



BOARD CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, JULY 11, 2011

Members of the Board Curriculum Committee met on Monday, July 11, 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, and Benjamin Tenaglia. Absent: Rosario Amato, Aurea Ortiz, and Eugene McKeon. Also in attendance were Dr. Jack Silva, assistant superintendent for education; Dean Donaher, director of student services; Russell Giordano, director of human resources; Richard Agretto, director of special education; Frank Arbushites, director of technology; Janet Tate, supervisor of grants; Vivian Robledo-Shorey, supervisor of minority affairs; principals, teachers, and representatives of the press.

Director Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Mr. Justin Amann – 319 East Locust Street, Bethlehem
Mr. Amann addressed the code of conduct review. He noted that referrals at the high schools had nearly doubled between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. He also pointed out that enrollment at Liberty High School had declined by over 100 students. He inquired why the referrals were increasing in consideration of the lesser population. He also asked about consistency among administrators and mentioned that the initiative associated with Restorative Practices would help the district.

Mr. Amann also expressed concern about the proposed student activity fee. He believed it would be a burden to the students in the district. He expressed that he had a member of his family unable to attend summer school because of the expense. He reviewed that Liberty High School's School Improvement Plan included "student engagement and school activity participation for all students." He thought that a vote to support the fee would lead to a culturally insensitive school district.

COMPASS COMMUNITY SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Dr. Silva recalled his mentioning at the previous meeting about the support of community members in both academic and activity programs. He said the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley has directly supported the district such as COMPASS Community Schools. He explained that the program “married” the school with the supportive partner to enable a range of activities within the district. He introduced Jill Pereira, Director of COMPASS Community Schools, who provided an overview of the community school agreements.

Ms. Pereira presented the executive summary of the partnership agreement. She explained that the United Way raised funds to contribute to the community such as partner agencies which contribute to the well-being of children. She noted that over the past few years they had shifted into an impact mode which involved using data to address the needs of children and families.

The goal of COMPASS is to strengthen existing relationships with the district and align the support provided to schools through the Community School Model. The Community School Model’s emphasis upon data-driven goal setting and decision-making is in line with the high expectations/high support components outlined in the BASD’s *Roadmap to Educational Excellence*.

The Community School Model is designed to transform a public school into the hub of the community through the use of a coordinated effort to integrate and align comprehensive academic, social, and health programs or services around a common vision for serving students, families, and community members. Each Community School partnership serves to assess the strengths and connections between identified and new partners and to develop and act upon strategies for growing into a full-service Community School partnership through the implementation of the six conditions for learning which are at the core of COMPASS’ mission.

Ms. Pereira explained that through the partnership of the district and other entities such as Lehigh University, Communities in Schools of the Lehigh Valley, and Northampton Community College, good work was happening at the four COMPASS Community School sites. She added that the goal for the upcoming academic year was to strengthen all of the relationships currently in place at the four district sites. She noted the sites were selected based upon need.

Some of the benefits of COMPASS to schools and the community include:

- Students are connected to enhanced services and opportunities for growth and learning
- Students gain a commitment to give back to a community that supports them
- Students achieve at higher levels because of the holistic approach to education
- Safe, engaging school environments within communities transform into true hubs for kids and families
- Business and Corporate community partners help to mold future leaders and workers
- Investors receive a positive return on investment
- Community members become energized by the opportunities that exist to connect the skills, talents and passions to those who can benefit most

Ms. Pereria described the programming offerings at each participating district schools:

1. Broughal Middle School – Lehigh University CDUEL (Center for Developing Urban Educational Leaders)
 - Establishment of a free on-site community health clinic in partnership with St. Luke's/Temple
 - Procurement of two Lehigh Community Fellows – one to lead the greenhouse effort
2. Calypso Elementary School – Communities in Schools of the Lehigh Valley
 - Five parents empowered to provide free out-of-school time programming for students
 - Parent hired part-time by CISLV to support out-of-school time programming
3. Fountain Hill Elementary School – Northampton Community College
 - Partnership with a local faith based organization to pilot a Backpack Buddies Program
 - Leadership Team developed a plan for securing funds to purchase a Peaceful Playground Kit
4. Lincoln Elementary School – Communities In Schools of the Lehigh Valley
 - Implementation of “Leader In Me” as a leadership and character development process for students
 - Two successful leadership days wherein students planned, organized and led the events

Ms. Pereria also provided an overview of the financial support provided to the district. In 2010-2011, United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley/COMPASS supported Community Schools in the district with approximately \$171,000. In 2011-2012, the organization agreed to support Community Schools work in the district with more than \$233,000. The current outstanding grants to support the district for 2011-2012 equal an additional \$26,000. Additional EITC funding is anticipated to support after-school programming in 2011-2012. Ms. Pereria stated that additional grants and funding will be sought as needs are identified and opportunities arise. She concluded her presentation by sharing information about a fall event to be held at the SteelStacks on November 4 from 8:30 until 11:30. She asked for commitment to support their model and welcomed the board to visit any of the school sites to observe their programs.

Director Burkhardt expressed gratitude to Ms. Pereria and the United Way. He said, on behalf of the board, there was an appreciation of their outreach and programming in light of the district cut-backs in funding.

Director Leeson inquired about the actual cost to the school district.

Ms. Pereria replied there was no current cost but there was a need for office space and a computer.

Director Leeson reviewed that the program was community driven and expressed gratitude to Ms. Pereria.

Director Follweiler inquired about the involvement of additional schools within the district.

Ms. Pereria stated their organization was working with leadership in the district in consideration of additional school involvement which would be based upon need and lack of resources. They needed to arrive at an agreeable initiative to move on across the board and then shift some of their allocations going forward.

Director Burkhardt concluded that no board action was needed at the present time.

