



**BOARD CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2010**

Members of the Board Curriculum Committee met on Monday, August 9, 2010, in the Dining Room at the Education Center. The following Board Members were in attendance: Rosario Amato, William Burkhardt, Michele Cann, Judith Dexter, Irene Follweiler, Loretta Leeson, and Aurea Ortiz. Director McKeon arrived at 7:10 p.m. because he was involved in negotiations.

Absent: Michael Faccinetto

Also in attendance: Dr. Thomas Persing, interim superintendent of schools; Dr. Margaret K. Barilla, educational consultant-assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction; Dr. Dean Donaher, director of student services; Thomas Washington, assistant superintendent for human resources; Janet Tate, supervisor of grants; Richard Agretto, director of special education; teachers, and representatives of the press.

Mrs. Dexter called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – None

2010 ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSE ANALYSIS

Dr. Margaret Barilla provided an overview of the 2010 Advanced Placement Course Analysis for the district.

Director Cann inquired if the International Baccalaureate Program offered opportunity for college credit.

Dr. Barilla responded affirmatively.

Director Follweiler said she thought the students would benefit from the course regardless if a college accepted it in the future.

Director Leeson commented that each university/college varied on the acceptance of dual enrollment/AP courses.

Director Leeson thought the students were not taking or failing the tests because of poor preparation. She asked Dr. Barilla how to improve upon the situation.

Dr. Barilla thought the students should be monitored. She thought the teacher should be chosen by criteria other than the one with the most experience.

Dr. Barilla thought the students who were advanced on the PSSA should correlate with the AP course results.

Director Ortiz inquired about the requirements to enroll in an AP course.

Mr. LaPorta explained there was an application for the students to enroll. The students needed a certain grade average to apply but they had the opportunity to test into the course. He also said the students were provided with the information about the classes by their counselors.

Dr. Barilla believed it was critical for the students to be contacted in the middle school to have an awareness of the opportunity to enroll in the AP courses.

Director Dexter recalled the past process up until approximately two years ago, where a test was administered, a certain grade point average requirement, along with a teacher recommendation. She recalled the board had asked to change the criteria and to use the test as a guideline but not as a hard and fast rule. She also reviewed the orientation sessions given at the middle school and the students were told to limit their enrollment in honors courses. She had hoped that the advisement had changed with the focus of increased rigor. She pointed out that the board did not want to have a test administered any longer for a student to qualify for the coursework.

Dr. Barilla thought Freedom High School was not using a test to evaluate the students to qualify for the courses.

Mr. LaPorta said they utilized PSSA, Scantron and 4Sight data for determination and encouraged students to take on courses with increased rigor.

Director Dexter commented about the offering of honors courses with regard to balancing the students' schedule.

Mr. LaPorta replied that the course schedule sometimes made it impossible to schedule certain honors courses.

Director Dexter questioned how the master scheduling was structured so it would better support the honors courses.

Director Cann inquired about the variations of students qualifying for honors courses such as a student who scored highly in one area such as math and not in another area.

Dr. Barilla commented on the comparison of the AP test results to scoring advanced on the PSSA tests. She noted that just because a student scored advanced in one subject, it did not require them to take AP in all areas. She noted there were students who took AP Art and Music but not take any other AP Courses.

Director Dexter commented about the financial benefit of the courses as compared to actual college tuition. She added that her own daughter left Liberty High School with 26 college credits, which was the equivalent of almost a full-year of college. She said it was also a benefit for the student to have the courses as back-up in the event they would have to miss a college semester because of an unplanned family issue or illness.

2010 PSSA – AYP RESULTS

Dr. Barilla provided an overview of the AYP status of the district as well as the specific AYP status for all schools in the district. She pointed out the success and progress made by the principals and teachers in the district. She reviewed the criteria set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with regard to reading and mathematics, attendance, and the rate of graduating students.

Some highlights of the results include:

- The district made AYP
- Twelve elementary schools made AYP
- Three middle schools made AYP
- One elementary school is making progress in Correction Action I – Donegan
- One middle school is making progress in School Improvement I – Broughal
- Two elementary schools are in warning – Marvine and Lincoln
- One elementary school is in Corrective Action I – Fountain Hill
- Two high schools remain in Corrective Action II for the fourth year

Dr. Barilla pointed out an appeal was being processed for Fountain Hill because there were five students who were misclassified in the PIMS reporting system. The goal would be to have the school moved into “making progress School Improvement II.”

