



**BOARD CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2010**

Members of the Board Curriculum Committee met on Monday, October 11, 2010, in the Dining Room at the Education Center. The following Board Members were in attendance: William Burkhardt, Michele Cann, Michael Faccinetto, Irene Follweiler, Loretta Leeson, Eugene McKeon, and Aurea Ortiz. Absent: Rosario Amato

Also in attendance were Dr. Joseph Roy, superintendent of schools; Dr. Dean Donaher, director of student services, Thomas Washington, assistant superintendent for human resources; Richard Agretto, director of special education; Frank Arbushites, director of technology; Janet Tate, supervisor of grants; principals, teachers, and representatives of the press.

Director Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR –**

None

**PROPOSED NEW COURSES FOR THE 2011 – 2012 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr. Roy addressed the main item on the agenda, which were the proposed new course offerings for the next school year. He noted that part of Dr. Barilla's work in the district within the past year was to put the district on a regular cycle, which involved the approval of courses well in advance of the upcoming budget and next school year. He stated the meeting tonight would address proposed course additions, changes, and deletions. The following board curriculum meeting in November will address the full program of studies at each high school. Dr. Roy introduced the high school curriculum coordinators, Mrs. Kim Harper, assistant principal at Freedom High School and Miss Jennifer Hilton, assistant principal at Liberty High School.

Mrs. Harper reviewed the additions, deletions, and adjustments to the course offerings at Freedom High School. She stated they had worked hard to align core courses, increased course rigor and created additional AP courses, addressed additional supports for students and eliminated some courses because of redundancy.

The following course would be common to both high schools:

English 11- Critical Literacy – Students will be enrolled in this course either prior to taking English II or concurrent with English II.

Dr. Roy noted that the course was not in lieu of the regular 11<sup>th</sup> grade English course but as a support to their regular curriculum. He thought the model was in place at the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade level and would be extended to 11<sup>th</sup> grade to challenge the students with more rigor.

Director Leeson inquired if the course was an elective course which could be taken concurrently with an academic English course.

Mrs. Harper replied that it could be concurrent or taken beforehand because the skills were associated with critical reading and writing to ramp-up student skills.

Ms. Jennifer Hilton presented changes and an addition to Liberty High School electives with the addition of Journalism 2 and discussed the changes to the Ilick's Mill Project. She noted the Ilick's Mill Project and Studies In Nature: Literature and Writing were two elective courses offered to the students. She pointed out a correction to the Illick's Mill Project, pointing out that although it is listed as a 2-credit course, the students can receive "up to" 2 credits dependent on a student's schedule and availability. She stated it replaced English Project 11 and English Project 12, which were removed.

Mrs. Harper reviewed Freedom High School Electives noting changes to journalism courses. She also introduced the Philosophy and Literature course and a course involving the study of author, Edgar Allan Poe.

Mr. Zeigler and Mrs. Chickey, chairpersons of high school level English, made additional comments related to the course offerings.

Director Tenaglia inquired if the Ilick's Mill Project was an English elective. He expressed concern about the content and asked if they were dropping Community Project English 11 and 12; both of which required extensive reading, research, and writing. He asked about the connection to English content with the elective courses.

Miss Hilton agreed that the listed courses were electives. She explained the core English courses would be taught at the high school. She added that it was a transition period for the mill so the electives would meet the needs of the mill.

Dr. Roy stated that the students will need to take their regular English course for Grade 11.

Director Tenaglia commented that the description was more in alignment with a community service project rather than an academic exercise and inquired with Mrs. Durante about the details such as the selection criteria.

Mrs. Durante replied the selection would still be made by application.

Director Tenaglia inquired if the course would be for proficient or advanced.

Mrs. Durante responded that it could be but she did not have a copy of the application. She said it was really viewed as an elective similar to a co-op, or a flex-elective at this point

Director Burkhardt commented that it was a major departure from how the program was run in the past. He pointed out that it was previously substituted for English College Preparatory 12. The students would be taking the course at the high school. The course offering would be offered based upon student enrollment.

Director Tenaglia commented about the lack of rigor associated with the course description.

Dr. Roy expressed that the course was not to be a substitute for the standard English course. He thought it to be a course based upon application of skills.

Director Tenaglia inquired about the student criteria involved for guidance counselor approval.

Dr. Roy commented that he thought it would be largely based upon student interest and was not in lieu of an academic course.

