



BOARD CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2011

Members of the Board Curriculum Committee met on Monday, January 24, 2011, in the Dining Room at the Education Center. The following Board Members were in attendance: William Burkhardt, Michele Cann, Michael Faccineto, Irene Follweiler, Loretta Leeson, Eugene McKeon, Aurea Ortiz (arrived at 6:22 p.m.), and Benjamin Tenaglia. Absent: Rosario Amato. Also in attendance were Dr. Joseph Roy, superintendent of schools; Dr. Jack Silva, assistant superintendent for education; Dr. Dean Donaher, director of student services; Thomas Washington, assistant superintendent for human resources; Richard Agretto, director of special education; Janet Tate, supervisor of grants; Vivian Robledo-Shorey, supervisor of minority affairs and governmental programs; principals, teachers, and representatives of the press.

Director Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Stephen Antalics – 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem
Mr. Antalics made comment about the use of hand held calculators in the classroom. He reflected on a recent report about a mathematical tool called an abacus and that it was resurfacing in preschool and elementary schools in Japan. He also made comment on elementary students utilizing beads to grasp mathematical concepts as opposed to a “black box” which he considered to be a dangerous tool. He emphasized the need to check on the district math curriculum with regard to the use of tools. He thought the grades of the students would rise because the students would be learning math as a concept rather than as a “black box tool.”

DISTRICT GOALS – DR. ROY AND DR. SILVA

Dr. Roy discussed the framework needed for district goals, which could be adapted by all schools in the district. He referred to the draft of a “Roadmap to Educational Excellence,” which was a culmination of the entry plan and transition work done by him and Dr. Silva. He stated they listened internally and externally to people’s aspirations, hopes, and identification of needs. He pointed out the need to ensure the district was a system. In quoting one of the former distinguished educators, “They did not want to be 22 separate schools but rather a school system with 22 schools.”

Dr. Roy stated they needed a common framework for improvement that provided structure with some overarching district-level goals, which could then be adapted by each school. He reviewed that the roadmap provided direction and focus and it set challenging goals for the next few years. The intent at the present time was to review it with the board, gather ideas and feedback, perform editing, and then return to the board for endorsement.

Dr. Roy provided more detail associated with the model such as the Formula for Excellence, which consisted of two ingredients – high expectations and high support.

Dr. Silva explained that coherence was very important. He noted that when he first arrived at the district, he inquired about the specific school model being utilized and found there was not an overarching district or school improvement model or not one which was data driven or eclectic enough to really address the variety of schools in the Bethlehem Area School District. He pointed out the need for flexibility with regard to the school improvement model because of the range of demographics and achievement levels of the various schools.

He provided an explanation of the four learning criteria, which was part of the framework for school improvement and goals for student performance. He discussed details of the four quadrants which included Core Learning, Stretch Learning, Student Engagement, and Personal Skill Development and added that one school may have more data needs than another. He explained that core learning data was a measure of proficiency in reading, math, and writing. It was a small part of the overall mission which he would frequently address. Another measure he would be following would be the PVAAS (Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System) which assessed the ratio of yearly growth based upon PSSA scores. Dr. Silva said that he and Dr. Roy wanted to set goals in each area of core learning such as making AYP with No Child Left Behind, closing the achievement gaps, and always adding a year's worth of growth in one year's time in reading and math at each grade level.

Dr. Silva referred to Stretch Learning and said it worked when every student was addressing or approaching their ability rather than just meeting the core learning standards. He suggested that advanced placement courses be measured by the College Board's Advanced Placement Equity and Excellence (APEE) score which described the percentage of students in the graduating class who scored a "3" or better on at least one AP exam. The other goal for stretch learning was to continue the efforts involved in Dual Enrollment and other options which would connect students to the outside world.

Dr. Silva addressed school engagement and the correlation with student achievement. He suggested a student survey as a tool to measure student engagement in the district and incorporate the areas of strength and need into the school improvement program. He pointed out that student engagement, in many ways, precedes student achievement. The goal was to have students be hard working, team playing, honest leaders.