GETTING RESULTS IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUBMISSIONS – Dr. Silva

Dr. Silva presented an executive summary on the Getting Results School Improvement Plan submissions. He explained the plans were required as a result of not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress for the 2010 PSSA scores. He noted the submission deadline was July 1. He added that at the present time, he had received a preliminary student spreadsheet for the 2011 PSSA student scores but not official or complete student records. Unfortunately, the new deadline precludes principals from using 2011 PSSA results in their Getting Results Plan. The following BASD schools have successfully submitted their Getting Results Plan using the web-based eSIP Program:

BASD School	AYP/Getting Results Status
Lincoln Elementary School	Warning
Marvine Elementary School	Warning
Broughal Middle School	Making Progress
Donegan Elementary School	Making Progress
Fountain Hill Elementary School	Making Progress
Liberty High School	Corrective Action 2-4
Freedom High School	Corrective Action 2-4

Dr. Silva asked each principal to present their plans in the format of strengths, concerns and action sequence:

Fountain Hill Elementary Principal – Lisa Lynch

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- All predicted proficiency groups made one year’s growth.
- The proficiency gap is smaller between the “all student group” and each relevant subgroup.
- All relevant subgroups made AYP by a special provision.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” exceeded the AYP target by 9.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- The proficiency gap is smaller between the “All Student Group” and each relevant subgroup.
- Every predicted proficiency group in grades 4 and 5 made a year’s growth.

CONCERNS

1. Not all grades show a positive three-year trend in both reading and mathematics.
2. Not all relevant subgroups show a positive three-year trend in both reading and mathematics.

ACTION SEQUENCE (Steps 1-4)

- Continue RTII in Grades K-3 and expand to grades 4 and 5.
- Implement Reciprocal Teaching Strategies.
- Revisit Guided Reading Instruction.
- Incorporate Marzano’s research-based recommendations for classroom instruction.
- Incorporate kinesthetic activities into math lessons.
- Gradually introduce algebra into daily math lessons.
- Continue to align instruction and assessments to PA Standards.
- Continue data meetings to discuss, interpret, and analyze student achievement.

Marvine Elementary School

Principal – Karen Gomez

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- Every grade made one year’s growth.
- All predicted proficiency groups in all grades made one year’s growth.
- The “All Student Group” met the 95 percent participation target.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” exceeded the target by 5.6 percent.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- All grades met or exceeded the target.
- All relevant subgroups made AYP with the help of a special provision.
(Confidence Interval)

CONCERNS

1. Not all grades show a positive three-year trend in both reading and mathematics.
2. The proficiency gap has increased between relevant subgroups and the “All Student Group” in both reading and mathematics.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Implement the RTII initiative in all grades to address specific student skill deficiencies/difficulties.
- Intensify focus on differentiating instruction for subgroups.
- Ensure subgroup access to small-group support interventions.
- Continue data analysis meetings to monitor student progress and determine appropriate academic interventions.
- Provide professional development opportunities with emphasis on RTII, data analysis, guided reading, co-teaching, and differentiating instruction.
- Continue to develop a “team” approach to instruction involving classroom teachers, ESL, and special education teachers, and reading specialist.

Donegan Elementary School

Principal – Sonia Vázquez

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” exceeded the reading target by 7.6 percent.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- All subgroups made AYP even if through special provisions.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” exceeded the AYP target by 23.8 percent.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- All grades show a positive three-year trend and reflect an increase each year in the percent of proficient or advanced students in math.

CONCERNS

1. Not all relevant subgroups show a positive three-year trend in both reading and math. With budget cuts, class sizes will be larger and have a negative impact on student learning and performance.
2. Grade 5 Reading needs to be looked at to determine the direction to take in order to experience positive growth.
3. Continued growth of the IEP students is concerning especially in larger class sizes.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Continue RTII in Grades 1-5 and expand to Kindergarten.
- Implement more specific intervention tools during the intervention time and provide the necessary teacher training.
- Continue use of READ 180, System 44, Fast Forward Guided Reading and the specific intervention tools as indicated by assessment information.
- Continue to utilize PaTTAN, CIU 20, and specialized personnel for professional development.
- Move to the next level of data meeting in having teachers analyze their own data to determine the direction of their lesson plans.
- Continue flexible grouping and monitor via benchmarks/multiple assessments.
- Continue school-wide academic rigor.

Director Burkhardt noted that Benita Draper, Lincoln Elementary School Principal, was not in attendance because of a pre-arranged vacation. A summary of her report follows:

Lincoln Elementary School

Principal – Benita S. Draper

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” met performance targets with the help of the Growth Model special provision.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- In Grade 4, all predicted proficiency groups made one year’s growth and in Grade 5, the predicted proficiency groups for Below Basic, Basic, and Proficient made one year’s worth of growth.

- From SY 07-08 to SY 08-09, Grade 4 made an increase in Reading from 35.9 percent to 54.1 percent and from SY 08-09 to SY 09-10, Grade 4 increased in reading proficiency again from 54.1 percent to 62.5 percent.
- The Economically Disadvantaged subgroup made AYP with the Growth Model provision.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” exceeded the AYP target by 3.2 percent and is advanced or proficient in math.
- The “All Student Group” and all grade levels made one year’s growth.
- Grades 4 and 5 exceeded the target by 12.7 percent and 11.1 percent respectively.
- Every predicted proficiency group in grade 5 made a year’s growth.

