

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2006

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Tuesday, November 28, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA.

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

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:05 p.m.

2. **ELEMENTARY REPORT CARD**

Dr. Beauchemin explained the three-year process involved in developing the new elementary report card. The committee was comprised of building and central administrators and teachers from both elementary schools. The new report card is aligned with state academic standards, and the report card's primary purpose is to share student progress and development with parents to strengthen the home-school partnership to support student learning. It was also reported that all parents of elementary students had the opportunity to provide input through a written survey regarding the current and new report cards. Parent suggestions and concerns were addressed in the new report card design.

Members of the committee explained aspects of the report card such as progress indicators, guided reading levels, assessment of student learning characteristics, and supplemental supports. Committee members explained the professional development efforts provided teachers to ensure consistency of assessment and evaluation in determining and reporting student performance. In addition, the committee explained that the CLIU is providing technology support in creating a report card template using our current student management system.

Mrs. Ziegler inquired why there were no effort indicators for special subjects. Mrs. Samide explained that in these areas, effort is embedded in the specific performance indicators. Mrs. Miller commented on the general nature of the indicators in the special subject section, and she expressed hope that teachers will make use of the comment

boxes to give specific information regarding student performance specific to curriculum as it becomes more complex in nature. The committee explained that teachers have been encouraged to pilot the new report card this year with a few students in their classes in order to fully understand its assessment and reporting nature. Teachers and administrators agree that the new report card better aligns with current classroom curriculum and instruction that has been improved over the past few years to align with state academic standards and *No Child Left Behind* performance indicators.

The committee explained the shift from a quarterly to a trimester reporting schedule. The new schedule will allow for two parent teacher conference opportunities scheduled after the distribution of the first and second trimester report cards. Parents will continue to be contacted as student needs arise throughout the school year in addition to the scheduled conference dates. The committee presented the proposed trimester report card and conference calendar beginning with the 2007-2008 school year. Mrs. Feinberg expressed concern about the amount of time needed for parent conferences at the expense of classroom instruction. Dr. Beauchemin explained that two scheduled parent-teacher conferences reflects the current practice of most the surrounding districts and that parents expressed interest through the surveys in having two scheduled meetings.

Board members inquired as to the process for communicating the new reporting system to parents. Committee members explained that parent workshops will be conducted in Spring and Fall 2007 to explain the changes in the report card and the conference schedules. In addition, the topic will be presented at each elementary school during Open House sessions in Fall 2007. Also, the first two distributions of the report card will coincide with a face-to-face parent-teacher conference which will allow further individual explanation.

Mrs. Miller asked about plans to evaluate the report card and the conference schedule. The committee explained that there are plans to solicit parent and staff input after each set of conferences and year-end.

The board agreed to support and approve the recommendations of the administration and Report Card Committee to adopt the newly designed report card and trimester schedule for implementation in Fall 2007.

3. **PROGRAM OF STUDIES**

Mr. Hume presented the proposed revisions to the Program of Studies. He explained that the approval for the Program of Studies needs to be earlier in the year due to a number of factors which include: the new district budget timelines based on Act 1, staff and course projections based on student enrollment and the Curriculum Review Process, and the need to begin the student registration process earlier in the school year.

Mr. Hume articulated several changes including:

- The implementation of a 5/6 course option which will allow greater flexibility in allowing students to enroll in performance-based courses that may conflict with a scheduled science lab. Students will be given the same credit as they would receive if attending class every day of the 6-day cycle;
- The offering of an integrated, year-long course entitled, *Life Smarts*, in lieu of the current requirement of a semester *Life Management A* course and a semester *Computer Applications* course, combined with the personal finance and entrepreneurial aspects of the Small Business course;
- Removal of the Accelerated Geometry course due to the offering of the Alg/Geo I, II, and III courses;
- The full year Studio Art course will become a semester *Drawing and Painting* course and a semester *Sculpture and Ceramics* course to allow for more student choice and flexibility in scheduling;
- Inclusion of the phrase “strongly recommend that students achieve 93%” in pre-requisite courses for students interested in honors and AP courses.

The recommendations for the SHS Program of Studies were approved by the board.

Dr. Beauchemin reviewed some historical data on student enrollment in the Foreign Language classes in Salisbury. In addition, data was shared regarding Foreign Language offerings in the other Lehigh County school districts. The data will be used in determining Program of Studies offerings, staff projections, and in the budget process.

4. **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

Mr. Ziegenfuss provided a presentation on *blogging* as an example of technology and instruction integration. Mr. Ziegenfuss provided several illustrations of current blogging usages to improve student engagement, promote critical thinking skills, and to connect students with a larger audience of learners. He explained the shift in thinking and practice to increase student control and choice in learning with the benefit of teacher facilitation. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained how blogs are currently being used in the district to promote student engagement, to provide professional development opportunities for staff, and to assist in data collection for evaluation of student progress and student programs.

5. **KINDERGARTEN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD STANDARDS**

Dr. Beauchemin explained that Pennsylvania has adopted state academic standards for Kindergarten. She provided the board with a portion of the document which provides an overview of the various areas of learning addressed in the standards. Dr. Beauchemin explained that the demographics of our student population has been changing for the past several years, and we are receiving students into Kindergarten who need extra support in many areas. She provided the example of the PSSA disaggregated scores for Harry S Truman Elementary School for Spring 2006. The subgroup of economically disadvantaged students met AYP state goals through the use of the confidence interval

calculation. The school is analyzing the data to ensure that these students' needs are being addressed.

Dr. Beauchemin explained that our current Kindergarten half-day is approximately 2 hours and 35 minutes. She explained that it is difficult to fully address the recently adopted Kindergarten standards and meet the needs of all students in this short time frame, particularly when some students are lacking in some areas coming into Kindergarten. Mrs. Miller asked that we consider this information as we move forward with the District Reconfiguration Study. Dr. Beauchemin explained that some local districts have begun to offer full-day Kindergarten programs. After some discussion, it was decided that Dr. Beauchemin will present additional information on full-day and extended-day Kindergarten options for further discussion at the Curriculum Subcommittee meetings.

6. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Mrs. Feinberg inquired about the proposed Model UN student trip to Washington, D.C. in February 2007. Dr. Wright explained that the administration considers the trip to be an educational tour. The administration is waiting to get all the trip details before bringing it to the board for approval.

Mrs. Miller stated that the recent editorial in *The Morning Call* concerning an integrated math program may prompt some concern from Salisbury parents in regards to our new integrated math classes if parents do not understand that our approach is not the same as this program. Dr. Beauchemin explained that the paper was writing about a published Core Integrated math program whereas our newly designed math classes are different. The instruction in our math classes are spiraled and integrated to allow students to regularly use and review aspects of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, but our program is not connected with the published Core Integrated math program in question.

7. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

None

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 8, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA 18103.