

Cheshire Public Schools



Board of Education Curriculum Committee

Monday, October 16, 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; Kimberly Dessert, Principal - Darcey School

Community Members Present: None

1. Public Comment

No public comment in person or via email

2. [Review Minutes of September 11, 2023 Meeting](#)

Dr. Harrigan made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 11, 2023, Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting. Ms. Ham seconded the motion. Ms. Ham and Dr. Harrigan voted to approve the minutes of September 11, 2023. The motion passed.

3. New Business

a. New Legislation - Raising the Kindergarten Starting Age

Marlene Silano shared an overview of legislation that changes the starting age of Kindergarten from turning 5 years old by December 31st of a school year to September 1st of a school year. The implementation date for the legislation is for the 2024-2025 school year.

Districts must have a process, which starts with a parent making a written request for early admission to kindergarten if the child is not 5 years of age by September 1st. Then, the principal and a team must provide an assessment to determine if kindergarten is developmentally appropriate for the under-age child.

The assessment process is currently left up to each district. At this time, the state has not recommended any specific assessment. Districts are awaiting further guidance from the State Department of Education and the Office of Early Childhood.

Ms Silano shared a letter about the new kindergarten starting age that has been posted to the district website to alert families to the new legislation.

b. Proposal to address new legislation

Marlene Silano shared a proposal for a transition program to meet the needs of the estimated 60 families who will be impacted by new legislation that raises the kindergarten starting age. The district proposed for the 2024-2025 school year only, for students born between September 1st and December 31, 2019, that they be offered a transition program run by the Cheshire Public Schools. The district would plan for approximately 60 students to enroll in the transition program to be housed at Darcey School. The program would allow for the reallocation of one kindergarten teacher and one paraeducator per enrollment. No new positions would be added to the district budget. The transition program would follow the school calendar. The program would be tuition based, as is the case with existing preschool programs in the district and is estimated at roughly \$5,500. Similar to the district's other preschool programs, parents would provide transportation. Students attending the transition program, which would only be offered in the 2024-2025 school year, would attend Kindergarten for the 2025-26 school year. The curriculum would be based on the CT Early Learning and Developmental Standards (CT ELDS). Curriculum would be developed throughout the current school year and during the summer Curriculum Writing Institute (CWI).

Discussion occurred about capping enrollment and the need to be cost neutral. Ms Dessert, Darcey School Principal, was present and answered questions regarding current preschool programming and her ongoing communication with community preschools.

Ms. Ham moved that the one year transition program proposal, to accommodate Public Act No. 23-159 raising the kindergarten starting age, be brought to the full Board of Education for consideration. Dr. Anne Harrigan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Informational Items

a. Overview - Smarter Balanced Assessment Growth Data (Grades 4-8)

Marlene Silano provided follow up information regarding the 2023 Smarter Balanced Assessment growth data. The report included a comparison of Cheshire growth data to all of District Reference Group (DRG) B. One indicator of growth data as measured by the state is the average percentage of target achieved (APTA) for individual students. In ELA, Cheshire ranked 3rd in the DRG in ELA and ranked 9th in Math.

A request was made for two additional pieces of information: Elementary versus middle school growth data and special education versus non-special education growth data

5. Adjourn

Ms. Ham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Harrigan seconded the motion. Ms. Ham and Dr. Harrigan voted to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Hanlon

Kevin J. Hanlon
K-8 Curriculum Coordinator