He commented that the four elements would be developed into a school planning module and cycle of which he would work collaboratively with the principals. The principals would monitor their building's data, set goals, and report on their progress.

Dr. Silva explained that having a common language and direction often yielded positive results. He added that something worth having was worth measuring but one needed to be measuring the correct thing.

Dr. Silva also reviewed the Educational Program Goals of the district which involved the development of rigorous curriculum and assessment to meet Core State Standards, Pennsylvania Graduation Requirements, and Keystone Exams. He also commented about the fostering of positive relationships in the learning environment by the integration of Restorative Practices with the Student Code of Conduct. He thought it was important to have a restorative piece as well as a Code of Conduct piece in the management of student conduct. He felt the Restorative Practices Program was good for school culture and climate but also was a classroom and instructional application appreciated by teachers and responded to by students. Dr. Silva spoke of the correlation of increased student activities to higher grade point averages. He also explained the need to have high quality instruction as a powerful variable in the teaching/learning process. The priority is to refine the B-Flex program and provide focused in-service programs on higher graduation requirements, restorative practices, and school improvement.

Director Leeson addressed specifics with regard to high expectations and high support.

Dr. Silva cited the Keystone Examinations as an example with the requirements, the assessments, and what the students would have to demonstrate as part of the higher expectations. The higher support would have to be a more focused curriculum and instruction. There needed to be a clearer definition because the standards were increasing for graduation which included the students having something in their high school experience which resembled what they would pursuing post-graduation.

Director Leeson commented that it was a directive from the state and it would not be their choice. She noted that she liked many of the ideas and concepts but was looking for more specific goals that were measurable with an outcome and timeline.

Dr. Silva mentioned the PVAAS, which would result in a year's worth of growth in a year's worth of time in every grade with regard to math and reading. He emphasized that it would be a significant achievement for the district. He also reviewed reducing the achievement gaps by 5 percent every year. He added that meeting AYP was a very difficult yearly measure with the challenge becoming higher as far as the number of students meeting proficiency in reading and math. In Stretch Learning, the AP Excellence and Equity Index was a percentage that he wanted to see increase on a yearly basis.

Director Leeson commented about AP students and that the district target would be easier to move because it was at a low percentage. She agreed with the goal about moving at a pace of a year's worth of growth in a year's time, but they also had some lower achieving students of which they would like to see them move ahead more than a year.

Dr. Silva re-addressed the need for the school improvement survey that would judge the perceptions of people because it would provide a hint about the origin of the issues.

Director Leeson mentioned budget issues with regard to enhancing student engagement beyond the classroom.

Dr. Silva agreed with Director Leeson about it being a challenge.

Director Ortiz addressed previously requested information on the number of Latino students involved in AP and Dual Enrollment courses. She stated she never received the information. She asked how those students were being engaged to take advantage of those courses. She said there was a need to increase the participation of the students in the courses.

Dr. Silva said he thought the information had been sent to Director Ortiz and would attempt to track down the result. He said they needed to address how they were reaching all students to participate in their most rigorous programs. The AP Equity and Excellence Score by the College Board, inquired with districts to ensure they had some way of objectively identifying and recruiting students who were not traditionally involved in advanced placement programs. He added that it could be a score based upon predictive ability from their PSATs or the scores on the Writing PSSAs. Dr. Silva said there had to be something in the school system where they used information from grades 8, 9, and 10 to put on the radar screen in grades 11 and 12 with regard to the students who might not normally take an advanced placement course. He noted that recruitment as well as identification had to be part of an AP Program evaluation, which they planned to do in the second semester. He stated the most common standard for AP predictability was the PSAT. The only way to close the achievement gap and increase the AP Equity and Excellence Score would be through better identification and recruitment and then give them the high expectations and high supports.

