

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting Notes

Monday, April 16, 2012, 10:30 AM

Attending: Board Members - Ray Tai, Barbara Garrity, Chiung-Yin Cheng Liu
Administrators – Mary Beth Currie, Susan Alston, Randy Westrol, Barbara Duncan

Items for Discussion/Reports

1. Social Studies Program & Readers Workshop – Mrs. Susan Alston
 - Mrs. Susan Alston (Supervisor of Humanities) updated the committee on Social Studies Programs at Satz and the Readers Workshop/LA Programs.
 - Social Studies Programs at Satz: there was some misconception about anticipated changes due to the Core Curriculum changes. Parents are assured that the same Satz enthusiastic and talented teachers will continue to teach Social Studies at Satz, and they are actually the ones will be writing the new curriculum this summer.
 - Concerns about not having enough writing at 6th grade: this is a longtime issue and is being addressed now. The curriculum will be revised this summer to further address it. Representative LA teachers from all elementary grades attended a workshop on Writers Workshop recently, which incorporates “School-wide” as part of the material to address writing and grammar. The workshop is well received.
 - The 2nd issue of the Literacy Newsletter is forthcoming. A copy of it will be attached in this note for everyone’s information if it is published in time. A copy of Literacy Update in response to the parents’ concerns over the past several months is also attached.
2. Athletic Handbook
 - Mr. Randy Westrol reported that the current Handbook dates back to 2003-04. He and the HS Principal have been collaborating on revising it, and useful information has been obtained from a recent workshop. The revised Handbook will cover the needs of Coaches, Students, and Parents.
 - The plan: review a draft with C&I in June, whole board discussion at the July meeting, and Board Approval in August to be in time for 2012-13 implementation.
3. Sports Camp
 - Randy shared the changes/improvements: now all checks are payable to HHS and specific camp is noted in the Memo; a coach list will be on the board agenda for approval in May (not all coaches will be actually hired if the enrollments don’t require all of them); need to have at least 12 students to run a camp; and all head/assistant/student coaches are being paid at the fixed \$/hr for their respective category across all sports.
4. Policy Discussion – Home Schooling and Sports
 - Randy shared NJSIAA has changed their regulations and now allows home schooled kids to participate in school sports. However, NJSIAA leaves the decision to each local district. So far, more districts choose not to allow it than allow it. The major issue is who will determine whether the home-schooled student is at grade level in terms of “credits” earned, and how. It’s hard to implement the new participation rules until that issue is resolved. Unfortunately, current State law and regulations don’t provide any effective or clear cut way for local districts to track the curriculum progress of home schooled students. Therefore, C&I recommends that we don’t go forward with it now, and would like to put it forth for a whole board discussion at the 4/25 board meeting during new business.
5. Athletic Participation – NJDOE Cardiac Pamphlet
 - Randy shared the pamphlet with the committee. It is currently posted in HHS web-site, and the committee suggests posting it on all 4 school websites as well as the Athletic site. It is also noted that the personal physician knows the kids’ health history best, and will continue to provide clearance to kids’ participation.

Items for Approval: Discarding of Textbooks: 25 outdated copies will be discarded, to be on 4/25 board agenda for approval.

Items for information: Next Curriculum Committee meeting is scheduled for May 15, 5:30pm, Board Office at VS.

Respectfully submitted,
Ray Tai

Literacy Update

In response to expressed concerns, we have already put in place additional instructional methods and strategies to insure that students are receiving optimal literacy instruction, along with increased and open parental communication.

- A literacy newsletter is published at the start of each new unit. The newsletter highlights the work to be done in reading, writing, word study, grammar, and assessment. (IH and VS)
- Literacy teachers are committed to insuring that more student work is sent home. This includes class work, tests, quizzes, writing drafts, finished pieces, as well as other work.
- Word study, vocabulary, and grammar instruction will continue to take place using either existing programs or newer ones.
- Reading homework time will be more flexibly assigned.
- At Indian Hill, a new reading unit has been incorporated to give students the experience of reading a whole class novel or text. Each grade and teacher chose a novel or group of short stories that the class read and studied together.
- Representative teachers from grades 1-6 attended a workshop regarding a series of writing resources. The teachers have chosen this series, which uses Balanced Literacy strategies and provides a framework, specific lessons, and skills instruction. They have also chosen the companion Grammar resources which provides direct instruction and practice integrated into writing instruction. These materials will be incorporated into revised curriculum and implemented in September.
- We will be looking at the results of end of year running records, NJ ASK, and Study Island benchmark assessments to chart progress in reading comprehension through the year.

We will continue to monitor and review our progress, making changes/revisions as warranted on an ongoing basis. We will be revising the literacy curriculum this summer to incorporate the additions we have already instituted.

