

Seymour Board of Education



CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 17, 2018
Seymour High School
Room 321
3:30 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jim Garofolo

Kristen Harmeling

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent

James Freund, SHS Principal

Ernie DiStasi, SHS Assistant Principal (left 5:02 p.m.)

Bernadette Hamad, SMS Principal

Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services

John Fitzgerald, SHS Music Teacher

Greg Spath, SHS Math Teacher

Caroline Sweeney, SHS Science Teacher

Josh Swetts, SHS Music Teacher (arrive 3:45 p.m.)

Dave Willadsen, SHS Social Studies Teacher (left 4:40 p.m.)

Pat Boyle, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Mr. Garofolo called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 3:42 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. INFORMATIONAL

A. Elementary Reading and Writing Workshop Update-Mrs. Tencza

Mrs. Tencza discussed Patty Wright, Literacy Specialist's, work with the elementary and middle school. Mrs. Tencza said she is doing regular walkthroughs to check in and provide feedback with the teachers. The teachers are impressed with how much the children are capable of in their writing after implementing the professional learning.

B. REACH Program Update-Dr. Boyle

Dr. Boyle stated that the program started with 6 students with 1 teacher and 2 paraprofessionals. A new student was recently added along with 1 additional paraprofessional for support. There are 3 tiers for behavior data. Once a student is in the highest tier for 10 days the process to integrate the child back into a main classroom is started. They are placed in classes in areas that give each individual child the best chance to succeed. One student is already back into regular classes. Mr. Garofolo asked about the decision to place an outplaced student in this class. Dr. Boyle said it is done at a PPT meeting with the sending school, receiving school as well as parent input. Dr. Boyle is happy with the results in this classroom at this time.

C. Middle School Writing, Math, GRIT Update-Mrs. Hamad

Mrs. Hamad started with the writing program. After implementing the program teachers have seen students go from writing a couple of paragraphs to writing pages in their assignments. During the professional learning authentic student work is analyzed and scored to make sure the teachers are all in agreement with the process. In math the new math program is being well received by both teachers and

students. The teachers are very appreciative of both the writing and math professional learning. The data results will not be seen until the MAP scores are analyzed in January and in the spring. Mrs. Harmeling said since there was no math book to approve she felt the committee was a little out of the loop with the math implementation. She would like to see a demonstration of a math lesson. Mr. Garofolo suggested the possibility of video-taping an actual class so they could really get a feel how the lessons are implemented. Mrs. Tencza will look into the possibility of some form of presentation. Mrs. Hamad said the Grit sessions are working well. It is 1 section in every 8 days and is being used to do small group work, goal setting, Khan Academy, the counselors and teachers are also using this period for Social Emotional Learning and doing lessons on "A Culture of Kindness".

- D. Middle and High School World Language Enrollment Update/Next Year-Mrs. Hamad, Mr. Freund
Mrs. Hamad said after doing a survey at this time she anticipates offering both French and Spanish next year. Mr. Freund said with current enrollment projections he plans on offering 1 section of French I, French II and French III as well as Spanish I-V. Mrs. Harmeling asked about exploring the possibility of Spanish V being UConn Spanish so that the students could receive college credit for it. Mr. Freund will look into the possibility.

- E. Music/Fine Arts and Library/Media Update-Mr. Freund
Mr. Freund said the plan is to grow the music department. This is evident with the new course proposals for next year. Due to budget constraints the Library-Media program will not be re-instated. Mrs. Harmeling said the curriculum should be written so that it could be approved and be in place to forward the need for the position. Mr. Freund said the curriculum had been started before the position was eliminated. Mrs. Harmeling would like to discuss the curriculum at a future curriculum meeting.

IV. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

- A. Proposal-Program of Studies 2019-2020 New Course Offerings-Mr. Freund, Mr. DiStasi
New Social Studies Courses presented: "Sports in American Society" – Students in this course will examine American history, society and culture through the perspective of sports. There will be no cost to the district for this semester course as there are many resources on-line and in archival footage and no additional staff needed. "Music History and Appreciation" –Students in this course will examine music as it relates to history. The committee asked why this was a social studies and not a music offering. Mr. Freund explained that there was no performance component to this course and would be taught much as the "Sports in American Society" class. The Board suggested that the name be changed to reflect this; new course will be titled "Music in American Society". Mr. Garofolo also wanted the language in the course objectives changed. There will be no cost to this semester course and no additional staff needed. Two new semester Mathematics courses are being presented. "Discrete Mathematics"-this stresses problem solving and reasoning skills. "Linear Algebra" –stresses the theory and application of solving equations in business, engineering, physics, and health sciences. The addition of these two courses would allow students who have doubled up on math as a freshman to continue their mathematical studies as upper classman. Pre-Calculus is a pre-requisite to both of these classes. Mrs. Harmeling questioned why these are not honors level courses so students could earn quality points for them. The cost to these two courses would be 1 math book for Linear Algebra at the cost of approximately \$3000.00 and no additional staff needed. The music department is requesting the addition of three music classes "a Capella" and "Chamber Singers" both would be a full-year course and offered at the honors level. Auditions would be required before being admitted to these courses. Mr. Fitzgerald felt the ideal class size would be 16-20 students. Mr. Freund said these two courses would be taught on alternate years and offer students a choice instead of 4 years of Choir. The other music course "Keyboarding and Recording" would be a semester course and would be a class in keyboarding. There would be a cost of \$7,000-\$9,000 for the purchase of keyboards for this class. The other cost to the district would include adding .6 music teacher to the existing .4 music teaching position creating a full-time music teacher. Mr.

Garofolo would like the language in the objectives reworked. The rest of the requests are changes to existing courses.

Mrs. Sweeney would like to separate "AP Biology and UConn Biology" and only offer "AP Biology". The two programs have changed so much in past years that they are dissimilar making it difficult to teach at the same time. She would also like to offer AP Biology every year instead of every other year. Mr. Garofolo asked about the lab component. Mr. Freund said Biology and Chemistry have separate lab time but his expectation was all science classes have lab work. Mr. Freund would like the EMT course changed to "UConn EMT" with the elevation to an honors class. It would incorporate a Medical Terminology course into the curriculum and has been approved by UConn. The music department would like "Advanced Guitar" changed to "Honors Advanced Ensembles" where participants create and perform music and it requires an audition before enrollment. They would also like to change "Concert Band" to "Concert and Jazz Band". These two courses are arranged so that the teachers can work collaboratively.

MOTION: (Mrs. Harmeling /sec. Mr. Garofolo) move to send the Program of Studies 2019-2020 New Course Offering to the full Board for approval with the agreed upon revisions and contingent on budget constraints.

B. **SO VOTED**

AFFIRMATIVE: Mrs. Harmeling, Mr. Garofolo

V. **REPORTS**

A. Chairman's Report

None

B. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Tencza wants the committee to be aware that at the middle school, the students will be starting to carry an assigned ChromeBook with them throughout the day. They will be responsible for getting it during homeroom and returning to the charging station in homeroom at the end of the day. This is the beginning of our 1-1 initiative. We are also going to be exploring the possibility of Better Lessons professional learning at the high school in the math department. There has been 3 years of solid results at the middle school with this program. The cost will be \$2800 per math teacher.

VI. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mrs. Harmeling/sec. Mr. Garofolo) to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mrs. Harmeling, Mr. Garofolo

Submitted by:
Pat Boyle