Dr. Roy commented that identification and recruitment took a huge leap forward this year because the Grade 8 PSSA score was a predictor of future success with regard to AP courses.

Director Ortiz said they needed to address closing the gap when they were looking at the budget.

Dr. Silva thought one of their challenges was to get more of the students into the more challenging areas by encouragement and identification.

Director McKeon reviewed the board's previous request to obtain concrete road marks so they could measure the information.

Director Cann inquired about the honors program within stretch learning and how would progress be assessed.

Dr. Silva stated that honors was an internal program defined by a district's own standards. He said there was still a place for grades, and for seeing more students involved and being successful, but it was not similar to the AP course where there was an empirical national number for comparison. He said it could also be a measure of stretch learning.

Director Cann commented that she would like to see it as part of the stretch learning assessment. She also appreciated the area of personal skill development but she did not believe anyone had really attempted to measure it.

Dr. Silva replied that the district was doing a great job of it with the Community Service Program.

Director Cann said that it was a requirement so it did not have as much meaning. She inquired about how the assessment would be accomplished.

Dr. Silva said there were a variety of school improvement surveys but he had personal experience with a very short survey that consisted of the same questions to students, teachers, and parents. It would help to determine the weak spots in the school community.

Director Leeson commented that she believed they went above and beyond the requirements for community service. She thought they could make a better attempt of recognition in regard to student personal skill development at both the board and school levels.

Director Leeson inquired about the level of students taking the Keystone Examinations this year and what was being done to prepare those students for success.

Dr. Silva replied that it was an upcoming item on the agenda.

Director Follweiler brought attention to the scenario where a student may have interest but the parent might not have an understanding. She thought it formed into the personal skill development and student engagement areas.

Dr. Silva responded that the data could be measured by how many parents participated in “Back to School” nights and how many returned telephone calls. He added that it was a tough data point but very powerful when successful.

Director Follweiler reviewed that at times the best way to reach the student might be to reach the parent.

Dr. Silva said he would like to bring a created template before the board with a menu of different measures that schools could select under each area so school improvement could be customized.

Director Burkhardt commented that he thought their goal was to have everyone understand the common language which would be used throughout the district as new programs were developed and items came before the board for approval. He also said it was important that students already be “stretched” before they arrived at high school. He thought they were in trouble if they expected the student to “stretch” once they entered the high school doors because they were already behind the “eight ball.” He said the three middle school years were critical and looked forward to seeing some stretch activities in that area.

PVAAS RESULTS

Dr. Silva explained that PVAAS was a core learning item which described a student's basic success. He reviewed math and reading data from the website for grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11. Dr. Silva added that the information would be accessible to the public from the state to review growth gains for schools. He noted math strength in Grade 4 but pointed out a soft area in advanced math within Grade 5. He said he met with elementary principals and shared some strategies that might work with those students. He also noted that Grade 7 proficient students did not have a year's worth of growth in math. Grade 11 students did not show growth in below basic, basic, and proficient students. He mentioned that it was a composite report with no description of any particular school.

Dr. Silva stated that it appeared they were very strong in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 with regard to a year's worth of reading growth in below basic and basic students. There was also growth in the proficient students with the exception of Grade 5. He noted areas of concern in Grade 5, 7, and 8 for advanced students. Dr. Silva expressed concern because, at the end of Grade 8, literacy was considered a gatekeeper's skill. He said he wanted to see Grade 8 exceeding a year's worth of growth across the board in a year's worth of time.

Director Tenaglia inquired if Dr. Silva saw any curricular deficiencies in the study.

Dr. Silva replied that PVAAS only revealed where the students were losing steam but it did not explain the reason. He said the reasoning could be curriculum related but not always. He shared the example from his previous school district where they did an analysis on Grade 5 math results and it was determined that two math teachers were on a maternity leave and the students had two substitute teachers.

Director Tenaglia addressed that it was a district-wide report so some of the variables would be mooted with the larger population.