Indian Hill Literacy News

April 2012
Volume 1, Issue 2

Tali Axelrod, Principal
Michael Ferrarese, Vice-Principal
Susan Alston, Supervisor of Humanities
Lori Hawksby, Reading Specialist

As you know, NJ ASK is quickly approaching. Consequently, a review of previously taught literacy skills is being embedded in the short story and novel study units. This is combined with a two week test prep unit where the emphasis is placed on how to succeed on standardized tests. Specific examples include multiple choice strategies, responding to open ended questions, distinguishing among key words to determine the genre of writing prompts and working within time constraints.

NJASK dates:

Grade 4- May 7-11, 2012

Grades 5/6- April 30-May 4, 2012

GRADE 4

GRADE 5

GRADE 6

READING: Short Story Unit & Test Prep

Students continue to read and analyze short stories. Teachers are reviewing test taking tips and strategies and administering practice timed tests in preparation for success on the NJ ASK.

WRITING:

-Open-ended, Speculative and Expository writing

WORD STUDY:

Vocabulary

-Lesson 8: spect, spec
-Lesson 9: terr

Spelling

-Continue with Words Their Way groups

GRAMMAR:

-Punctuation
-Possessive

READING: Novel Study Unit & Test Prep

Students continue to read and analyze the novel selected for their class. Teachers are reviewing test taking tips and strategies and administering practice timed tests in preparation for success on the NJ ASK.

WRITING:

- Open-ended, Speculative and Expository writing

WORD STUDY:

-Wordly Wise: Lessons 8-12
-Vocabulary from the novel by chapter

GRAMMAR:

-Prepositions
-Adverbs
-Punctuation/Capitalization
-Sentence structure

READING: Novel Study Unit & Test Prep

Students continue to read and analyze the *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Teachers are reviewing test taking tips and strategies and administering practice timed tests in preparation for success on the NJ ASK.

WRITING:

-- Open-ended, Speculative and Expository writing

WORD STUDY:

-Wordly Wise: Lessons 15-20
- Vocabulary from the novel by chapter

GRAMMAR:

- Pronouns
- Punctuation/Capitalization
-Compound & complex sentences
-Adjectives & Adverbs

Village School Literacy News

April 2012
Volume 1, Issue 2

Brian Schillaci, Principal
Dionne Ledford, Vice-Principal
Susan Alston, Supervisor of Humanities
Erin Fetter, Reading Specialist



We are Readers and Writers! Look at what we will be up to!

GRADE 1

READING: Poetry Unit

Classes will be exposed to a variety of poetry. We will be exploring:

- How poems are different from stories.
- Features of poems (rhyming words, rhythmic beat, line breaks, stanzas, different types of punctuation, fun ways to use words).
- How poems describe objects/things using the 5 senses.
- Role play with poems.

WRITING: Poetry

Students will experiment with writing different styles and types of poetry. Some classes will have poetry recitals for the students to recite their poems. Some teachers will be working on persuasive writing also.

WORD STUDY: Words Their Way (Sort 21, 16, and 27)

- Long u (ue, ew)
- Long e (ea, ee)
- Review long vowels and assessment

GRAMMAR: adjectives, synonyms, antonyms, possessives, plural/singular

GRADE 2

READING: Tale Unit (Folktales, Fairytales, Fables)

Classes will read a variety of tales to:

- Identify lessons/morals in the story.
- Make text to text connections.
- Infer character feelings and traits.
- Identify cause and effect.
- Identify point of view
- Step into the character's shoes and director's hat through role play.

WRITING: Poetry Unit

After the Poetry Reading Unit, students will explore writing their own poems on self-selected topics, experimenting with features such as repeating words, line breaks, white space, shapes, patterns, sensory images, feelings, onomatopoeia, etc.

WORD STUDY: Spelling patterns

- au/aw
- soft and hard c and g
- ur, ar
- el, le
- lge, nge, rge, dge

Vocabulary – Lessons 18

GRAMMAR: verbs, contractions, plurals, compound words, adjectives

GRADE 3

READING: Poetry Unit

Classes will be exposed to a variety of poetry. We will be exploring:

- The structure of a poem (line breaks, stanzas, white space, rhyming words, rhythmic beat).
- Figurative language (onomatopoeia, similes, and metaphors).
- Our reactions to poems (making connections and using our senses).

**We will be devoting time this month to test taking skills and strategies to prepare for NJASK*

WRITING: Poetry Unit

Students will explore writing their own poems on self-selected topics, experimenting with features such as repeating words, line breaks, white space, shapes, patterns, feelings, figurative language, etc.

**We will also be practicing Expository, Narrative, and Speculative writing to prepare for NJASK.*

WORD STUDY: Spelling patterns

- Prefixes/suffixes
- ou, ow

GRAMMAR: pronouns, adjectives, adv.