She reviewed that all grade levels had made the threshold in math and reading with the exception of the high school with regard to math.

Dr. Barilla noted it was commendable that over half of the district schools made AYP and only three schools had been cited for not making AYP. The four schools either “making progress” or “in warning” would have the opportunity to continue to progress and move forward to making AYP in 2011.

She suggested that a major initiative in 2010-2011 under new leadership, continue to focus on implementing a quality Standards Aligned System within the district. The system should ensure quality curriculum and a standards aligned curriculum for all students. The implementation should focus on using data to continue to improve the quality of instruction within the district.

Dr. Barilla also stated the following future recommendations:

- A detailed analysis of performance in targeted areas as well as performance trends will be completed after results are made available

- Principals are preparing professional development plans which will be shared with Dr. Roy
- Maintaining pockets of success is a goal
- Consideration of restructuring to address the areas of concern

Dr. Barilla pointed out the overall progress made in the district with regard to AYP. She reviewed the following schools had improved their status in 2010:

- Clearview (Warning to AYP)
- Broughal (School Improvement I to Making Progress)
- East Hills (Making Progress to AYP)
- Donegan (Corrective Action I to Making Progress)
- Fountain Hill (School Improvement II to Making Progress – pending)

Dr. Barilla also brought attention to the schools which were required to offer open enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year. Letters would be sent to the parents of students attending Donegan and Fountain Hill Elementary Schools, in addition to Broughal Middle School. The students would be permitted to enroll in a school which made AYP for the present year. The high school students did not qualify to transfer because both high schools did not meet AYP.

Director Follweiler asked for a review of the stages associated with achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Dr. Barilla reviewed the various stages and explained the warning stage is the very beginning, then the categories move on to School Improvement I, School Improvement II, Corrective Action I, and Corrective Action II. If a school was making progress in School Improvement II but did not make progress for the second year; they did not go back to School Improvement II. The school would move up the ladder to Corrective Action I.

Director Dexter asked for an explanation of performance goals versus performance targets. She inquired how the performance target was set.

Dr. Barilla gave the example of Safe Harbor and confidence intervals as performance targets which were calculated by the state. She noted that Safe Harbor was the most typical one used by the district which showed a 10 percent decrease in the number of students who were below basic. She explained that if 40 percent of the students were proficient, they would decrease the number of students who were not proficient by 10 percent.

Director Leeson pointed out there were many successes to celebrate but they also needed to recognize what they needed to improve upon. She expressed concern about math scores at the high school level. She brought attention to the target rising for PSSA testing next year.

Dr. Barilla also noted the principals were also very concerned about the Grade 5 reading scores.

Director Leeson reviewed the reading program changes over the past two years.

Dr. Barilla commented that they were hoping to present data at the next meeting with regard to the present reading program. She also said she asked for a report on the Read 180 program.

Dr. LoFaso said she reviewed the report from last summer and noted there were some trends which she would like to have further discussion with Dr. Barilla.

Director Leeson addressed her concern about the middle school math teachers instructing the high school level courses.

Dr. Barilla said that Julie Victory would be overseeing middle school math for the upcoming year. She added the high school course offerings should be addressed. She recommended evaluating block scheduling with regard to covering the material. She also expressed concern about teachers who may not have been exposed to Algebra II or Geometry since they graduated from college. She noted Mrs. Victory evaluated the district math program and concluded the curriculum was approximately one year behind. Dr. Barilla referred to the PDE website which could provide teachers with the preparation information pre-PSSA testing and also what could be addressed after the PSSA testing has concluded. She was concerned about the curriculum being so dense in math and the instructors rushing through the challenging problems because of concern about the timeline.

Director Leeson thought there were not enough students passing the AP Tests regardless of the high school.

Director Burkhardt inquired about the targets for each high school. He noted Liberty High School making 21 out of 25 targets and Freedom High School made 14 out of 21 targets.

Dr. Barilla replied that it was relative to the population within the school.

He asked if they were seriously evaluating academics at the high school with regard to restructuring. He reviewed that it was done in the early 90's but it was related to economics because teachers were requested to teach more courses. He thought if they had concern about reaching the higher benchmarks; they needed to look at different ways to do business, especially for some of the students who experienced difficulty with the retention of academics.

