

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
WESTERN SALISBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2005

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, September 19, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. at Western Salisbury Elementary School, 3201 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Feinberg, Mr. Gatani, Mrs. Gibbs, Mr. Giordano, Mr. Mantz, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Reinsmith, Mr. Steidel

Administrators Present: Mr. Cassidy, Ms. Herrity, Mr. Hume, Mrs. Perron-Jones, Mrs. Pfingstler, Mrs. Samide, Mrs. Wright

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:00 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting from May 12, 2005 was made and approved as submitted.

3. **CHAPTER 4/DISTRICT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Ms. Herrity shared that one of her goals last year was to assess the state of the district's Planned Courses and the Curriculum Review Cycle and to examine the requirements of Chapter 4. During the 2004 - 2005 school year, Ms. Herrity met with department chairs, reviewed the Planned Courses posted on the district website, and accessed the Strategic Plan for a better understanding of the Curriculum Review Process. The current Curriculum Review Process includes four stages: implementing, evaluating, revising and reviewing although these stages are not clearly defined in the Strategic Plan in terms of persons involved and the types of activities within each stage. This information, combined with a synopsis of the minutes from the District Curriculum Sub-Committee Meetings from 1998 – 2005 which documented textbook adoptions, course additions and revisions, and program changes that had been approved by the board, had been presented in a document and shared with the School Board in Spring 2005. While much has been done in the area of Curriculum and Instruction, a priority for this year is to bring the Curriculum Review Cycle into better alignment with the current reality in the district and to more clearly articulate what each of the stages in the Curriculum Review Cycle involves and the persons responsible.

Since Chapter 4 articulates the requirements and guidelines for curriculum and instruction, Ms. Herrity presented an overview of the main aspects of Chapter 4. It was also stated that one of Mrs. Wright's goals, when she presents her transition report in November, will be in the area of curriculum and instruction, specifically the Curriculum Review Process.

In reviewing the Chapter 4 requirements, the state's requirements for curriculum and instruction were discussed. It was noted the district is responsible for teaching content and knowledge as well as developing integrity, processing information, thinking critically, working independently, collaborating with others, and adapting to change. Chapter 4 also includes a section on parental rights – allowing parents access to Planned Courses and assessments. One of the ways in which this is accomplished is by posting the Planned Courses on the district website. The Planned Courses identify course objectives, related activities, assessment tools, and alignment with state standards. Parents also have the right to examine state and formal assessments that are used in the district. Parents can exercise this right by contacting the building principal.

Another critical component of the Curriculum Review Process that should not be overlooked is the timing of presenting to the School Board a written Planned Course before or with a request for a textbook adoption. The Planned Course might not have all of the activities and assessments defined at the onset, but it should be a finished document by the end of the first year of implementation. It is understood that this Planned Course document may be revised during the four curriculum stages.

Ms. Herrity explained that she and the secondary building principals, Mr. Hume and Mr. Cassidy, have met with the seven department chairs individually to talk extensively about the Planned Courses, Curriculum Review Process, and the setting of department goals for the 2005 – 2006 school year in terms of objectives, timelines, activities, persons responsible, and the goals' connections to student learning and achievement. Similar meetings with the elementary principals, Ms. Herrity, and the elementary liaisons were conducted.

Mrs. Wright presented an overview of the proposed revised Curriculum Review Process. She articulated each stage in terms of the persons involved, activities to be conducted within a particular stage, and how each stage was related to developing curriculum and writing Planned Courses. The four stages include: Stage One – Preparation; Stage Two – Planning; Stage Three – Focus; and Stages Four – Implementation and Evaluation. Mrs. Wright responded to questions from the School Board related to the process.