Dr. Silva agreed that the larger the population, the more likely it was a program issue. He added that when the students become older, the more difficult it becomes to add a year's worth of growth, but it was still achievable.

Director Burkhardt asked if the Grade 11 students were currently seniors.

Dr. Silva replied affirmatively.

Director Burkhardt asked if there was a method to evaluate the seniors in the area of math.

Dr. Silva explained that the data was based upon the longitudinal PSSA report. He said they should probably be using other more focused post-secondary measures by the time students reach Grade 11 and 12. He reviewed about asking the "whys" and taking action to work with the principals and students on each of the individual hot spots.

Director Follweiler addressed the Grade 7 Reading weak area in advanced students. She asked if the report stated how far advanced the students were to start. She said that if an advanced Grade 5 student was reading at a Grade 8 level, then to obtain a year's worth of growth, they had to advance to the Grade 9 level.

Dr. Silva explained that it was a year's worth of growth for them individually. He added that it was more difficult for a student to achieve a year's worth of individual growth at the advanced level. He thought there might be something relative to rigor and expectations in the area of reading for proficient and advanced Grade 5 students.

Director Follweiler thought it was acceptable if the students were already working at a marginally advanced level and didn't have a year's worth of growth.

30-DAY PLAN INFORMATION

Dr. Silva introduced a plan to align the assessments and standards with the new core standards and Keystone Assessment. He said he worked with Dr. Roy, Mrs. Durante, Mr. LaPorta, as well as the department chairpersons, to develop the first step in the alignment of the Keystone Assessments. He explained that the 30-Day Plan brought teachers together who taught a specific subject in the two different high schools or in this case the six different secondary schools because Algebra I was offered across the secondary level. They reviewed the expected core-state standards, which would be on the Keystone Examination and ensured the final examination in the course was properly aligned. Dr. Silva noted the math team, led by Mr. Wagner, assistant principal at Liberty High School, created a Keystone replicate, which would be in place for the students prior to when the Keystone Examination's consequences hit the students. He explained the students had to take the examination in Grades 7 and 8 if they were enrolled in Algebra I but they did not have to score at a certain level. He stated that his goal was to have the assessments aligned in the three key areas of the Keystone Examinations, which were Algebra I, Literature, and Biology. He did point out the option to petition the state to use their own assessment as the standard but it had to qualify. He also stated that the another 30-Day Plan would be to address a curriculum map which would be aligned to a final examination with gradually building more formative and unit assessments. If they adhered to the plan for the ten Keystone courses as they became operational then they would stay in the ball game. He said he would be bringing forth the completed Biology 30-Day Plan and then in a few more months, Language Arts for Grade 10.

Director Burkhardt inquired about the Keystone Examination administration.

Dr. Silva explained that the student tested as they took the course. A student taking Algebra I in Grade 8 would be taking the same end-of-year Keystone Examination as an Algebra I student in Grade 10.

Director Faccinnetto inquired if the ultimate plan was to have a district set of examinations as opposed to the Keystone Examinations.

Dr. Silva replied that he thought having their own set of examinations was the best option but there were limitations. He said the three that would count for AYP, which would replace the Grade 11 PSSA, could not be replicated. He stated he would like to make an internal attempt to develop the other seven assessments.

Director Leeson addressed the preparation of students for college and not only prepared to take the exit examinations. She expressed concern about the students being aligned with the expectations of their next education level. She inquired if there would be communication with the local colleges to ensure alignment beyond the state standards.