Dr. Persing said there needed to be emphasis in the community that mathematics was essential for performance and success. He said they might consider investigating the role of department chairpersons as supervisors or part of the bargaining unit. He added that it was a serious consideration but it was something they should investigate. He reviewed the plans for the distinguished educators to concentrate on high school instruction in the approaching year. He added that it was a national concern and it should be paramount.

Director Dexter asked Dr. Persing if the department chairpersons at the high school should be in a supervisory role where they could continue to evaluate teachers and have additional authority.

Dr. Persing replied affirmatively.

Director Burkhardt commented that it was previously done and the reasoning for moving away from it was not necessarily educational reasons. He thought the high schools' five or six administrators could not adequately supervise approximately 200 staff members. He suggested having some content specific people to also have the responsibility. He recommended the math or language chairpersons function as supervisory/evaluating positions.

Director Leeson pointed out that she was aware of students recently involved in table games instruction for the casinos. She noted that approximately 20 percent of the students were not obtaining employment because of their poor math skills. She pointed out that math was important even at that level.

Director Burkhardt asked if they should set a deadline for the high school principals to reevaluate their academic programs.

Dr. Barilla stated a deadline was set for the end of October.

Summer School Funding Grant Update

Mrs. Janet Tate, supervisor of grants, provided an overview of the major funding sources awarded to the district.

She reviewed the outline provided to the board and pointed out their office received approximately 70 grants so she limited the list to 16 of the highest awards.

Mrs. Tate briefly reviewed the following grants awarded to the district:

- 21st Century Community Learning Center Grants – 2 separate recipients with Cohort IV being a continuation for Clearview, Donegan, Marvine, Freemansburg, Thomas Jefferson and William Penn Elementary Schools which ends on June 30, 2011 and Cohort V included the four middle schools which would end June 30, 2013
- Dual Enrollment - The application is for \$111,686, but it was noted the dollar amount awarded would not be actually known until late spring when the state determined the participation for the program throughout the commonwealth. Mrs. Tate pointed out there were 164 participants involved in the dual enrollment program in the past school year.
- Family to Family Initiative – A \$100,000 grant to support a collaborative effort between the Bethlehem Area School District and the Northampton County Children, Youth and Families Division. Family Development Specialists employed by the district, work with families in order to provide services or make referrals for additional services for families identified by the county.
- Keystone Stars – An initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), which supported continuous quality improvement in school age programs specifically for the district child-care program.
- Marvine Family Center – The center is the recipient of continuous funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare since 1994. The current support is in the final year of a three-year grant. The center provides an array of health and social services, in addition to educational programming for children and their families.

- The Pennsylvania Pact Grant – consisted of four components with the district receiving \$2,748,354 for the maintenance of effort, research-based, one-time costs and expanded programs. The Accountability Block Grant is also part of the grant, which the district utilized for pre-school programming, full-day kindergarten, class-size reduction, and school health and wellness services. Another component of the Pennsylvania Pact Grant, funded in the amount of \$750,333, is the Educational Assistance Program (EAP), which was previously referred to as Tutoring in Pennsylvania. The final component of the grant was called Basic Education Hold Harmless, which provided \$604,062, which would be used for tuition reimbursement for professional staff.
- Pre-K Counts – The grant originated from the Office of Early Childhood Development in which the district would be receiving \$595,650. The funding would be used for preschool programs.
- Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools – This federal grant provided the district with emergency planning, school safety instruction, and equipment with a \$100,000 carryover, which will end in January 2011. The grant covered the district as well as non-public schools.
- School Improvement – The following schools will be receiving funding: Donegan Elementary School - \$109,200, Broughal Middle School - \$80,676, and Fountain Hill Elementary - \$80,676. The activities will support “Getting Results” and continue with the school improvement plan for the three buildings.
- Family Reunification Grant – This grant was funded through the Northampton County Children, Youth and Families Division with a focus on the reduction of the length of time involving the removal of children from their homes. The grant supported the necessary services, which enabled the smooth and effective reunification process.
- Title I – A request for \$3,021,175 has been submitted to support teacher and counselor salaries and benefits, in addition to administrative costs, staff development in reading and math, supplies, parent involvement, and also mandated set-asides.
- Title II – Part A – A request for \$847,340 has been submitted for teacher salaries and benefits for class-size reduction in kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2, in addition to staff development with a focus on elementary school math instruction.
- Title III – The grant was currently in process with a submission deadline in October. This grant would make funding available for supplemental educational programming for limited English proficient (LEP) and immigrant status students.