CONCERNS

1. Not all grades showed a positive three-year trend in both reading and mathematics.
2. Not every subgroup met or exceeded the targets for both reading and mathematics or showed a positive three-year trend in both subject areas.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Continue RTII in Grades K-5.
- Grade level teams will continue to meet to review and discuss student data and plan for instruction.
- The School Leadership Team and RTII Data Team will merge to review data and make school-wide decisions for instruction, student, and parent engagement.
- Provide professional development and implement researched based teaching strategies in phonics (Grades K-3) and Vocabulary (3-5).
- Implement READ 180 in Grades 3-5.
- Continue the Leader In Me Program and incorporate the use of data notebooks for students and teachers.
- Increase the amount of independent reading time during core instruction and provide opportunities for independent reading, tutoring, and book clubs after school.
- Conduct three Family Literacy, two Family Math, and two PSSA Family Nights.
- Strive for mastery of grade appropriate math facts via core instruction and a school-wide math fact wall.
- Continue to align instruction and assessments to PA Standards.
- Continue data meetings to discuss, interpret, and analyze student achievement.

Dr. Silva commented that he recently met with former acting superintendent, Dr. Persing. Dr. Silva said they discussed data regarding school performance on “value-added” and shared that six of our schools in the district had the greatest gains among 72 schools in the state which utilized distinguished educators. He pointed out that although the schools in discussion made more than a year’s worth of growth and gains; the bar associated with No Child Left Behind continued to escalate.

Director Follweiler brought attention to the READ 180 program and technology. She asked if there could be more accomplished with the system or with other technology.

Ms. Vázquez said she supported the READ 180 program. She said her students made gains with progress which was especially noted with second language learners and higher level special education students. She noted that the program had to be properly introduced with the correct reading teacher.

Mrs. Lynch also commented on READ 180 and System 44 which were both Scholastic programs.

Mrs. Gomez said that eight to ten of the lowest Grade 3, 4, and 5 students received very intensive READ 180 instructional time daily.

Dr. Silva stated that READ 180 was the lead program for the growth model. The program provided the measures and strategy to see if a student was closing the gap with regard to getting more than a year's worth of growth in a year's worth of time. He pointed out that a teacher at Marvine Elementary was getting four years of growth within one year of time for his students. He commented that if one only looked at the threshold, the gains aren't realized.

Director Leeson thought it was frustrating for Dr. Silva to use 2009-2010 data to produce a document for next year and also seek the approval from the board as a plan for next year. She inquired if the program analysis noted in the reports were from last year or the previous year.

Mrs. Lynch replied that it was a combination of what existed in 2009-2010 and what they looked to change in 2010-2011. She mentioned that some programs were already onboard such as RTII and guided reading. They continued to look at successful strategies as far as reading instruction.

Director Leeson inquired about class sizes at the elementary schools.

Dr. Silva referred to Mr. Giordano with regard to class sizes across the various levels. He thought overall there might be an occasional pocket.

Director Leeson said she understood with the shifting changes in population, there might be times of lower or higher population at a school. In consideration of those situations they might need to address staffing on a yearly basis. She questioned if the references to class sizes in the reports referred to the previous year or the present year.

Ms. Vázquez said she that adding five students to a class at Donegan was comparable to adding a half of a class elsewhere. She said it was difficult to address the specific needs of the students. Director Leeson inquired about the specific programs used at Donegan to contribute to the success of the school.

Ms. Vázquez said her goal was to have continued growth. She added that she expected the large gains for the first year but knew that jump would not be duplicated every year.

Ms. Vázquez said they used READ 180 in Grades 3, 4, and 5 for as many students as possible. She noted that System 44 was used for the lower level learner as well as the special education students. Fast ForWord was used for students in Grade 1 and 2 with plans to introduce the program to Kindergarten in the approaching year. She also mentioned utilizing programs for specific student clusters formed across grade levels depending on the student needs.

Director Burkhardt proceeded to introduce the middle school improvement plans:

Broughal Middle School

Principal – Edward Docalovich

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- The “All Student Group” met performance targets with the help of SH special provision.
- The proficiency gap is smaller between the “all student group” and each relevant subgroup.
- From SY 08-09 to SY 09-10, the literacy growth increased from 46.6 percent to 53.1 percent.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” met or exceeded the 56 percent target.
- The “All Student Group” made one year’s growth.
- The proficiency gap is smaller between the “All Student Group” and each relevant subgroup.

CONCERNS

1. Grade 6 did not make one year’s growth in reading.
2. The advanced predicted proficiency group in grade 6 did not make one year’s growth in mathematics.
3. The percentage of grade 7 students who were proficient/advanced in math went from 59.4 percent in SY 08-09 to 58.2 percent in SY 09-10.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Continue Marzano’s research based strategies for instruction.
- Administrator classroom walk-through using Teachscape “CWT.”
- Continue small PSSA tutoring and mentoring groups.
- Continue to align instruction and assessment to PA standards.
- Continue to utilize SAS and BASD curriculum.
- Implement revised BASD Algebra curriculum.
- Formal/informal observation
- Collaborative meetings
- Lesson plan monitoring
- Data analysis
- Provide ongoing student assessment/benchmarking.
- Improve student engagement through the use of technology.

Director Tenaglia asked Mr. Docalovich to define the advanced predicted proficiency group.

Mr. Docalovich replied that those students were advanced and were predicted to be advanced. He further explained that PVAAS (Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System) could evaluate a student by formulating their scores.

Director Tenaglia referred to the Grade 5 students who tested advanced in math and were predicted to test advanced in math at the Grade 6 level.

Mr. Docalovich said they could either slip back into proficient or slip back within the band of advanced and then not meet the predicted proficiency or advanced proficiency range.

Director Tenaglia inquired if there was a group of Grade 5 students who were not predicted to test advanced and tested advanced.

Mr. Docalovich replied affirmatively. He added that it was based on PSSA.

Dr. Silva commented about the PVAAS projections and that it was strongest in Grades 5,6, 7, and 8 with it obviously being weakest in Grades 3, 4, and 11.