Dr. Silva commented that the state standards are described and approved by state boards of education as being college and career ready. He added that he reviewed the standards and they were college ready which is the reason why the ante was going up for the students in the middle.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES INTRODUCTION

Dr. Silva referred to the area of student engagement related to the school improvement criteria. He stated the goal was to pursue training for the faculty and for school-wide goals in Restorative Practices, which was a deliberate scientific strategy to increase student engagement in school. He further explained about the discipline piece of the program which focused on opportunities for students to repair the damage caused and rejoin the community as a fully functioning individual. He added that the Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices would come together to support students. The program has been shown to have a very positive effect on bullying prevention efforts, student engagement in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities. He said that Restorative Practices as based in Bethlehem and further explained the influence of the program on many school districts as far as complete school climate changes in large urban districts to working in smaller suburban schools that were attempting to improve performance. He believed the program would assist teachers with student engagement. Dr. Silva noted that he and Dr. Roy would like to build it into budget discussions with the thought of possible future community investment in the program. He said he had discussion with some professional staff during an Act 48 Committee Meeting and the program was received with enthusiasm. He concluded that with every good academic piece, there should be an accompanying engagement piece, which is found in Restorative Practices.

Director Follweiler inquired about a trademark associated with Restorative Practices similar to Reading Recovery®. She had concerns moving forward as to any regulations the district would have to follow in using the training.

Dr. Roy said the training program was to get the schools up and running but they did not have to adhere to a specific model.

Dr. Silva explained that the term “restorative practices” was related to a philosophy and principles. He said that many community partners used their own forms of restorative practices.

Director Leeson inquired about more details associated with the concept.

Dr. Roy provided details associated with the program. He reflected that each classroom had their own community so if there was an incident of disrespect or defiance, there was a consequence. The goal was to have the student “own” the responsibility for the action. He said it could apply to minor infractions or with regard to larger incidents; it may involve a formal meeting. He said that when an instructor used the program successfully, they will be asking different questions such as, “What was the impact [of your behavior] on other people?” and “How will you fix it?” The program provided the teachers with language and skills for both preventative strategies and addressing problems. He concluded that it created a more strategic and purposeful approach to discipline issues in the classroom setting.

Director Leeson addressed the Student Reaction Report which gave the student an opportunity to reflect and have discussion. She thought they were using the reports inconsistently as compared to years ago.

Dr. Donaher commented that they were used mainly for Level 3.

Director Leeson inquired if the reports could be used for Level 3 and above, on a more consistent basis, to allow student discussion.

Dr. Roy further explained the approach with regard to Restorative Practices. He said the questions posed might be, “What happened?” – “What was your role?” – “Who was affected?” – “How were you affected?” – “What will do about it?” He explained that it educates the student about the impact of their actions on other people and how they can fix it.

Director Leeson inquired about the grade level where the concept would be best utilized.

Dr. Roy said it had been used from K through 12 grades. He thought elementary schools had more “restorative” type activities occurring more naturally but some of it gets lost at the higher grade levels when there is more departmental organization.

Director Cann asked if the program would be used as a supplement to the Code of Conduct.

Dr. Roy agreed and added that it would hopefully reduce the recidivism by the student having ownership.

Dr. Silva said if the practice is instituted well in the school; it had a lot of preventative power to keep incidents from occurring in the first place.

Director Ortiz asked if she was correct in understanding that the program provided a focus on the explanation of a student’s behavior and how they could fix it.

Dr. Silva agreed.

Dr. Roy added that the program provided a more consistent language and a purposeful way to decrease incidents of discipline.

Director Leeson asked how the program would interface with PBIS in the schools.

Dr. Silva said that the program would compliment PBIS but would have a more direct impact inside the classroom rather than just in the culture of the school. It was more dedicated to specific incidents or a problem rather than just setting an overall tone and culture.

Director Leeson asked for specific goals and timelines when they were ready to roll out the program next year so they would be able to measure the success of the program.

Dr. Silva replied that it would be in the student engagement and skill development data indicators.

Director Burkhardt said he would be interested in seeing the structure of the program. He reflected on other interventions in the past and pointed out if they weren't handled carefully, the intended positive impact dissolves. He thought it was important that everyone was on the same page as they moved forward with the program.

