

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2007

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, February 26, 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, Mr. Reinsmith, Mrs. Ziegler

Administrators Present: Dr. Beauchemin, Mr. Hume, Mrs. Morningstar, Mrs. Pfingstler, Mrs. Samide, Dr. Wright, Mr. Ziegenfuss

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:03 p.m.

2. **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

Mr. Ziegenfuss provided the board with a progress update of the District Technology Committee. Mr. Ziegenfuss shared the committee's vision, mission, and belief statements. He also explained the (5) identified goal areas related to: access, effective teaching and learning, professional development, information literacy, and assessment and evaluation. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained that the next scheduled technology committee meeting would focus on developing the actual goal statements.

Mr. Ziegenfuss explained that technology subcommittees have been formed at each school building in order to share the work of the district technology committee and to discuss the implementation of the goal areas in each building.

The school board representatives to the District Technology Committee, Mr. Mantz and Mrs. Heffelfinger, shared their perceptions of the committee work. Mrs. Heffelfinger stated that she is impressed by the process that has been designed and implemented as well as the consistent involvement of the diverse stakeholders. She explained that the diversity of the group has helped to create a synergy that allows members to challenge each other's thinking, and it has resulted in good, collaborative work. She referred to the group's intention to maintain an alignment among the vision, mission, and belief statements. Mr. Mantz commended Mr. Ziegenfuss on his strong facilitation skills. Mr. Mantz explained that the group left each meeting with a feeling of accomplishment. Mr. Ziegenfuss concluded by commenting that the committee is trying to provide

definition and credibility to teaching and learning in the 21st century and to integrate technology seamlessly and transparently into that context.

Mrs. Miller solicited feedback from the board on the work of the committee. Mrs. Miller inquired as to the phrase “competitive advantage” within the vision statement. She explained that the district has always advocated developing confident and competent students. Mr. Mantz and Mrs. Heffelfinger explained that the intention was to ensure that our students would be ready to compete in the workplace. Dr. Beauchemin stated that there was strong belief by the business representatives on the committee that our students should have the skills necessary to provide themselves with a competitive advantage in the job market. She explained that the phrase did not imply that the district was advocating competition as the primary mission within the learning environment.

Mr. Giordano stated his view that technology should support curricular goals, and he expressed that some of the committee’s statements appear to be the opposite of that idea. Mr. Ziegenfuss responded that the committee shares the agreement that technology is a support for curriculum. Dr. Beauchemin explained that the committee worked to have the technology plan blend with the Chapter 4 curriculum and instruction plan.

Mr. Ziegenfuss presented the board with two recommendations that are an outgrowth of the committee’s work and the District Curriculum Review Process:

1. Provide wireless network access in all five district buildings with available funds from the 2006-2007 technology budget in order to improve access capabilities and to provide the infrastructure to enable us to qualify for grants such as Classrooms for the Future.
2. Allocate district curriculum funds, designated for the acquisition of resources, to the purchase of laptops for the new LifeSmarts course as the technology will be a primary learning resource.

Mr. Ziegenfuss acknowledged the need to develop policies and procedures regarding the use of the wireless network and the management of laptops. He explained that work is already underway to contact surrounding districts that already have such documents and programs in place as well as to research ideas related to the topic from other areas of the country.

Mrs. Miller explained to the board that the administration is looking for approval of these two recommendations so that they can move forward with the ancillary work that must be completed before the end of the current school year. Mr. Gatani inquired as to other district’s procedures for laptop management and to the number of laptops being requested in the recommendation. Mr. Ziegenfuss responded that laptop carts often provide security, and agreed that administration will need to plan for storage and security. He also stated that the recommendation is for 30 laptops which would cost approximately \$50,000. He explained that the wireless option for all buildings is approximately \$44,000. Mrs. Feinberg reinforced the need for policies to be developed for site access and security. Mr. Pauloski stated the need for students to be able to bring work from

home and have it be compatible with any new equipment. Mrs. Ziegler asked if D'Huy is aware of the wireless proposal, and the response was that they are aware of the recommendation. Mr. Mantz, Technology Chair, explained that he had discussed the recommendations with Mr. Ziegenfuss, and Mr. Mantz strongly supports the recommendations.

Mrs. Miller polled the board for support, and the board unanimously approved both recommendations.

3. **WORLD LANGUAGES – 2007-2008**

Dr. Beauchemin referred the board and administration to the World Language 2003-2007 data that was provided at an earlier curriculum meeting this year. The data reveals a consistently low student enrollment in French classes each year. Dr. Beauchemin explained that the recommendation to eliminate French as a district option was initially proposed for the 2005-2006 school year. Upon further discussion, the decision was made by the school board to hire a part time French teacher and to gather enrollment data for future analysis. During 2005-2006, 10 students were enrolled in French I, and in 2006-2007, 9 students were enrolled in French I. During 2006-2007, French IV was provided as an independent study for (5) students. Dr. Beauchemin shared the registration data for French I – IV for the upcoming 2007-2008 school year. She also provided data as to the current options in the other Lehigh County schools with three districts presently offering two World Language options.

