dr. Wright, Mr. Ziegenfuss

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **LIFESMARTS PRESENTATION**

LifeSmarts teachers, Ms. Michelle Cotugno and Mrs. Holly Borthwick, provided the school board with an overview of the units of study completed thus far. The teachers focused on developing a community of learners during the initial weeks of the course. Emphasis was on team building, communication skills, and personalizing the learning environment. Career awareness and career planning were addressed during the second unit of study. A student from the class, Alyssa Mismar, presented a group video project which resulted from the unit of study. In addition, all students were provided at least one opportunity to visit a local business as part of Career Awareness month coordinated with the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The LifeSmarts class is currently investigating issues related to personal finance such as job acquisition, credit, savings, rent and living expenses, and family/personal budgets.

The teachers explained the integration of learning with technology throughout the course. The students are excited to have the daily availability of laptops in the classroom to support their learning. Students are using technology in a variety of ways: researching topics using the internet and search engines, using social networks for collaborative learning through wikispaces, blogs, and email, and creating multi-media presentations for audiences. The tools allow the students and teachers to continue the learning beyond the class period and the classroom.

Dr. Beauchemin asked if teachers are receiving student feedback about the course. Ms. Cotugno responded that the students appreciate the opportunity to work as a team on real-life applications, and they see relevance in their learning. Mr. Ziegenfuss linked the

information shared by the LifeSmarts teachers with the ISTE standards discussed at the January curriculum committee meeting.

Mrs. Miller asked how the use of laptops in the classroom is different from the computer lab. Ms. Cotugno explained the delivery of instruction is easier and more flexible with access to laptops within the classroom. She added students are learning with technology beyond the individual computer applications she used to provide in to students in the Computer Applications class. The students are willing to teach and help each other with their technology skills. Ms. Cotugno stated the students are being very responsible in the use and care of the laptops.

Mrs. Miller asked if there has been much down time with the technology. Ms. Cotugno reported no problems with the wireless connection, and the laptops are used every day by students. Mrs. Miller asked the teachers about the delivery of three content areas within one course. The teachers explained the integration allows students to see how the content areas are related. In addition, students are getting to know one another better, and they are working and communicating with students whom they might not have had the opportunity to know.

Mr. Mantz inquired about the teachers' professional development needs and if their needs are being met. The teachers explained the demands of collaborative work with three teachers and the demands of a new integrated course have caused them to work out processes and habits that work for them. They stated the daily planning period provided to them has been instrumental to the success of the course.

3. **TECHNOLOGY ADVANCING PLAN**

In response to the board's request on January 28, 2008 for additional information related to the technology Advancing Plan, Mr. Ziegenfuss and Mr. Smith presented information highlighting the current inventory of district technology per building, and the proposed inventory based on Option A and B of the plan. In addition, Mr. Ziegenfuss and Mr. Smith presented technology budget information to explain budget totals for the past few years as well as budget projections for maintaining and replacing the current inventory and the proposed budget costs for Option A and B. The budget plans are based on a 4-year replacement cycle. The projected salary and benefits costs of an additional technician were shared.

As requested by the board, Dr. Beauchemin reported on the upcoming curriculum review process initiatives and costs focusing on elementary language arts, possible re-alignment of science curriculum based on the new PSSA science assessment, and world language study. She stated the cost for the language arts adoption, which should be completed in spring 2009, will probably exceed the regularly budgeted amount of \$50,000 per year; however, she explained that we will not be using the entire budgeted amount this year, and it will be rolled over into the fund balance.

Mr. Reinsmith inquired how the Advancing Plan provides for the professional development of teachers. Dr. Beauchemin and Mr. Ziegenfuss highlighted the various opportunities that are being provided and will continue for 2008-2009.

Mrs. Heffelfinger commented about the one year timeline to implement the plan, and she asked, given the change management involved, would it be better to phase in the plan. The administrators explained the benefits of the timeline which include the efficient and effective delivery of professional development to staff, the ability to provide a consistent level over time of “learning with technology” for students rather than having consecutive years of teachers at the beginning stages of technology integration, the potential for synergy in having teachers work collaboratively together and learn from one another, and the emphasis on informational literacy and technology skills as necessary requirements in 21st century learning environments.