Director Leeson said she thought they were practicing RTII for the past few years across all schools. She questioned if it was being done only in specific schools.

Mrs. Lynch said she thought that Fountain Hill, Donegan, and Lincoln were the first three schools to participate two or three years ago. She stated that additional schools became involved this year including Marvine, Thomas Jefferson, and William Penn Elementary Schools. She said there is an intention to bring on five additional schools next year. She also noted they received support from CIU-20 and PaTTAN.

Director Burkhardt recommended that when they had fresh available data for the past school year, it could be posted next to the present percentage data so the board could easily compare the changes.

Dr. Silva agreed to accommodate Director Burkhardt's request.

Director Leeson asked about changes in the plan if there are changes in the data.

Director Burkhardt pointed out that changes would not be necessary if the difference in data was not significant.

Mrs. Vázquez added that although they have found materials which have brought them success; each school used them differently in addition to some schools needing more time than others.

Director Burkhardt said that he had full confidence in the principals' abilities but he still wanted to compare the freshest data.

Mrs. Durante, Liberty High School Principal, provided an overview of her school's continuous improvement plan by discussing the following points of data:

Liberty High School Principal – JoAnn Durante

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” met/exceeded the target by 2.1 percent.
- The school-wide trend for the past 3 years reflects an increase each year in the percentage of proficient or advanced students in reading.
- The “All Student Group” met the 95 percent participation target.
- All but one sub-group made AYP with Safe Harbor Provision.
- The following relevant subgroup(s) closed the gap: Latino, IEP, ED by making AYP by Safe Harbor provisions.
- Students continue to show growth in reading.

Mathematics

- The “All Student Group” met the participation target.
- The following relevant subgroup(s) closed the gap: Black, IEP, ED, by making AYP with Safe Harbor provisions.

CONCERNS

1. The “All Student Group” was below the target in math.
2. The “All Student Group” did not make AYP with the help of a special provision in math.
3. Mathematics shows little growth.
4. No grade in the school met the target in math.
5. Not all relevant subgroups show a positive three-year trend in both reading and mathematics.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Continue to integrate READ 180 to increase skills in Grade 9 and 10.
- Expand critical literacy strategies in Grade 11 English.
- Complete common assessments in all mathematics courses, aligned to state standards and analyze test results in order to differentiate instruction and assist struggling learners.
- Benchmark data in reading and math to change instructional strategies and techniques to increase achievement.

Freedom High School Principal – Michael LaPorta

STRENGTHS

Reading

- The “All Student Group” met the minimum proficiency target.
- Our “White” subgroup met the minimum proficiency target.
- The “Latino” and “IEP” subgroups closed the achievement/proficiency gap.

Mathematics

- The “White” subgroup met the minimum proficiency target.
Our “IEP” subgroup closed the achievement/proficiency gap.

CONCERNS

1. Not every relevant subgroup met or exceeded the minimum proficiency target in reading and mathematics.
2. Not all relevant subgroups demonstrated a positive three-year growth trend in reading and mathematics.
3. The “Economically Disadvantaged” subgroup did not close the achievement/proficiency gap in reading and mathematics.
4. The “Latino” subgroup did not close the achievement/proficiency gap in mathematics.
5. No subgroups other than the “White” subgroup made AYP in reading and mathematics.

ACTION SEQUENCE

- Collaboration among department chairpersons, building administration, and central administration throughout the process of revising and fully aligning curriculum according to the Standards Aligned System and upcoming Keystone Exams.
- Assessment revision teams will be created and professionally developed on how to effectively analyze, create, and use data as a means to improve student achievement.
- Reduce the number of students who are under-scheduled (i.e., Conceptual Science or math into academic, and academic/honors into AP courses).
- Implementation of Restorative Practices

Director Follweiler expressed concern about both high schools in light of not meeting the standards. She asked if similar results were being seen in other districts in the region or state.

Dr. Silva said the drop-off in Grade 11 was a common dynamic across PA--especially in math and most particularly in subgroups such as IEP students. He shared that the Keystone Examination would soon replace the Grade 11 PSSAs in 2013-2014. He believed it would lead to reveal actual school progress rather than PSSA results which are standards not aligned to specific courses or instructional calendars in addition to instructional methods. He added that the student assessment system was not the same as the system which scheduled, taught, and assessed the student within a course. He said the Keystone Assessments had rigorous standards but it assessed the subject matter clearly.

Director Faccinetto brought attention to the fact that the Keystone Assessment counted toward a requirement so there was an incentive for the student to perform well.

Director Leeson expressed concern that students needed to be more ready to attend college. She was concerned about students having to take remedial courses after they enter college which meant they were paying for something and not getting credits out of it. She reflected on the target concern about math last year.

Mrs. Durante replied that the students took the 4Sight assessment as a benchmark and as a result, certain students were pulled out for specific tutoring sessions. She said they did not have the opportunity to review the list of students for PSSA results. The same group was presently working on common assessments. She also brought attention to a newly formed math lab where students were assigned for specific assistance utilizing one-on-one instruction.

Director Leeson reviewed that they were increasing tutoring during the school day and they were working on the development of common assessments. She asked about opportunities for students that were meeting proficiency or advanced requirements.

Mrs. Durante said that there were individuals who reviewed various data and noticed a need to strengthen their statistics instruction in math. She also increased student awareness with open-ended questions.

Director Leeson suggested a plan to improve student achievement at all levels with specific attention to mathematics.

Recommendation: The President of the BASD's Board of School Directors and the Superintendent of Schools to sign the Assurance of Quality and Accountability for Getting Results Plans for BASD schools in Warning, Making Progress, and Corrective Action in the 2010-2011 school year.

