

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting Notes

Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 5:30 PM

Attending: Board Members - Ray Tai, Barbara Garrity, Mary Hartnett
Administrators - Mary Beth Currie, Barbara Duncan
Absent: Jerry Burke

Committee Structure & Description of C&I:

The existing committee structure and description of C&I was shared and briefly discussed. The committee agreed to review and discuss it again at the next meeting to see if any changes should be made.

Minimum of Class Size:

We continue to see load imbalance for the teachers in different subject areas – even when they teach same number of sections, the total number of students in one subject may be much larger than in another. It is proposed to change the minimum class size in HS from 10 to 12. This will alleviate the situation and also enables us to put the resources in where we have the most need. In general, the negative impact is estimated to be minimal; and courses that are critical as part of a sequence will continue to be offered. This kind of exceptions and for any courses that fall between 10 to 12 students will be reviewed individually by the department supervisors and Mrs. Currie for a final decision. The committee supports this new guideline, and Mrs. Currie will check if this requires any policy/regulation changes.

Free In-House Staff Development:

Kean University Diversity Council will provide two tuition free in-house graduate courses to 30 Holmdel teachers. The courses, entitled “Teaching the Holocaust” and “Teaching Prejudice Reduction,” will cover holocaust education and link into our effort in character education by covering topics ranging from bullying to genocide. The courses will be run after school; it provides staff development without consuming the staff development budget and teacher’s teaching time. The tuition donation by Kean University is \$92K; the only cost for the district is a bus trip to the Washington Museum in DC (~\$2K) and also the cost on sub teachers for one day (~\$3K).

World Language Program Updates:

While Mrs. Currie has been taking the lead to revamp the world language program in middle school, we need to continue to look at the whole K-12 program. Mr. Kevin Bals will take over part of the oversight responsibility and covers grades 7-12 with a focus on revising HS World Language Curriculum next year. While this is a work item targeted for next year, some planning and research work will need to start now. Mrs. Currie will also start reviewing the K-6 World Language program in parallel.

Items for Approval:

One curriculum guide, two textbooks, and several generous donations from HSMA & Kean University are approved and will be on the next board agenda.

Next Meeting: 5:30pm, 4/22/2009, W. R. Satz Main Office Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Ray Tai