Ms. Herrity and Mrs. Wright provided a handout describing the curriculum work that has been done in the district (K-12) for the past seven years. It also highlighted the curricular areas that appear to be priorities: chorus, band, and the music and art programs (K-12), health and physical education, the integration of Family & Consumer Science and Business and Technology, and addressing remediation needs within the secondary math curriculum. A discussion followed concerning the process and the identification of priorities. Mrs. Miller explained that the Curriculum Review Process would be an on-

going topic at Curriculum Committee Meetings. There was agreement from the board to the continuation of revising the Curriculum Review Process.

4. LCTI – ACADEMIC CENTER – UPDATE

Ms. Herrity explained that a 16-member ad hoc committee (school board member, administrators, teachers, and parents) has been set up to address the issues of the LCTI-Academic Center and the ninth grade option at LCTI. Information was presented to the board concerning the district's current use of LCTI programs for students in grades 10 – 12 and a brief explanation of the options were presented and discussed. It was explained that the committee will be making recommendations concerning the possible program options to a larger administrative group. The options would be evaluated in light of budgetary considerations and the costs and benefits to students and district. The expectation is to present the recommendations to the board by the end of November/early December.

Depending upon the options selected, parent and student information sessions will be held in December, and students will select from the available options in January. More information on this topic will be provided in the near future.

5. DUAL ENROLLMENT – SALISBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Herrity presented information on the two dual enrollment courses that are being offered at the high school this year in conjunction with LCCC – Honors Anatomy & Physiology and Honors Chem II. The students took a placement test for the Honors Anatomy & Physiology course, and our students scored very well. No placement test for Honors Chem II was required by LCCC. Discussion took place concerning the previous board decision to not include the grades of dual enrollment students in the high school GPA. Ms. Herrity reviewed the documents that were developed and distributed to students and their parents prior to Spring 2005 course registration, including sections in the Program of Studies, which outlined all aspects of the dual enrollment courses. This included specific information that if taken for college credit, grades in these courses would not be calculated into the student's GPA. This is the practice of other districts in Lehigh County offering dual enrollment courses with LCCC, and it is also consistent with our district's policy for students taking college courses from other area colleges. Mr. Steidel offered that since the LCCC dual enrollment courses are being taught by Salisbury teachers in our high school, we have more direct supervision of the instruction and should therefore consider calculating the grades into the GPA. After considerable discussion, it was decided to continue with the established board decision. It was also acknowledged that we are early in the dual enrollment opportunities we offer, and as the programs continues and expands, we will evaluate and refine how all aspects of these courses best serve our students.

Ms. Herrity also explained that each department is identifying any teacher who would qualify as a possible adjunct professor for future dual enrollment courses. It is the expectation that the district will continue to explore this option for students.

6. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gatanis asked for clarification on the role of the high school counselors in the college search process. Several board members spoke about the need at the high school to provide an articulated guidance plan to aid students and parents in the college application process. It was recommended that students and parents be given a detailed guide which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of students, parents, and counselors. In addition, Mrs. Miller made the suggestion that the guidance counselors provide a formal presentation of the college search process to parents during Open House each year. Parents attending Open House could attend this guidance presentation during open periods in their student's schedule.

The administration acknowledged the need to work on the plan with the guidance department. Mr. Hume will speak with the guidance counselors to begin addressing the concern. The administration will provide information to the board at future meetings as to the progress on this issue.

Mrs. Gibbs asked if our students were allowed to take courses not offered at Salisbury High School at another area high school such as Emmaus High School during the school day. Ms. Herrity said to her knowledge this does not occur, except in the possible case of a distance learning situation, where high schools collaborate with "real time" internet linked courses. Mrs. Gibbs was under the impression this was an option of our students.

Mrs. Gibbs recommended that discussion of class sizes, particularly in the elementary schools, become a regular item for discussion in Curriculum Committee meetings. Mrs. Wright offered that she plans to update the Board via the regular monthly Board packets with this data to include grade level, total student numbers, student numbers in learning support, and gifted support. It was recommended that this system of data distribution be tried before determination of regular inclusion of this item in future Curriculum Committee agendas.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 31 at 7:00 p.m. at Harry S Truman Elementary School Library.