NINTH GRADE FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL TEAMING UPDATE – Mr. Michael LaPorta/Mrs. Kim Harper

Both principals presented their evaluation of Freedom High School's Grade 9 Teaming Initiative. They shared the purpose which was to streamline the transition from middle to high school and to help shrink the size of the large school. The Roadmap to Excellence of core and stretch learning, student engagement, and personal skill development are addressed through the guiding principles of the initiative as follows:

- Core Learning – Differentiation of learning will be supported in the team infrastructure. Teams will be supported in order to provide safety nets for learners who are struggling and to meet the individual needs of students over time as conditions change.
- Stretch Learning – Curriculum may be classified; students may not. All students will be stretched to their maximum potential. Teams will be supported in order to provide enrichment for learners who are ready.
- Student Engagement – Interdisciplinary and real-world connections will be made. All students will be supported proactively by a cooperative network of educators.
- Personal Skill Development – Appropriate behavior will be taught and supported.

Mr. LaPorta and Mrs. Harper reviewed the program evaluation questions, conclusions, and actions plans.

1. Has the Grade 9 Teaming Initiative improved student academic achievement as measured by student grade point average?

Conclusion: No – Student grade point averages have not maintained an increase at the higher end of the scale. In addition, a greater number of students fell below a 2.0 grade point average. Students who were failing tended to fail multiple courses. Students on teams were in year-long core courses, affording no opportunity for credit recovery at night school in the spring. All students have access to academic-level courses. Some additional supports need to be implemented. In the past, students who showed signs of multiple failures due to a variety of reasons would have been referred to Career Academy, which no longer exists.

Action Steps: (1) Revert back to semester-based core courses so that students only have two core courses at a time. This will also allow students who fail a course in the fall to attend night school in the spring.

(2) Increase supports for students during the school year

2. Has the Grade 9 Teaming Initiative increased students' access to and success in rigorous courses?

Conclusion: Yes – More students enrolled in honors courses and were successful.

Action Steps: (1) Continue with the expectation that all students have access to a rigorous curriculum.

(2) Implement suggestions from the BASD Advanced Placement Program Evaluation to increase the number of students in the program.

(3) Increase supports for students during the school year.

3. Has the Grade 9 Teaming Initiative improved the overall attendance rate?

Conclusion: Attendance rates for Grade 9 students increased slightly over the four-year time span. Overall, attendance rates were higher on average for Grade 9 than the other grades all four years, with the exception of Grade 10 in 2007-2008 and Grade 12 in 2010-2011.

Action Steps: (1) Coordinate efforts of teachers, counselors, administrators, attendance office, and truancy officer to reach out to families of absentees.

(2) Implement Restorative Practices to increase relationships and student engagement.

4. Has the Freedom Teaming Initiative affected disciplinary infractions?

Conclusion: Yes – The number of discipline infractions decreased when students were with their team teachers.

Action Steps: (1) Continue to teach and model expected student behavior

(2) Continue the consistent implementation and application of the Code of Conduct.

(3) Implement Restorative Practices to increase relationships and student engagement to prevent infractions from occurring in the first place.

5. Has the Freedom Teaming Initiative reduced the retention rate?

Conclusion: No – The retention rate has increased. The reasons are the same as those for the lowered grade point averages (question 1).

Action Steps: (1) Revert back to semester-based core courses so that students only have two core courses at a time. This will also allow students who fail a course in the fall to attend night school in the spring.

(2) Increase supports for students during the school year.

(3) Use team teachers from the opposite semester courses as mentors for current students.

Director Burkhardt commented that he appreciated the principals' honesty, frankness, and willingness to look at areas that aren't necessarily where they would want them. He questioned the scheduling pattern from the recent school year.

Mrs. Harper explained the block scheduling schedule with the incorporation of teams.

Director Leeson complimented the principals on the program evaluation and the manner in which it was presented. She said they could not make progress if they did not analyze programs. She pointed out that Career Academy was not set-up for students who were just failing classes.

Mrs. Harper stated that when she obtained data with regard to the retention list, discipline was also a factor in the students' lack of success.

Director Leeson supported the idea of academic detentions to a certain degree. She inquired about increased rigor. She was glad to see the trend and wondered if some of it was a result of the push-up at the middle school level. She thought there was a need to push-up into biology and math classes.

Mrs. Harper said the team approach allowed for flexibility with regard to increased rigor.

Director Follweiler inquired about the differentiation between high school and middle school teaming. She asked if it was referred to as clustering.

Dr. Silva said he did not want to cause confusion.

Director Follweiler noted the high school approach did not include extra periods. She asked if it would work at the middle school level.

Dr. Silva said the high school teaming had some of the same approach and elements as middle school teaming. They would be able to maintain some of the connections as far as grouping students with common teachers without a planning period as long as there were expected routines and schedules to be followed. He said in some ways the high school model did translate to the model that middle school principals were presently working on with clustering at the middle school.

Director Follweiler believed it was still a pilot program. She asked if there were similar plans at Liberty High School.

Dr. Silva replied there were no plans to proceed at Liberty High School. He wanted a faithful implementation of the system to draw conclusions before rolling out too far. He added that if the program was successful, he would recommend it for the middle schools.

Director Follweiler requested an update on their progress at a half-way point through the academic year.

Director Faccinetto asked Mr. LaPorta for his projection five years from the present time with regard to teaming. He asked if he thought it would expand once the action plan was in place.

Mr. LaPorta said he had hope to see a totally engaged school that had students connected to teachers within a large urban high school consisting of a small high school environment. He thought there should be a difference in the environment for a Grade 9 student versus a Grade 12 student.

Mrs. Harper commented about the limited course choices for students which is more conducive to the cluster system. She added there was more course diversification as the grade levels increased.

Director Follweiler agreed that it was okay if the program was not right for Grade 10. She thought the students might be ready by that point in the transition.