Mrs. Miller asked if common planning times will be an expectation of staff in the implementation of the plan. Dr. Beauchemin explained the building administrators are creative in their efforts to provide common planning and release time to teachers for many building/district initiatives. These practices will continue as we move forward with technology integration.

Mrs. Heffelfinger addressed the issue of assessment and evaluation, and she asked how the district will measure the success of the plan. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained the plans to collect both qualitative and quantitative data through measures such as the LOTI survey and local surveys as well as teacher and student stories and documentation.

Mrs. Miller expressed concern for implementing the Advancing Plan outside of the Curriculum Review Process. Dr. Beauchemin explained the past decision to move the Technology Sub-Committee under the umbrella of the Education Committee because technology and curriculum are integrated. She explained the plan was developed based on staff survey data, on information gathered during staff and student focus groups, on feedback from the current Smart Classrooms teachers and students, and on the District Technology & Learning Plan. The plan is a result of data from multiple building-level and district-level sources.

Mrs. Miller polled the board members for their views on the proposed Advancing Plan. Mrs. Feinberg, Mr. Frankenfield, Mr. Giordano, Mrs. Heffelfinger, Mr. Mantz, Mr. Reinsmith, and Mrs Ziegler responded in favor of the plan. Mrs. Miller stated she does support technology, but she does not support this plan. The majority agreed to approve the plan for implementation in 2008-2009 pending the current budget process.

4. **DOCTORAL STUDY REQUEST**

Mr. Roger McFillin, a Salisbury Middle School guidance counselor, presented a request to conduct a portion of his doctoral study in the district with female students in grades 8-11, ages 14-17 during the spring of 2008. Mr. McFillin described his study, entitled *The Problem-Solving Approach of Adolescent Girls Diagnosed with an Eating Disorder: Toward a Greater Understanding of Control*. He explained that participation is

voluntary, and students will understand that screening results will be shared with parents for possible referral to community based services, if needed. Salisbury students will constitute the control group for his doctoral research.

Mr. McFillin agreed to share the results of the study with the board and district. The board approved the study to be conducted in the district.

5. **ACCREDITATION FOR GROWTH**

Ms. Morningstar and Mrs. Xander reviewed the Accreditation for Growth process and procedures with the board. The scheduled visitation to the high school by the AFG evaluation team will occur in April 2008. A self-study document has been developed by the SHS staff as required by AFG, and Ms. Morningstar provided a copy to the board for their review. She explained the most valuable part of the process is the self-reflection, and she stated her pride in the commendable work that has been achieved by the SHS staff. Mrs. Xander stated staff members were pleased to have a voice in the direction of the high school.

During the visitation, the evaluation team will meet with students, parents, board members, community members, faculty, and administration. The findings of the visiting committee will be shared on the last day of the school visit. School board members will be informed of the date and time, and all are welcome to attend.

There was a brief discussion as to future participation in the AFG accreditation process given current standards of evaluation for all schools through NCLB as well as the strategic planning process mandated by the state. Dr. Wright indicated this has been a topic of discussion county-wide among superintendents, and it will require further discussion by this board before the next cycle for AFG accreditation will occur. Considerable time and effort as well as financial resources are required for completion of this accreditation process.

6. **STRATEGIC PLAN – UPDATE**

This item was postponed until the March 31, 2008 meeting.

7. **GRADUATION COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS RESOLUTION**

Mrs. Miller explained PSBA has issued a resolution for adoption by school boards to state their disagreement with the proposed Graduation Competency Assessments. The board agreed to send the resolution to PSBA and our local legislators. The resolution will appear on the March agenda of the regular monthly board meeting.

8. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Wright asked the board if they wanted to have a representative from LCCC to attend a future school board meeting to answer questions on the LCCC budget. The board responded there is no need to bring someone to the meeting.

Mrs. Feinberg reported she is getting questions from parents concerning the district's music program and staffing. Dr. Wright explained personnel issues will be discussed during the executive session on March 26.

9. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Mrs. Siegfried informed the board that there are two seniors working on attaining the Eagle Scout Award. The seniors are Colin Comerci and Timothy Siegfried.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

11. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 31, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA 18103.