

Newtown Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

Minutes from the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee held on Tuesday, May 26, 2020.

M. Ku J. Vouros A. Uberti D. Zukowski

J. Vouros called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

J. Vouros moved to approve the minutes from 5/12/2020

M. Ku seconded the motion.

Public Participation: None

Review of Revised Curriculum Development Guide

During monthly Curriculum Development Council meetings, the group worked on revising and improving the curriculum development process. The newly revised Curriculum Development Guide will replace the prior guide and serve as a reference for anyone involved with curriculum development. An appendix will accompany the guide and will include Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction (CBCI) information as well as forms for staff.

M. Ku asked about how significant the changes were from the old document. A. Uberti summarized the changes and highlighted that changes in the process will ensure that all curriculum is high-quality and that the core learning tasks are rigorous at all levels. To achieve this, subject committees will be more involved in the upfront vertical alignment before curriculum writers engage in the work. Once the work is underway, each curriculum writing group will be assigned a Curriculum Coach to provide the writers with timely and specific feedback during the first unit and at key points during writing. The Curriculum Coaches will be a cadre of certified staff who are very experienced with CBCI and have received specific training designed to guarantee consistency in quality.

M. Ku stated that the detail in the document was much appreciated.

J. Vouros commented that he was also appreciative, especially of the steps included for maintaining quality control and a high level of rigor.

M. Ku noted that since the prior Curriculum Development Guide was Board-approved she would like to the Board to see this new version and that it would be helpful for them to see the steps to the process.

A. Uberti agreed that it would be helpful for the Board to see what checks the curriculum goes through before they see it and stated that there is no rush, that it could be added to a future Board agenda at the discretion of the Board Chair.

Review of Summer Curriculum Writing Projects

A. Uberti shared the plan for June curriculum writing. All curriculum writing will be virtual with groups creating their own plans. Concept-based training for all writers took place on Friday, May 29th. Three levels of training were provided by K. Swift, J. Connors and C. Tischio, all members of the Curriculum Development Council.

- Beginning – This is their first time writing curriculum
- Intermediate – Written curriculum in the past and would like to take a refresher course
- Advanced – Staff who enjoy writing curriculum and would may be interested in serving on the Council or as a Curriculum Coach.

A. Uberti noted that Grade 7 and 8 Math will be finished by the end of this school year and should be ready to be presented to the BOE early next school year.

M. Ku asked how much curriculum writing would change in a world due to the pandemic.

A. Uberti stated that a curriculum outlines what is taught and therefore should not be impacted by how we are teaching it.

J. Vouros asked about if there was resistance by educators wanting to write during their summer.

A. Uberti shared that she met with each group to explain the expectation and all those on the list agreed to them. There does need to be a future discussion regarding departments or grade levels whose curriculum needs to be revised and consistently refuse to write in the summer.

A. Uberti has discussed this with Dr. Rodrigue and there will need to be an agreement with the Union on how to proceed in those instances.

C&I Communications to Staff

A. Uberti shared several of the C&I Updates newsletters to staff that she and F. Purcaro have been sending out every week or so since the school closure began. The newsletter has been well received garnering on average of 850 views per mailing. Staff have shared that the newsletters have been very helpful in improving communications.

J. Vouros asked if it is possible to show the Board if you can show the board a copy of the C&I Communication to staff.

M. Ku agreed it should be shared with the Board.

A. Uberti said she would be happy to share this at a future date.

J. Vouros thanked A. Uberti for her leadership.

Public Participation: None

J. Vouros adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

M. Ku seconded the motion

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Norling

THESE ARE DRAFTS MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

