

Cheshire Public Schools



Board of Education Curriculum Committee

Monday, April 17, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Committee Members Present: Faith Ham (Chair) and Dr. Anne Harrigan

Cheshire Public Schools Staff Present: Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator; Dr. Mary Gadd, Principal - Cheshire High School (CHS); Dr. Maureen Reed, Assistant Principal - CHS; Ms. Michelle Catucci, School Counseling Director, CHS;

Community Members Present: None

1. Public Comment

No in-person public comment nor any public comment via email

2. [Review Minutes of March 13, 2023 Meeting](#)

Ds. Harrigan made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 13, 2023 Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting. Ms. Ham seconded the motion. Ms. Ham and Ds. Harrigan voted to approve the minutes of March 13, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. New Platform for Student Success Plans - School Links

Michelle Catucci gave an overview of the update to the platform the district uses to host student success plans. For approximately 12 years, the district has been using Naviance to implement student success plans in accordance with state guidelines. While Naviance has had some positive features and benefits, there have been noted limitations and product support issues. The School Counseling department set out to research alternate platforms. After the research, School Links is the recommended platform. Some of the features of School Links that are noted as added strengths include options for additional two year school and career exploration, readability that matches grade levels six through twelve, an interface that is engaging for students, the ability for community partners to add information to the platform, and the ability to print a consolidated student success plan. Additionally, the platform costs substantially less than Naviance.

b. [Peck Jones Grant Request](#)

Marlene Silano put forward a request for classroom library books for Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms. The request is for \$22,000 and will support the replenishment of texts at various reading levels to support all of our primary grade students as well as meet the identified need for additional decodable texts for Kindergarten and first grade readers.

Ms. Ham made a motion to send the Peck Jones Grant Request to the full Board of Education for consideration. Dr. Harrigan seconded the motion. Ms. Ham and Dr. Harrigan voted to approve and move the Peck Jones Grant Request to the full Board of Education. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Team Teaching Proposal

Marlene Silano gave an overview of the district's conversations to improve both teacher recruitment/retention as well as address the need for increased collaborative planning time at the elementary level. Conversations related to teacher recruitment and retention included providing graduate coursework within the district through partnerships with universities and providing in-house child care for teachers. One possibility under discussion is to pilot a "team teaching" model by combining the sections of two elementary classrooms with the support of a paraeducator. Each teacher would work four days. The total amount of work time on the week would be the same as all teachers, but there would be extended days to allow for additional collaboration time. It was noted that this is exploratory at this point, and any plans have/will involve teachers and parents.

4. Old Business

a. Update on New Format for School Business Partnership Meeting held April 6th

Marlene Silano and Maureen Reed shared an updated format for the School Business Partnership. The April 6th meeting included representatives from local businesses, many of whom represented businesses in the trades. Additionally, there was faculty representation from the business, school counseling, and career and technical education departments at the high school. An outcome from the meeting was to share the collective information, efforts, and individual stories from the school and local businesses with parents of both middle school and high school students on college and career pathways.

b. Update on March 17th Professional Learning Day

Marlene Silano shared that anecdotal feedback from teachers and teacher leaders, as well as survey results from all participants, indicated that teachers had positive takeaways from the whole district March 17th Professional Learning Day held at CHS. In debriefing the design of the most successful sessions, teacher leaders are planning how to utilize some similar designs for professional development in August. The teacher leaders reflected there was great value in the sessions where participants were active throughout the session and also included collaborative planning time to apply learning during the session.

c. Update on New Instructional Materials for Grades 6, 7, & 8 Math Resource

Kevin Hanlon shared the work of the ad hoc Middle School Math textbook committee. The committee is down to two possible resources, both of which are well aligned with standards and instructional approaches valued by the district. The committee has been diligent in their exploration of resources to make sure there is a strong match for the district goals and defined needs. The committee has one more meeting to finalize their recommendation, and the proposed text resource will be brought to the May 8, 2023 Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting for consideration.

5. Informational Items

a. Out of State Overnight Field Trips

- [CHS Robotics - Houston, TX - April 18-23, 2023](#)
- [CHS Chorus - Virginia Beach, VA - April 3-7,2024](#)

Maureen Reed shared that the fourteen students from the CHS Robotics Team qualified for the world competition in Houston, TX beginning April 18, 2023. The event will be livestreamed for viewers to see.

Additionally, the CHS Chorus is planning to attend an adjudicated festival of music event in Virginia Beach during the spring of 2024.

6. Adjourn

Dr. Harrigan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Ham seconded the motion. Ms. Ham and Dr.Harrigan voted to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 8, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Hanlon

Kevin J. Hanlon
K-8 Curriculum Coordinator