Director Follweiler addressed the specific criteria of some grants so the district did not have certain options as to where they could utilize the money. She asked if the scope could be broadened as to the grant composition so when it was awarded, there would be some space to choose the area of support.

Mrs. Tate said she believed the grants were written with attention to where the funds were most needed. She commented that she was not exactly clear or comfortable to give a true answer with regard to flexibility.

Director Follweiler shared that it could be something to address moving forward which would be in the district’s best interests so the grant could be as flexible as possible within the structured guidelines. She added that needs could change within the cycle of time from when the application is submitted to when the actual funding was awarded.

Dr. Dexter addressed the criteria for the grant funding and the priorities in the district with regard to the use of the funds. She reflected on past situations such as the board not being informed about a specific grant such as \$600,000 for computers last spring and they were looking at a need for textbooks but were told the grant had to be spent on computers. She said if the grant was not spent on computers then they were in a position to lose the funding so the board voted to do it. She asked who was determining the needs of the district when the grants were being written.

Dr. Barilla commented on the existing controls that affect the manner by which the grant is used. They had to adhere to the parameters of the specific grant but when a certain issue arose, the district could appeal for a revision with regard to a certain program request. She also noted that the state reviewed quarterly reports and if they observed the district was sitting on the money, it would be questioned. She added that the grants office was monitored as to how the funding was spent in the district.

Director Follweiler thought the grants should be more broadly distributed across the district.

Mrs. Tate expressed that she would be supportive in the effort as long as they adhered to the parameters of the grant. She said it was a collaborative decision from many sources which was the way she approached any grant. She agreed to be very flexible as long as they do not violate any guidelines.

Director Dexter stated the board would like to be better informed about the grant priorities before it was too late so they could determine whether there was consistency with regard to the needs of the district.

Director Follweiler asked if a grant could be restructured as an “either/or.”

Dr. Barilla stated that it would have to be submitted with specifics by a deadline. She noted that typically the district did enough legwork prior to submission to know where the grant would be applied.

Director Follweiler requested improved earlier communication so the board would have a later understanding of where the funds were used.

Mrs. Tate said the grants often obtained in a short time line but she said she still wanted to provide the board with the information.

Director Leeson commented that she thought what was previously known as educational funding was presently being funneled through some of the grants such as the PA Pact Grant. She thought that funding, in addition to Title I funds, were the larger blocks of money, which had room to move relative to meaningful discourse amongst the administration, board, and the other offices.

Dr. Barilla commented that Mrs. Gober worked with the grants in the present budget.

Director Dexter said there were deviations in the priorities which was why some members felt they wanted more knowledge about how the priorities were set and how the money was spent.

Director Ortiz reviewed that they had to adhere to the grant guidelines. She noted that sometimes it was not permitted to switch from computers to books.

Director Dexter inquired about the amounts allocated to each of the schools with regard to the school improvement. She asked how it was decided to award a specific amount to the schools.

Mrs. Tate replied that in the past it was determined through the school principal and school team in collaboration with the grants and curriculum office including the superintendent.

Director Dexter asked if a principal from a recipient school could ask for tutoring support or a certain book, the request could be supported.

Mrs. Tate replied affirmatively.

Director Dexter inquired if the principal wanted to use the funding to have an assistant principal, could that request be permitted.

Mrs. Tate replied that she was unsure and would have to review the guidelines because it was not yet posted on the e-Grants System.

Director Dexter asked if the same three schools received School Improvement funding.

Mrs. Tate responded affirmatively.

Director Dexter asked how it was determined.

Mrs. Tate replied that she believed Title I and federal guidelines, in addition to AYP results influenced the decision.

Dr. Barilla said she met with Principal Docalovich about his concerns for 6th grade reading pointing out a 39 percent deficiency. She noted he was looking at professional development opportunities for his staff to strengthen that area.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT UPDATE

Dr. Donaher introduced Mr. Monty Perfetti and Mr. Thomas Doluisio, consultants to the district, who assisted him in providing a status report and program audit with regard to the Student Code of Conduct. They reviewed the history of the Code and the results of their investigation. In addition to the status report, an action plan was also presented.