Dr. Roy commented that he also discussed the concept with the BEA President, Jolene Vitalos. He said they wanted to build support as they moved forward. He added that he was impressed with the detailed design of the implementation model.

CONCERN COUNSELING SERVICES – Mr. Agretto

Mr. Agretto addressed the proposal which was an information item. He explained that there was no cost to the district with regard to the outline of the proposal. The CONCERN Counseling Services provided support to students in the district and was associated with Magellan Behavioral Health, which was the insurance arm connected to the Medical Assistance Program. The services would be provided in a more structured and broad-based manner. Mr. Agretto explained that the services were currently provided in five district schools. The proposal was to form a mobile team to address mental health issues with therapeutic staff support, behavioral support services and specialists. The goal was to provide the services within the environment of the schools.

Director Ortiz inquired about the involvement of the students' parents.

Mr. Agretto said a partnership needed to be established with both the parent and student.

Director Burkhardt inquired about approved clearances for the intake workers and therapists.

Mr. Agretto said he would make a point to ensure the necessary clearances were in place.

Director Tenaglia inquired about the expense associated with the service.

Mr. Agretto explained that all costs would be covered through the government assisted medical insurance program.

Director Tenaglia asked if the use of the school facilities would be limited to services for the student population. He also inquired if the program would be supplanting any other existing program or was it an adjunct program.

Mr. Agretto replied that the program was already established with students qualified through a Provider 50 license. They wanted to expand the services. He added that the expansion was dependent on the amount of funding received after the proposal was made to Magellan. Mr. Agretto agreed to report back to the board with an update.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR JANUARY 31, 2011 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Director Burkhardt received board approval to list the following agenda items for the January 31, 2011 Regular Board Meeting:

A. Community Service Agencies

The following community service sponsors be approved to participate in the district's Community Service Program and be included in the Community Service Directory of Participating Organizations and Agencies:

- St. Francis Retreat House
- The Phillipsburg Summer Youth Theatre

B. Impact Aid, Section 8003

Dr. Silva explained that it was authorization for the administration to develop and submit an application to report the necessary data for the 2010-2011 school year in order to access the 2012 Impact Aid funds under Impact Aid, Section 8003. The funds are used to assist in the cost of providing educational programs for children from federally supported housing. An annual survey is conducted to determine student eligibility.

C. CareerLinking Program Initiative

Dr. Silva explained the grant opportunity sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board in support of career awareness and preparedness for high school business students. Freedom High School was applying for \$14,873 and Liberty High School was applying for \$8,251 to support their CareerLinking Programs.

Director Tenaglia inquired about the disproportionate allocation in consideration of the given student population.

Dr. Silva replied that he thought it was based upon the usage proposals received from each school.

Mrs. Tate provided further explanation with regard to the details of the programs at each high school, noting that Freedom High School had a summer program which involved transportation, which justified the difference in funding.

D. Laura Bush Foundation Grant Program

Dr. Silva explained the grant, established in 2001, supported school libraries by providing funding for book purchases. The Laura Bush Foundation Grant Program supported schools with large populations of students receiving free and reduced lunch in their efforts to promote a love of reading and literature. He stated that Broughal Middle School intended to use the funding, in the amount of \$6,000, to supplement books for students reading below grade level, ESL students, and students who need additional challenging materials for research projects.

Director McKeon inquired if it was the first time they had submitted for the grant.

Mrs. Tate stated Broughal Middle School also received the grant last year.

Director Leeson asked if other schools in the district qualified and if they were notified about the availability of the grant.

Mrs. Tate replied that other schools qualified but by the time she had an awareness of the grant, the deadline had arrived. She said they would be on the alert for future applications.

E. 2011 Youth Garden Grant Program

Dr. Silva stated the National Gardening Association was awarding Broughal Middle School with funding in the amount of \$1,000 to support their greenhouse and educate students on how to grow their own food. The project is in collaboration with the Southside Garden Initiative.

