

Newtown Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

Minutes from the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020.

M. Ku A. Uberti S. Earle K. Magness
J. Vouros A. Deeb K. Longobucco

J. Vouros called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

J. Vouros moved to approve the minutes from 2/25/2020

M. Ku seconded the motion.

Public Participation: Teresa Cardamone
38 Farm Field Ridge Road

Ms. Cardamone has twin boys who participate in the gifted program at the Middle School. While she had high praise for the gifted program overall, she expressed concerns regarding the rigor presented to students in general curriculum. She suggested that there be more ability-leveled courses such as in the area of math.

Mrs. Uberti offered to meet with Ms. Cardamone to further discuss her specific concerns.

Preview New Curriculum: Sociology

Ms. Amy Deeb

Ms. Deeb presented the Sociology curriculum and gave an overview of the learning objectives and assessments for each of the units:

- Culture
- Conformity and Deviance
- Socialization

Project Challenge Update

Dr. Sherry Earle and Ms. Kate Magness

Gifted Identification/Screening

- The Otis Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT) is one of multiple measures used in the identification of gifted children in Newtown. The results of the OLSAT are also used to make other education decisions such as placement in Math Plus at Reed Intermediate School.
- The digital OLSAT was administered for the first time this year. Three teachers of the gifted were trained to administer the digital OLSAT. With the help of Beth Ann Krupa of the Newtown Tech Department and Pearson Assessments, the OLSAT was successfully administered to all third graders. Due to electronic testing, results were available in a matter of weeks as opposed to months for paper and pencil scoring.

Providing Support in the General Education Setting

- provide math enrichment to third and fourth graders who perform exceptionally well on Stepping Stones assessments.
- assist teachers by creating or curating challenging activities to augment the regular curriculum
- model creative problem solving lessons in fourth grade classes.
- provide needed lessons as requested (i.e. active listening lessons to fourth graders)
- conduct creative and critical thinking screening lessons to all third graders
- co-teach, with the library media specialist, Personalized Exploration, a six-week instructional segment to support exploration of topic of choice for all fourth graders; students are then encouraged to continue that exploration throughout the year

Physical Space for Instruction

- Reed Intermediate School (RIS) has continued to provide two adjoining classroom for Project Challenge fourth grade students who attend Reed once weekly throughout the year.
- Space at the other schools varies and is sometimes less than ideal due to space demands at some schools.

Project Challenge Website

- This fall the gifted education website was redesigned.
- The website provides information for parents including information pertinent to the identification process and links to national, state and local resources.

Project Challenge – Wish List for the 2020-2021 School Year

- Attention to the subject of single subject acceleration at the elementary level.
- Additional opportunities for staff development and attendance at conferences such as the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC).
- Additional staff development for general education teachers regarding the nature and education of gifted children.

Assistant Superintendent Updates

Ms. Uberti asked that the subcommittee remind Board members that presenters of new/revised curriculum are only expected to attend the meeting of the First Read of their curriculum. It is important that if any member of the Board has additional questions, that they be forwarded. The curriculum presenters will attend another meeting, if needed, upon request.

Public Participation: Teresa Cardamone

Ms. Cardamone added that Project Challenge is a successful program, but is not a substitute for adequate curriculum in the general education classrooms.

J. Vouros adjourned the meeting at 11:44 a.m.

M. Ku seconded the motion

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Norling

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