Director Leeson pointed out that the course offered the option of one or two credits during the span of the academic year.

Director Burkhardt suggested a copy of the application be provided to the members of the board for review.

Director Cann expressed gratitude for the offering of the challenging courses. She inquired about Honors English and if it was a dying course because of AP English course offerings.

Mrs. Chickey said they were seeing an increase in the AP 11 course but the enrollment seemed to vacillate. She explained the students at Liberty High School had the option of Honors English and AP English.

Mr. Ziegler commented that Freedom High School offered three sections of Honors English and one section of AP English.

Both department chairs offered more detail about regarding AP and Honors English course offerings.

Director Leeson gave positive comment about the additional course offerings.

She asked about the different credit given for the journalism courses at both high schools.

Mrs. Harper said the journalism elective credits were different at each school and it was the manner in which the programs were developed.

Mrs. Harper addressed the updated social studies courses and noted AP Comparative Government and Politics would be offered at both schools. Both schools had the course offered last year but it has been moved from electives to core for 2011-2012. Honors Global Studies will be offered and is designed for academically talented and gifted students and will also fulfill the current eleventh grade social studies requirement. She stated it was part of the final shift for the history courses.

Miss Hilton reviewed AP World History and Global Studies A. She explained the “A” portion would likely be phased-out next year in order to meet the needs of the students in the regular Global Studies class.

Director Tenaglia inquired about AP US History.

Mrs. Harper replied that it continued to exist and was not grade restricted.

Director Leeson inquired about the phasing out of Global Studies A.

Mr. Anthony Markovich, Social Studies Department Chair for Liberty High School provided explanation.

Miss Hilton introduced the math course, Honors Discrete Math, which would be offered to students who have completed coursework beyond calculus.

Mr. Michael Wagner provided a description of the course and noted that some students were not able to attend off campus college level courses. He pointed out that it was an additional course offering for math driven students.

Dr. Roy added that AP Statistics was another math course choice for students at that level.

Director Follweiler inquired if the same level course was offered at Freedom High School.

Mrs. Harper responded that they would observe the success of the course and re-examine it based upon the results at Liberty High School.

Director Cann inquired about Project Lead the Way and if the course applied to students interested in engineering.

Mr. Wagner commented that Discrete Math would be helpful to the students but was not directly geared to engineering students. He suggested the addition of Calculus III to support engineering students.

Mrs. Harper reviewed high school science course offerings. She explained Conceptual Chemistry would be offered at both high schools. Also the common electives offered at both schools would be AP Physics B, Advanced Placement Physics C – Electricity and Magnetism, Advanced Placement Physics C – Mechanics, Advanced Placement Environmental Science, and Advanced Placement Biology.

Miss Hilton reviewed the Liberty High School Science Electives, which included Human Growth and Development and Arboriculture.

Director Leeson inquired about the course schedule with regard to physics.

Mrs. Guarriello explained the requirements for the course eligibility. She also noted the courses were driven by student enrollment.

Mrs. Harper stated an adjustment needed to be made to the prerequisites for AP Physics B.

Dr. Roy mentioned there would be coordination of certain courses between both high schools in the event there were interested students in both schools but not enough to justify the course offering in one building.

Director Burkhardt inquired about successfully implementing the courses into the schedule, noting there were an increased number of offered courses.

Mrs. Harper replied that she met with department chairs to plan out the schedules.

Mrs. Guarriello explained the AP courses had to be finished by a certain deadline in order for the students to be tested. Many of the AP teachers were certified to teach multiple courses so there was flexibility for them to teach additional courses throughout the year.

Director Burkhardt inquired about supplies and textbooks necessary to successfully offer the courses in consideration of the budget.

Mr. Eric Baltz stated there would be some increased needs such as laboratory equipment, but there were already books in the classroom.

Director Follweiler brought attention to her belief that physics was a necessity to prepare the high school students for college and future careers.

Director Cann was pleased with the progress being made with the offering of courses which would allow the students equal ground once they moved onto college.

Mrs. Harper reviewed the updated foreign language offerings common to both high schools, which included AP French, AP German, and AP Spanish languages.

Director Cann inquired about AP versus honors course offerings in foreign language.

Mrs. Harper explained the fifth year honors courses were being replaced with the AP offerings.

Mrs. Cynthia Baylis and Mr. Sam Norwood, department chairpersons, provided further detail about the honors and AP foreign language courses at both high schools.