Dr. Beauchemin has met with the World Language department to discuss the data and the plan to have the department begin the Curriculum Review Process in September 2007. Discussion addressed the possibilities of extending the depth and/or breadth of our current offerings. Dr. Beauchemin discussed the need to consider current research about World Languages and to investigate the varied options for providing these experiences to our students including distance learning and dual enrollment.

After discussion with the department and the building administrators, Dr. Beauchemin presented the following administrative recommendations:

1. Eliminate French I as an option for 2007-2008.
2. Continue to support French II students who have completed French I.
3. Consider offering French III and/or French IV as an Independent Study if the numbers continue to be as low as they currently appear based on registration.
4. Continue to offer the Grade 8 Exploratory World Language course with Spanish and German. The void created by eliminating French would be filled with a literacy based section that would focus on World Languages and cultures in general.

Mrs. Miller opened the discussion with the school board. Mrs. Feinberg commented that the feedback she is receiving concerning Independent Study is that it is not working. She suggested that distance learning options be investigated. Mr. Hume commented that the

current district policy on independent study only requires that the teacher and students meet to set up the course requirements for the student. There is no formal requirement to meet. The student takes the mid-term and final. Mr. Hume believes that our students need more support. Mr. Mantz was interested in having administration explore the possibilities of utilizing partnerships with local districts and/or colleges in order to provide World Language options. Dr. Beauchemin explained that steps are being taken to address this possibility.

Mrs. Miller commented on the value of the Exploratory Course, and she stated that she did not want the opportunity to be diluted. She expressed the need to keep the program “world language rich.” Dr. Beauchemin explained that she is working with Mr. Cassidy to have this occur. Board members asked that they be kept informed as to the format and content of the exploratory course.

Mrs. Miller surveyed the board for their approval of the recommendations. The board agreed to approve the recommendations at this time, and they are looking forward to the suggestions and recommendations from the Curriculum Review Process for strengthening the World Language options for students in the near future. Phase I of the Curriculum Review Process for World Languages is scheduled to begin during the 2007-2008 school year.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Mrs. Miller suspended the continuation of the Curriculum Meeting and turned the chair over to Mr. Reinsmith, Chair of the Building & Grounds Committee for discussion on the topic of Facilities Usage.

4. **FACILITIES USAGE**

The board reviewed the request by Mr. Brian Festa to waive the insurance requirement and the fees normally associated with Category D requests for Facilities Usage. Dr. Wright explained that Mrs. Famularo had informed the district’s insurance carrier of the request. The carrier explained that the Facilities Usage request being made by Mr. Festa does not qualify under Categories A or B of the policy. The carrier stated that they could support waiving the insurance requirement because it was a low-risk activity; however, the district would ultimately be responsible in the event of an insurance-related incident.

Dr. Wright recommended that the board adhere to the Facilities Usage Policy as written. Mrs. Miller stated that she was involved in the writing of the policy a few years ago. She explained that much time was spent looking at the liability question. Mrs. Miller believes that Mr. Festa’s request falls under Category D of the policy. She stated that currently other district employees are providing private tutorials and lessons outside of district facilities. Mrs. Miller recommended that the administration identify any other exceptions to the policy that may be occurring to ensure consistent practice regarding use of facilities.

The board agreed to approve Dr. Wright’s recommendation.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Reinsmith turned the meeting back to Mrs. Miller for continuation of the District Curriculum Committee Meeting.

5. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

None

6. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Mrs. Jackie Weileau stated that Saucon Valley School District offers only two World Languages, Spanish and German. This district was experiencing low enrollment in French. Mrs. Weileau shared information pertaining to the solicitation of students for private music lessons. She explained that shortly after marching band season her children received flyers through the U.S. mail, followed by phone calls. Dr. Wright explained that the district is aware of the situation, and she is investigating the details.

Mrs. Linda Kennington expressed positive comments about the technology committee and its progress. She also commented on the value of the Exploratory World Language course and shared that her child had enjoyed the experience.

Mrs. Nadine Smith inquired as to procedures in place to keep students from accessing inappropriate internet sites. Mr. Hume explained that the staff does monitor student usage intermittently, and students are disciplined when they have violated the correct usage policy. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained that it is the district's responsibility to teach appropriate usage. Mrs. Smith added that she understands the recommendation to eliminate French, but she would like to see the curriculum provide more options for students including orchestra.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 26, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA 18103.