Dr. Donaher stated the meetings took place with various groups including Act 93, the BEA, and multiple teachers at the middle school and high school levels. He noted the elementary schools were not a present focus, but the area would be addressed in the near future.

Dr. Donaher commented that the Code of Conduct itself was not in question with the teachers supporting the structure. He felt the document needed some tweaking and pointed out a need for in-service offerings for teachers and administrators.

Dr. Donaher believed they needed to reinstitute some processes, procedures, and guidelines which had been in effect, but perhaps may have somewhat fallen to the wayside. He also addressed the reinstitution of meetings for potential habitual offenders during the summer to review previous behaviors and provide support or a stern warning about the consequences associated with future incidents.

Mr. Doluisio reviewed the three categories of recommendations. The administrative and organizational recommendations were associated with central office line authority. The other aspect related to staff accountability, including principals and assistant principals. He added that it included the accountability of teachers on “as assigned” duties. He reviewed the second section, which had to do with the code such as upgrades in terms of redefinition or reaffirmation. He also pointed out the K-8 character education component which was originally imbedded in the code was no longer being instituted. The third section addressed the need for in-service which was provided on June 14. He suggested that the Code of Conduct be introduced during annual student and teacher orientation at all school levels. Mr. Doluisio stated the Code of Conduct was also extremely important in terms of exposing the students to the code. He acknowledged the BEA President, Jolene Vitalos, for her support and commitment to the project.

Mr. Perfetti reviewed the past concerns about safety in the schools, which led to the Code of Conduct of 1996. At that time they communicated to the board if behavior did not change then 500 students would be expelled. He recalled they received the support of the board at that time but they did not exceed beyond 61 students in one year. He noted the primary issues with the present code were technical in relation to new administrators and also in the processing of the referrals. He also addressed the area of changing negative behavior with the need for the students to have a sense of purpose. He said the code was not magic but it was a mindset.

Director Follweiler said there was concern from the board about moving away from the code. She said she heard from various sources about the students wanting order because of their need to have a sense of purpose. She asked how it could be sustained in the district. She agreed about it being introduced at the elementary level.

Mr. Doluisio replied that sustainability was the easiest part with the superintendent and administrators such as Dr. Donaher had to hold people accountable. The code was written and the expectations should be clear. They must hold people accountable in every aspect of the organization or there will be chaos. Mr. Doluisio expressed gratitude with regard to working with Dr. Persing on the project. He brought attention to the key word - “cohesion.” He said it was almost as if they had 22 different things going on instead of a school system. The principals had to hunker down to run their buildings with too many decisions being made at the individual building level, which should be made at the elementary, middle school, or high school level.

Director Ortiz inquired who was presently in charge of the Code of Conduct.

Mr. Doluisio said the leadership involved the superintendent of schools and administrators such as Dr. Donaher, but he needed the authority to enforce the code. He said Dr. Donaher did not presently have the line authority necessary for the individual in charge of the code.

Dr. Donaher commented that Dr. Roy supported the general tenants of the revised student code of conduct and also had some ideas with regard to sustainability.

Director Ortiz agreed that order was needed for successful academics.

Mr. Doluisio said the administrators were polled by Mr. Perfetti during an inservice and they agreed with the code. He said it had to be agreed upon by everyone involved.

Director Amato stated he did not agree with the reasoning about principals not being informed or enforcing the code. He believed they were under scrutiny for PSSA testing and scores, which affected their focus. He thought the principals were previously closely monitored by Mr. Perfetti in the past and it was not the case at the present time. He said Mr. Perfetti had the backing of the superintendent in addition to the board and they made it work.

Mr. Doluisio emphasized that they were running a big, important, and a very special kind of business which needed to have certain business practices employed such as accountability.

Director Amato reflected on the time when they “stuck to their guns” and turned it around in the past. If they did not have someone in the position to hold people accountable, then get rid of them.

Mr. Doluisio said teacher morale needed consideration. The teachers in the classrooms were in need of support.

Director Amato said the students needed the discipline and the principals needed to be accountable. He gave the example of an official not throwing the flag during a football game. The flag needed to be thrown to enforce the rules that they were out of order. The student discipline was as important as three square meals a day.