Director Burkhardt thought the students eventually needed to expand and become independent as they progress towards graduation.

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT – STUDY ISLAND

Dr. Silva addressed the multiple issues associated with benchmark assessments in the district. There was concern about validity and issues with the 4Sight assessment system in addition to technology compatibility concerns. He also noted that the results were not timely which resulted in lack of utility for instructors. Dr. Silva pointed out that 4Sight was only an assessment tool and did not offer instructional strategies to focus on the results. He said that Study Island was previously purchased by a few schools in the district to use as a tutoring and instructional tool. Dr. Silva reviewed that a district committee entertained a few potential assessment programs and concluded that Study Island was the appropriate choice for an improved district evaluation system. On his executive summary the purpose of benchmarking was defined as:

- Benchmark assessments are literacy and math test given throughout the year to track the progress of students toward an achievement standard. The purpose of benchmark assessment is to inform student, teachers, and principals how much progress has been made toward a standard/outcome, and to make timely changes to instruction to improve student performance.

Director Cann inquired if there would be a saving benefit to discontinue the 4Sight Assessment system.

Dr. Silva stated the district was spending approximately \$30,000 per year on 4Sight and additionally \$18,000 to \$20,000 on Study Island. He said the combination would be approximately the same. He said that next year's cost would be more but year three would have no cost. Dr. Silva explained that the three-year program would be more cost effective for the long term in addition to improved service.

A consensus was reached by present members of the board to list the following recommendation on the upcoming agenda: Replace 4Sight with Study Island as the BASD benchmarking tool of core learning (proficiency in reading, writing, and math).

NEW TEXTBOOK – CRITICAL LITERACY – GRADE 11

Dr. Silva introduced the proposed textbook, *Write Source 2012 Student Handbook*, for use at the high school level course titled Critical Literacy. The book will be used at both high schools.

The board of directors and public had one month to review the proposed book. It was agreed to include the item on the August Regular Board Meeting agenda.

ACTIVITY FEE OUTLINE – DR. DONAHER

Dr. Donaher reviewed the proposed activity fee for a student in grades 6 through 12 to participate in an activity, club, sport, or organization which is supported by a paid stipend to an advisor, coach, or director. He noted it would serve as a source of revenue for the general operating budget. The fee involved the students to pay a yearly activity fee of \$25 to participate in any activity, sport, or club, sponsored by the school district which involved a stipend paid to the advisor, coach, or director. Dr. Donaher noted that the proposal did not include the automatic waiver of the fee for any student who qualified for free or reduced lunch; however the committee recognized the need for some form of waiver of reduction of fee for economically disadvantaged children. He noted that a form of a waiver would be considered in the fee structure.

Dr. Donaher commented that administration did not feel good about requesting the fee but it offered the opportunity to generate between \$50,000 and \$75,000 in revenue which was a conservative estimate. He also stated that recent news articles on the topic indicated that most, if not all school districts revealed that they did not realize the expected anticipated revenue when the program was put into practice. He continued to explain the method of obtaining payment from the student participants involving the use of eSchool. He said the idea of a complete student waiver was not supported by the committee but opportunities for fundraising would be entertained.

Director Cann expressed concern about appropriate student notification with regard to the timeline and contact person for payment. She did not want a student to lose the ability to participate because of lack of communication.

Dr. Donaher replied that communication would be made to everyone involved at all levels. He said there would be a designated person at each building assigned to collect the fee. He reviewed there would be a single fee regardless of the number of activities per student.

Director Cann commented that it was never as easy as it sounded and cited known challenges with the yearbook fee. She reiterated her concern about proper organization so students would not lose an opportunity to participate in an activity.

Director Leeson opposed the fee. She believed the financial gain would not be worth the price paid by lack of participation. She inquired about bringing the concession stand revenue back to the district rather than sharing it between the booster clubs.

Dr. Donaher commented about the costs associated with the employment of district personnel. He said the booster club contributed back to the district. He noted that Freedom High School had a more defined program to include organizations outside of the athletic family. He also said Mr. Harris was bringing the concept to Liberty High School to include clubs such as the Drama Club. He pointed out that in the past the district paid employees to run the concession stand. The booster clubs agreed to pay a nominal stipend to the person who managed the program and the bookkeeper. He said the program has basically turned into a complete volunteer organization which increased the amount of money returned to the students.

Director Leeson said she was aware of the structural changes, but she suggested incorporating the changes into a district run program as well as a booster club run program. She said she was aware of some of the booster club priorities while the district was “nickel and diming” some of the programs. She expressed concern about inequity among the groups such as buying a third uniform for a team. She thought they should look at something else rather than an activity fee as a way to increase revenue to the athletic funds. Director Leeson suggested the need to observe the outcome of the policy at the end of the year with regard to success.

Director Burkhardt inquired about the contact source at each school to monitor the payment for each group.

Dr. Donaher explained the payment collection process.

Director Burkhardt disagreed with the proposal. He thought it would be a very work intense project.

Director Cann agreed with Director Burkhardt.

Dr. Silva commented that Dr. Donaher’s idea primarily addressed budgetary concerns. Dr. Silva explained that the activity fee was born out of a six million dollar budget deficit and certainly was not something administration wanted.

Director Follweiler stated that the concept was born out of a need to address the budget cuts. She also thought it was a nominal fee. She also commented that it was a requirement for the coaches to monitor the student physicals so she did not believe it would be so challenging to add the student names to a listing.

Director Burkhardt believed it would be difficult to monitor the policy across all activities.

Director Faccinetto expressed concerns about the implementation of the policy. He pondered the amount of time spent by employees during the year to make \$50,000. He also expressed concern about enforcement of the policy.

