

Seymour Board of Education



CURRICULUM and TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 16, 2016
Seymour Middle School
Library Media Room
7:00 p.m.

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 5/20/16
TIME: 8:15 am
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Yashu Putorti
Ed Strumello

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Syriac, Superintendent
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Jim Freund, SHS Principal
Pat Boyle, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Mr. Strumello called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance

II. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Capstone Project Planning Committee Update

Mr. Freund said he has been gathering samples of Capstone Projects from other schools to review and see what other schools are doing. However, he wants the project to be unique to Seymour and not just a copy of another school districts. He wants to form a committee of stakeholders consisting of students, teachers, parents and board of education members. He wants the students and staff to take ownership of the project. He would like the project to be started by the students as sophomores and finished in their first semester senior year. This would put less pressure on the students. Mrs. Harmeling asked what resources would be needed. Mr. Freund felt that most of the organizational work would be occurring in Advisory Groups. Advisory Groups are small groups that have faculty advisors that allow students to form a relationship with an adult not necessarily their own teacher. The student would present an idea to the faculty advisor and report back frequently. They would find an adult mentor to work with as well on their Capstone Project. The project should tie to something that the student would like to do in their adult life. Mr. Strumello wanted a timeline for when we could expect to see the Capstone Project implemented. Mr. Freund felt that the current 7th grade class should be the first class to do the project. That would allow two years to develop and implement the project. It would be possible to have the incoming 8th grade do a pilot program. Mr. Strumello wanted to know why we didn't implement the project for the incoming 8th grade. Mr. Freund felt that would be rushing the project. Mrs. Syriac pointed out that it is not recommended to change graduation requirements to a sitting class. She would also like to see the feedback from both the state and the NEASC committee on their requirements. Mr. Strumello would like to see a framework on this as soon as possible. Mr. Freund will research surrounding districts to see how many have a Capstone Project and if the students get credit for the project. The committee will meet in July to discuss the results.

B. Summer Curriculum Update

Mrs. Tencza discussed the voluntary summer curriculum work (see attached outline). The curriculum work will take place right after school is out. The administration will be guiding the work. Mrs. Tencza would like teachers to know that going forward this will be how curriculum work will be done. Curriculum is an ongoing process and should be a reflection every year. Mr. Garofolo wanted to know what Mrs. Tencza hoped the outcome would be on June 16. Mrs. Tencza felt that there should be scope and sequencing, assessments and instructional resources added to some of the curriculum.

Mrs. Syriac noted that no one was writing new curriculum but strengthening what is already written. Mrs. Tencza said she would review the curriculum work and it would be posted on the website with revisions in the fall.

C. GPA/QPA in PowerSchool Information

Mrs. Tencza stated that with the move to PowerSchool some data needed to be adjusted. It is a large undertaking. Moving forward our current rating system at Seymour High School will be cleaned and tightened. All regular classes will be weighted at 1, honors classes will be 1.1, and AP classes will be 1.2. Transfer credits and classes designated Pass/Fail will not be rated. This will be applied uniformly. This should not impact the ranking of next year's seniors. The students are not ranked until they have completed 6 semesters so it will be the same for all of them. This is a very equitable and easily explained system.

III. **REPORTS**

A. Chairman's Report

Mr. Strumello asked that while the committee was assembled a date be picked for the next July Curriculum Committee Meeting. The date of July 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. was selected and the meeting will be held at SMS.

B. Superintendent's Report

None

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Putorti) to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Mrs. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Putorti

Submitted by:
Pat Boyle

Summer curriculum update

Summer Curriculum Dates: June 13-June 16

When teachers are collaboratively involved in curriculum development, the implementation of a guaranteed and viable curriculum is increased.

John A. C. Hattie (*Visible Learning for Teachers*) encourages schools to have systems in place that ensure that:

- educators are working as members of a team rather than in isolation
- there is a shared understanding of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions all students must acquire
- teaching and learning are “visible” ...when it is clear what teachers are teaching and what students are learning, student achievement increases

Seymour Schools’ summer curriculum development will continue to utilize backwards design with an emphasis on standards-based planning. Curriculum will be revised in an ongoing fashion based on feedback from teachers, data collected, and updates from SB/SAT/Next Generation Accountability feedback.

Grade level	Focus area	Number of teachers
Elementary Grades K-5	ELA writing and reading curriculum/ scope & sequence	15
Elementary Grades K-5	Phonics/phonemic awareness	10
Middle School Grade 7	ELA Reading/Writing Workshop	3
Middle School Grade 6	Social Studies	3
High School Grades 9-12	Physical Education	2
High School	Marketing	1
High School	Psychology and Sociology	2
High School	Astronomy	1
High School	Forensics	1
High School	American Government	2
High School	English 1	4