F. Highmark Healthy High 5 School Challenge Grant

Dr. Silva explained that the grant supported programs to improve student fitness, increase physical activity, improve eating habits, and promote lifelong wellness activities. He noted that Governor Wolf Elementary would receive \$6,113 and Thomas Jefferson Elementary School would receive \$6,164. Both schools planned to use the funds to implement a series of six-week, one-hour workshops conducted by the Weller Center.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem

Mr. Antalics reflected on a previous curriculum meeting where Dr. Barilla commented that 68 percent of teachers at the high school level were not qualified to teach math.

Director Burkhardt interjected that Mr. Antalic's information was not correct and the issue only applied to certified math teachers at the middle school level.

Mr. Antalics responded by asking everyone to dismiss his comment.

His second comment was related to the excellence framework with regard to the high expectations matched with high support and that it would be extended to adults. He asked about a tracking record of specific schools with regard to the earlier statistical math and reading data shared by Dr. Silva. He also inquired if the district had a plan to transfer teachers based upon the needs of the district and then see if the specific school's track record improved. His final question was related to a policy for faculty review. He asked if the policy had been reviewed to meet the demands of the academic system.

Dr. Silva said that he was aware of the individual schools, which contributed to the composite data, including the names of the students and he had been communicating with those principals.

Mr. Washington commented that there was a process that involved central office administration.

Mr. Antalics asked if he recalled the last time a teacher was transferred for reasons related to academic improvement.

Mr. Washington said they did not typically transfer teachers for academic reasons because they did not want the problem to go to another place. They usually worked with the teacher in order to improve upon their deficiency.

2. Attorney Judith Dexter – 1866 Homestead Avenue, Bethlehem

Mrs. Dexter agreed with Director Leeson about the preparation of students for college and receiving feedback from the local colleges. She also supported the student/parent survey with regard to the satisfaction and perception of the education in the district. She suggested an open-ended question be included in the survey to allow individuals to provide further input and ideas. She reflected on past information received on a 2002 survey that assisted the district, which was very helpful in their analysis.

Mrs. Dexter shared the recent information she received with regard to four students from her daughter's class who were attending medical school. She thought it spoke volumes about the district in that they were turning out very successful students. She concluded her commentary by thanking all of the professionals present for their service.

OPEN FORUM

Director Leeson inquired about an overview regarding the math program and improvements for the present year. She also asked about a longitudinal study associated with the SPARK Program, which was requested prior to the arrival of the new administration. She noted the information requested was related to the graduation rate and success of the students involved in the program.

Dr. Silva said he requested information from the principal related to PSSA scores from SPARK graduates. He stated he searched for data but could not locate a detailed report.

Dr. Roy said they had a statewide report.

Director Leeson said they asked for details associated with specific data such as retention within the district, graduation rate, PSSA data, students from the program utilizing other support programs within the district, and the overall success rate of the students involved in the program.

Director McKeon said he had visited SPARK with Director Tenaglia approximately two years ago and met with Mrs. Ostman. He shared that she tracked data relative to the number of students who had attended the program and stayed within the school system. He pointed out the need to target students at each level of the education process so that they don't have the issue by the time they arrive at Grade 11.

Director Ortiz commented that she worked with Freedom and Liberty High School students after school. She inquired if Liberty High School had all of the ESOL students. She believed there were students living within the Freedom boundaries that were attending Liberty High School. She expressed concern about the clustering of the students.

Mrs. Harper commented that the decision was dependent upon the level of the student and available resources.

Director Burkhardt recommended obtaining data to support the structure of the program.

Director Leeson inquired about the attribution of the ESOL students' PSSA results.

Dr. Silva suggested that Doris Correll, Coordinator of English Acquisition, offer an explanation of the high school program structure at the next scheduled board curriculum meeting.

Director Burkhardt requested an update on the progress of the Student Code of Conduct.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Donna L. Wenz
Confidential Secretary – Department of Educational Programs