Director Follweiler recalled that the proposal surfaced when they were stretching to find cuts within the budget with regard to activities. She thought the fee was nominal in consideration that it was considered a larger burden to increase taxes. She agreed it would be a challenge for the coach/advisor to tell a student they were not eligible because of lack of payment. She recalled the duties of a coach to monitor the receipt of physical examination forms which was a comparative challenge. She said that nobody has argued that they cannot have sports because of the inability to track student physicals. She thought the difficult part would be notifying the students to pay the fee by a deadline. She expressed concern about raising taxes for the past three years. She recalled the decision to give a higher stipend to the employees administrating the activities. She commented that a student tracking challenge shouldn't be the reason for not pursuing the revenue.

Director Burkhardt expressed concern about expanding the concept to multiple activities and organizations that are not as well structured as sports. He thought it would be a problem.

Director Faccinetto said he wasn't strongly opposed to the \$25 fee but his concern was related to the implementation process.

Dr. Donaher also pointed out that student physical fees were the responsibility of the students as opposed to the past practice of the district assuming the cost.

Director Tenaglia reviewed that it was presented by the administration as a recommendation in their proposed budget. He recalled that it was also costly to collect the \$10 per capita tax. He recalled that it was presented to the board as a recommendation of the administration as part of their budget.

Director Cann said she didn't think administration advocated the proposal.

Director Leeson asked if the item could be slated on the upcoming Finance Committee Meeting for further discussion.

Director Burkhardt obtained a general consensus to have further discussion at the Finance Committee Meeting.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT END OF YEAR DATA REPORT – Dr. Donaher

Dr. Donaher presented the board with a Code of Conduct report for the 2010-2011 academic year. He commented that teachers, students, parents, and administrators must continue to work towards improving individual student behavior.

Dr. Donaher stated that what is considered inappropriate for one child may actually be considered an improvement for another. They must never lose sight of the fact that they were working with children. He said they cannot discard the imperfect child as manufacturer might discard an imperfect widget. He noted that in certain circumstances some children must be removed from the regular school environment, however, they must work with the great majority of children to provide the support, mentoring, and discipline necessary for success as adults. He said in the review of data from the past five to six years, the total numbers remained relatively consistent from year to year with the exception of a few occasional anomalies. He noted there were systematic concerns within the data which required attention but not cosmetic changes. They were concerns that addressed ideas and beliefs about student discipline – not code numbers and definitions. He said it was his hope and belief that many of those systemic concerns would be addressed this year in consideration of the affiliation with the International Institute for Restorative Practices at both high schools. Dr. Donaher explained details associated with the need to change the manner of calculating offenses in order to be compliant with PIMS and Safe School reporting requirements. He stated that one referral would include both students involved in an incident as opposed to past practice where a separate referral would be generated for both students. He also noted that referrals from Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School would be included in the high school totals beginning with the 2010-2011 school year.

Dr. Donaher stated there was a marked decrease in Level 3 referrals at both high schools for the 2009-2010 school year. He said the 2009-2010 school year marked the first year of the eSchool discipline program for both high schools. He noted there were concerns from administrators about correct implementation. Another reason for the decreased reports might have been some program implementation, especially at Freedom High School. Dr. Donaher also mentioned that some of the concerns expressed by teachers at the end of the last school year may actually have had some validity, in that referrals were not being effectively and efficiently processed as quickly as possible. He believed the numbers have since rebounded to be more in line with previous years in addition to the consideration of Vo-Tech referrals, coupled with the measurement of incidents rather than student numbers. He also reviewed that the Code of Conduct allowed students to remain on the same step in the code if they had twenty days of good behavior between incidents.

Dr. Donaher continued to share research data from all student levels from his report.

***AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING THE AUDIO-RECORDING SYSTEM STOPPED.**

Director Leeson asked about a plan of action with regard to the increase of infractions. She pointed out the earlier comment made by someone during Courtesy of the Floor about the increase in infractions even though the student population has decreased. She also inquired if the district report refers only to incidents versus number of participants involved in an incident.

Dr. Donaher explained that PIMS only required reports related to suspensions. He noted that the definition of insubordination differs from the state to the district.

Director Leeson said they should not change their reporting procedures at the district level. She emphasized the need to have consistency and the ability to compare results from year to year.

Director Faccinetto commented about the data revealing a large percentage of insubordination related to disrespect and student attitudes. He hoped Restorative Practices would have a positive impact on the results.

Director Burkhardt agreed that his observations have been associated with student attitude and he had hope associated with Restorative Practices.

Mrs. Robledo-Shorey commented on the issue associated with the loss of student monitoring at Vo-Tech. She thought the approach associated with Restorative Practices would eventually penetrate the students.

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN – Mr. Arbushites

Mr. Arbushites reviewed the 2011 Technology Strategic Plan which must be submitted to PDE after approval by the Board of Directors. PDE's approval of the plan qualifies it to be approved at the federal level so the district can be in compliance with E-Rate guidelines. It was emphasized that the document was a "planning document" and did not commit the district to funding. The plan was authored by the Technology Strategic Planning Committee which worked in consultation with teachers, support staff, administrators, students, parents, and community partners to collect data in order to develop the district's three-year strategic plan for educational technology.

The three broad goals identified in the 2008 Strategic Plan document will continue to be implemented in the 2011 document. These goals are in the areas of administration and management of the technology infrastructure, communication and information access, and teaching and learning with technology tools.

Director Burkhardt obtained a majority agreement to place the item on the upcoming board agenda.