Mr. Doluisio commented that the other students who respected the Code deserved a good learning environment. He added that Dr. Donaher needed the line of authority. He was concerned about the teachers doing “as assigned” duties. He said they could not run the high schools without it happening which was stated in the report. He stated it was controversial but it needed to be implemented in September with a lot more that needed to be done in addition to that recommendation.

Director McKeon commented about the reference to the dress code in the report. He thought if they adhered to the dress code, it would impact the remainder of the student code.

Mr. Doluisio said it was difficult to enforce because male teachers did not feel comfortable approaching females and the female teachers felt the same about disciplining the males. He pointed out it was an evolving problem in the culture and thought the change would be challenging because the students fight it and the parents supported them.

Director McKeon addressed the safety issues associated with certain footwear in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Mr. Doluisio addressed cell phone use in the instructional areas. He inquired about a legal consultation regarding the issue. There was concern about the security of testing and privacy issues in the locker rooms.

Director Leeson recalled when Mr. Perfetti was in charge of discipline and academics. She reflected that the district was in a positive situation at that time with regard to both areas. In looking forward she was in agreement with Dr. Donaher having line authority. She said the board previously received a report on the student code of conduct. She thought the progress of the Code of Conduct should be included in the evaluation process of the administrators. She inquired how the listed tasks in the action plan would be accomplished within a short timeline.

Dr. Donaher said in-service meetings have been arranged for middle and high school faculty and administrators along with the organization of committees. The procedural guidelines were being reviewed with processes that can be addressed by utilizing other building staff.

Director Leeson asked if they would be addressing the student code of conduct at the teacher in-service on convocation day.

Dr. Donaher replied the high schools would be covered on convocation day with the four middle schools addressed on the following day.

Mr. Doluisio suggested the continuation of using the services of Mr. Perfetti.

Director Dexter asked Dr. Donaher if he wanted the board to affirm his recommendation. She pointed out the board did not have the authority to determine line authority but they could support the report's recommendations.

Dr. Donaher replied that he would appreciate the input of Dr. Persing with regard to the role of the board.

Dr. Persing supported the endorsement of the recommendations and to also encourage that line authority be given to Dr. Donaher. He also recommended the continuation of Mr. Perfetti's services if grant funding or other funds were available after September 30. He applauded Mr. Doluisio for returning to assist the district with his leadership.

Director Dexter polled the board as to their position and received unanimous support regarding the updated review, recommendations, and implementation of the student code of conduct.

Dr. Donaher said he would assume total accountability for the execution and implementation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Director Dexter concluded that she was in agreement with the need of line authority with the same issue affecting department heads. She said when people are asked to do something and they had the choice to do it or not; it creates obstacles in getting from point A to point B.

Middle School Science Update

Dr. Barilla introduced Mr. Bill Cecchini, assistant principal and middle school science administrator, Mr. Tom Tancin, 7th grade science teacher at East Hills Middle School, and Mrs. Laurie Cirucci, 8th grade science teacher at Broughal Middle School. The group provided an overview of the middle school science curriculum, which is modeled after the Broughal Middle School science program supported by Lehigh University. The goal was to have a district-wide curriculum aligned with the state's Standard Aligned System.

Mr. Cecchini explained the review process with the goal to have a fluid middle school program. He applauded the input of the teachers in the formation of the curriculum. He mentioned the use of the google docks program in the organization process and shared there will be a science curriculum inservice on August 26 which will instruct teachers about the ability to access the program, which will permit them to view the curriculum. Mr. Cecchini addressed a very important part of the program, which was the activity component. He noted the teachers were contributing by providing activities, websites and other resources, in addition to a common handout binder set.

Mrs. Cirucci reviewed the 6th grade science curriculum-writing project, which was patterned after "understanding by design," which was associated with the standards. She explained the various state and national standards and the attempt to incorporate them into the curriculum.

Mr. Tancin reviewed the 7th grade science curriculum, which was chunked into various smaller mini-units. He reviewed the delivery of the program including objectives and various activities, which could be accessed through the google docks program.

Director Burkhardt inquired about the incorporation of a textbook.

Mr. Cecchini commented that he did not think they should be building their curriculum off of a textbook but their present textbooks would be extensively utilized as a resource.