Director Follweiler reflected on feedback she received at a past PAC Meeting with regard to other foreign language offerings. She asked if there was any progress made with non-traditional language offerings.

Mrs. Harper replied that they would like to broaden their offerings and were open to further discussion in the future.

It was suggested that it could possibly be readdressed when Dr. Jack Silva assumes his role in the curriculum department.

Director Leeson thought they might have had some contacts to offer the courses in the future.

Miss Hilton reviewed the addition of Integrated Business Technology Concepts to the business and technology house at Liberty High School.

Mr. Gregory Martucci, Liberty High School Business Department Chairperson, noted the program was offered to freshman students.

Mrs. Diane Jordan, Freedom High School Business Department Chairperson, also provided details associated with the business course offerings.

Director Faccinetto inquired about the course offering at Freedom High School in addition to it being offered at Liberty High School.

Mrs. Jordan replied that their course offered similar subject matter to the course offered at Liberty High School.

Mrs. Harper reviewed the Fine Arts/Music curriculum at Freedom High School with the addition of Fundamentals of Music, Jazz Improvisation, and The History of Music. All of the courses were currently offered at Liberty High School.

Miss Hilton provided an update with regard to physical education and explained the addition of History and Philosophy of Sport, which was created for students interested in the historical perspective of sports and physical education.

### **Agenda Item for October 25, 2010 Regular Board Meeting**

The Board of School Directors approved the following agenda item for presentation at the upcoming October Regular Board Meeting:

- A. Community Service Agencies – Dr. Donaher  
Dr. Donaher reviewed the additional agencies and organizations under consideration for the Community Service Program.

## **OPEN FORUM**

Director Leeson inquired about the results of 4Sight math testing at the high school level.

Mr. Wagner said the testing window recently closed with scoring in process.

Director Leeson suggested keeping an eye on the high school math situation.

Director Burkhardt inquired about the math program offered at the middle school level with regard to performance. He thought if it was not providing results, then something was not right.

Director Leeson commented about common assessments between the two high schools.

Mr. Wagner said the advanced middle school math students were not taking the same final examinations as the high school students and should probably be taking the common assessments.

Mrs. Durante commented that the students coming to the high school were still required to take the four additional math core courses.

Director Leeson inquired if the high school department head was in charge of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade math courses.

Dr. Roy reviewed he was tracking the math program and met with the high school principals about the matter. He agreed that the middle level math program should be addressed with regard to assessment. They would also be using the distinguished educator support. He also suggested evaluating the impact of moving algebra and geometry down to the middle school level.

Director Ortiz inquired about the placement of the students at the middle school level in the math program.

Miss Hilton stated that all students at Northeast Middle School who had Algebra I were placed into Geometry in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade with the exception of a few students.

Director Ortiz asked about the status of the deleted high school English course associated with diversity with respect to students from various backgrounds.

Mrs. Harper explained the justification for the deletion and pointed out that course content was included in the revised curriculum.

Director Burkhardt reviewed the recent discussions at meetings such as AP course results and reading progress at the high school level. He thought there should be follow-up on those discussions. He also mentioned readdressing the Code of Conduct revision during the mid-year.

Director Leeson also mentioned about a longitudinal study of the pre-school program. She also mentioned the middle school reading program and noted the results were not very impressive at that level. She believed a Code of Conduct review was due in the near future as previously agreed.

Dr. Roy stated they would address all of the aforementioned items.

Director Ortiz addressed minority interest in AP classes and what was being done to address it.

Director Leeson commented about AP test results from the past where the district students had a very impressive overall score. She expressed concern about the decline in the student scores.

Director Tenaglia noted the disparity between the students enrolled in the AP courses and the students actually taking the test at the conclusion of the classes.

Director Leeson reflected on evaluating the PSSA scores of the minority students in order to encourage them to enroll in a higher level of studies.

Dr. Roy reviewed the status of the Getting Results plans and explained there was not a need to submit plans to the state at the present time.

Director Follweiler inquired about an update with regard to the new email system and homepage.

Dr. Roy agreed to check on the status with Mr. Arbushites.

### **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. Antalics commented about Fine Arts/Music at the high school level. He inquired about the exposure of students to music beyond contemporary offerings such as jazz and classical music. He inquired about the level of exposure for the students in the district.

Director Burkhardt replied that musical offerings were available to the students at all grade levels.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Donna L. Wenz  
Confidential Secretary – Department of Curriculum and Instruction