APPLE LEASE – MAC TO PC CONVERSION DISCUSSION – Mr. Arbushites

Dr. Roy reviewed a memorandum distributed to the Board of School Directors on July 6, 2011. It stated that the Apple lease recommendation failed to secure Board approval on a 4-4 tie vote. At that meeting, several board members expressed an interest in receiving comparative information regarding the costs of moving to a PC platform rather than automatically continuing with Apple. Mr. Arbushites compiled an analysis of costs associated with moving from the district's current Apple-focused IT system. The cost of moving to a PC-focused system was substantial with no educational benefits to students.

Based upon the additional comparative information as well as on Apple's willingness to maintain the terms of the lease proposal and following consultation with Mrs. Cann, the Apple Lease recommendation will appear on July 11, Special Board Meeting agenda as a Recommendation of the Administration.

INFORMATION ITEMS

AGENDA ITEMS FOR JULY 25, 2011 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Director Burkhardt received board approval to list the following remaining agenda items for the July 25, 2011 Regular Board Meeting:

1. Textbook Approval

At the June Curriculum Committee Meeting, the Board had the opportunity to review books in the following high school subjects for 30 days: AP French, AP Spanish, AP German, Global Studies, and Discrete Mathematics. The textbooks were reviewed and recommended by committees of department teachers/chairpersons and meet all district and national (Advanced Placement) standards for suitability.

2. Getting Results Improvement Plans – Donegan Elementary School, Fountain Hill Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, Marvine Elementary School, Broughal Middle School, Freedom High School, and Liberty High School

As discussed earlier in the meeting, the improvement plans were submitted to PDE using eSIP. The *Assurance of Quality and Accountability Form* must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools and the President of the Board of Directors. The document is then submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

3. Benchmark Assessment

As discussed earlier in the meeting, the purchase cost for 2011-2012 (included in the Curriculum and Instruction Budget) is \$58,159.44. The Agreement also commits Study Island/Archipelago Learning, LCC to a 2012, 2013 price of \$78,726.40 and a 2013-2014 price of \$0.

4. Educational Technology Strategic Plan Update

As reviewed earlier in the meeting, upon board approval, the plan is submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education which approves the plan on behalf of USAC, the company which administers the federal E-Rate program.

5. No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title I

Mrs. Tate reviewed that the district is entitled to receive \$2,980,158 for the 2011-2012 academic year to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach proficiency on academic achievement standards and assessment.

6. No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title II, Part A

Mrs. Tate reviewed that the district is entitled to receive \$723,978 for the 2011-2012 academic year to improve teacher and principal quality through high quality professional development and to reduce class sizes in core academic subject areas.

7. No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Title III

Mrs. Tate reviewed that the district is entitled to receive \$276,797 for the 2011-2012 academic year to improve the education of limited English proficient students (LEP) by assisting them to learn English and meet challenging academic achievement standards.

8. Dollar General Back to School Literacy Grant

Mrs. Tate reviewed the grant which provided funding to assist school libraries or media centers in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in the following areas:

- Implementing new or expanding existing literacy programs
- Purchasing new technology or equipment to support literacy initiatives
- Purchasing books, materials, or software for literacy programs

It was noted that Broughal Middle School is seeking funding for *Kindle Interest in Reading*, a pilot program to introduce Kindles and eBooks to students.

Director Leeson asked Mrs. Tate if other schools in the district were offered the same exposure to the grant opportunity.

Mrs. Tate replied affirmatively.

9. Food Service Equipment Grant

The Pennsylvania Department of Education Division of Food and Nutrition is accepting applications for grant funding to provide schools with assistance in purchasing food service equipment. The focus of this competitive grant process is to enable awardees to:

- Improve the energy efficiency of the food service operation to drive down energy costs and to further the goal of energy independence
- Improve the safety of food served in the school meals program
- Expand participation in school meals programs
- Enhance the nutritional quality of school meals

The funds would be used to purchase new food service equipment at the three middle schools: East Hills Middle School – Hobart Dish Machine; Nitschmann Middle School – Southbend Gas Convection Oven; Northeast Middle School – Gas Convection Steamer

10. Sugra Memorial Fund Grant

The Bill Sugra Memorial Fund was established in memory of Bill Sugra, a compassionate, caring, and loving young man whose life was tragically taken by the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, at the World Trade Center in New York City. Family and friends desired to honor Bill’s memory by starting a charitable fund that would help make a positive impact on the lives of those in need of encouragement and support. Thomas Jefferson Elementary School plans to use the funds in the amount of \$5,000 to purchase technology aids that will be used in a third grade classroom setting in order to improve the reading comprehension skills of the students.

11. Apple Lease Restructuring

This agenda item failed by a 4-4 vote during the June 13, 2011 Regular Board Meeting. Second quarter pricing on the equipment has been maintained. Additional information was provided to the board comparing the costs of PC computer equipment with Apple computer equipment. Administration requested placement on the upcoming agenda for the execution of a restructured Apple Lease using Upgrade Option A so that a timely lease may be executed to replace student laptops at the middle school and high school level, as well as READ 180 computers.

Director Tenaglia inquired about the difference from last month. He noted that options effective for July 1 were removed. He asked about the difference between \$737 and \$755.

Director Leeson expressed concern about re-voting on an item and would it serve as a precedent.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Ms. Jolene Vitalos – Bethlehem Education Association President
Ms. Vitalos applauded Dr. Silva and the Assessment Committee for addressing the assessment system. She believed it would be a great improvement and asset to the educational process.
2. Liberty High School Band Booster Club Officer – Expressed gratitude to the board for reconsidering the student activity fee.

OPEN FORUM

Director Faccinnetto inquired about advertising on school buses as a method to raise the revenue to support student activities. Dr. Roy noted that it was not a permitted practice by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Director Tenaglia reflected on an April Board Meeting where administration recommended that students who qualified for the free or reduced lunch program would not have to pay the student activity fee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Donna L. Wenz
Confidential Secretary – Department of Educational Programs