Director Leeson inquired about the middle school science standards being in alignment with the high school science curriculum.

Mr. Cecchini said there were different standards for each grade level. The middle school objective was different than the high school objective. He commented about laboratory report writing, which prepared the students for the high school level science programs in addition to a commonality with regard to terminology covered at both levels.

Director Leeson asked about coordination of middle and high school science programs.

Dr. Barilla commented that the curriculum coordination was strictly based upon the state standards. She stated the high school curriculum was completed and was also based upon the Standard Aligned System website. The curriculum was prepared for the 8th grade assessments.

Dr. Barilla said the high school did not use the newest standards so they will have to readdress the curriculum. She pointed out that some of the middle schools did not have science for the entire year, which was discovered during curriculum writing. She emphasized the need to have the academic coordinator to be the same individual for both middle and high school levels.

Director Dexter inquired about which school in the district did not offer a full year of science.

Mr. Cecchini stated Northeast Middle School 6th grade students received the equivalent of three-quarters of a year. He explained the students received extra periods of math and reading, which was in need of strengthening with regard to the PSSA.

Director Leeson expressed her gratitude for the common science curriculum at the middle school level but suggested future articulation with the science programs in both directions in order to have the most efficient program for all students. She suggested that future academic plans needed to be approved by central administration before the curriculum was changed.

Director Burkhardt commented that he thought it was an outgrowth based upon the heavy emphasis on increasing test scores.

Mr. Agretto and Mr. Washington both confirmed that the change in the academic schedule was reviewed and approved as part of the Getting Results document.

Discussion covered the microscope inventory in the schools. Mrs. Cirucci and Mr. Cecchini displayed the present equipment and reviewed the impending purchases.

Mrs. Cirucci provided a demonstration of a document camera. She believed it was a critical piece of equipment for all science classrooms.

Director Dexter asked Mr. Cecchini to summarize the overall needs for the students.

Mr. Cecchini replied that he desired to have Northeast and Nitschmann Middle Schools to also have the equipment.

Director Leeson inquired about the status of the high schools with regard to projectors.

Mrs. Cirucci shared her knowledge about the high school microscopes. She added that a concern shared by the high school instructors was the need for the middle school students to obtain microscope knowledge. She pointed out the microscopes obtained at Broughal Middle School were obtained through a past grant and the Lehigh University program provided their school with one or two per year which allowed her to build up a supply.

Mr. Cirucci stated he did not know how East Hills Middle School received their microscopes.

Director Dexter commented that the microscopes could have been something purchased with PA Pact money even if the grant was written for technology.

Director Cann inquired if the microscopes were written into the budget for the other middle schools.

Mr. Cecchini said they had an extensive meeting today with discussion as to the best use of the funding amongst the four middle schools. He shared that every science room would be equipped.

Dr. Barilla complimented Mr. Tancin's ingenuity to create a smart board for his classroom by using his Wii controller.

Mr. Cecchini reviewed the request for 15 microscopes for both Northeast and Nitschmann Middle Schools. He also hoped to obtain projectors through a possible technology grant.

Director Ortiz expressed a serious concern that students could not achieve higher-level science coursework without the tools to progress at every stage of their education.

Director Dexter stated the board was not denying the request but they were not aware of the needs until today.

Director Follweiler commented that the information regarding the science department needs should have been included in the budget meeting prior to June 30.

Dr. Barilla pointed out there was allocated funding for the science equipment.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR AUGUST 16, 2010 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Director Dexter noted a general consensus from the board to place the following items on the agenda for the August 16, 2010 Regular Board Meeting:

A. Approval of Night School Program

Director Leeson inquired if the program was for students who failed courses and if it was self-sustaining.

Dr. Donaher replied affirmatively. He said it was the district's traditional credit recovery program for students who failed high school courses. He added that it was self-sustaining with the students paying a course fee.

B. Title II – Part A of No Child Left Behind

Mrs. Tate explained it was a program which provided grant funding to improve the education of limited English proficient (LEP) students.

Director Follweiler inquired about any limitations with regard to existing programs or was there a requirement to establish a new program.

Mrs. Tate replied it was applicable to an existing program.

C. Authorize the Administration to Prepare Specifications and Solicit Bids for Five Replacement Buses – Dr. Persing

Dr. Persing stated \$400,000 was budgeted for the purchase of five buses. He noted they had originally budgeted \$800,000. He recommended readdressing the budget in the spring to consider the purchase of the other five buses.

Director McKeon asked if Dr. Persing was advising to replace the amount “cut.”

Dr. Persing replied affirmatively. He explained the five buses were for this year’s budget. The buses would be ordered and be part of the fleet coming in for the next year.

Director Cann inquired if it was for the second round of new buses.

Dr. Persing replied affirmatively.

D. Quotations for the \$5,800 - \$15,200 Cost Category

Dr. Persing expressed concern about the condition of flooring in three classrooms at Fountain Hill Elementary School. He said the existing carpet was a health and safety hazard. He advised the replacement flooring to be composed of vinyl tile as opposed to carpeting.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Mr. Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem

Mr. Antalics addressed the term cohesion with regard to the success of the Student Code of Conduct. He reviewed the appointment of Dr. Baughn from the Department of Education to oversee the district three years ago. He thought recognition should be given to Dr. Persing, who addressed the issue. His report stated that the Bethlehem Area School District was not a school district but rather a district of schools, which indicated a lack of cohesion. He commented that Dr. Persing took the reigns and implemented correction to what he viewed as wrong, which changed the course of the district and in the process, he helped to educate the directors as to the implementation. He suggested the press include Dr. Persing in their coverage of the Code of Conduct.

Mr. Antalics also addressed the issue with AYP status at the various schools, stating Liberty and Freedom High Schools were in Corrective Action II for four years. In taking a fundamental or logical approach, he questioned if it was because the kids could not cut it or the teachers were not teaching. He pointed out the middle schools had made AYP and were improving but those students moved up to the high school. He asked what was breaking down when the students moved one step higher. He thought the new superintendent had to really take his reigns on the situation. He noted the primary goal of the district was not fiscal responsibility but education but they should use fiscally responsible policies to achieve it. He thought the taxpayers deserved an answer or a policy that would turn the situation around.

2. Mr. Michael Stocker, 909 Tioga Street, Bethlehem

Mr. Stocker shared that his second son recently graduated from the district with honors. He noted that approximately six years ago his son was diagnosed with a learning disability. He had concern about his son attending Liberty High School and considered sending him to a private school out of fear that he would not receive the proper educational assistance. His son resisted so he relented and allowed him to attend the public school. He complimented the teaching staff for the support his son received and noted he graduated with honors. He pointed out that if he were offered free private school tuition for his son, he would still choose Liberty High School. He expressed gratitude to the school board members for generously donating their time, in addition to their dedication to the district.

Mr. Stocker also commented on the Student Code of Conduct and thought the influence of a caring adult was important in the lives of the children. He challenged the district to seek out a support system for students in need of a positive adult influence. He especially thought fathers were extra important for young males to give them a sense of purpose. He offered to volunteer his time to positively influence the students and said he wanted to be part of the solution. He believed if the wayward kids had something to look forward to either once a week or once a month; it could be just enough to keep them from hanging out on the streets. Mr. Stocker concluded that he was fortunate in that he had a father who loved him and he had done the same with his son, but he knew there were some kids that did not have the same environment.

Director Dexter replied that she was pleased to hear the positive comments about Liberty High School including the fact that he would have turned down a private school education. She shared that it was also a choice she made for her own daughter.

Open Forum

Director McKeon stated he was not prepared to make a decision at the Monday evening board meeting with regard to the TIFF. He suggested notifying both parties if they would not be voting.

Director Ortiz said she believed a consensus was needed by the board. She addressed the TIFF associated with the Southside and believed they owed “those people.”

Director Leeson stated there were a number of items to discuss in executive session with regard to negotiations and pending litigation and she thought they needed to address those matters first.

Director Ortiz commented that she just wanted to be able to have her own opinion.

Director Dexter replied she did not think they could ask for a consensus without discussion.

Director Ortiz thought the board members should all be recognized individually rather than as a board. She also questioned if there was previous discussion with regard to the Broughal Middle School Planetarium seating.

Director Leeson said discussion took place at the Board Facilities Meeting and the item would be on the agenda for the Regular Board Meeting on Monday.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Donna L. Wenz

Confidential Secretary – Department of Curriculum and Instruction