

East Granby Board of Education
Curriculum Sub-Committee Minutes for
Thursday, February 21, 2019

Board Members Present:

Mr. Bob Ravens-Seeger
Mrs. Sharon Shepherd (via conference call)

Others Present:

Dr. Patricia Charles, Interim Superintendent
Marjorie Light, Director of Curriculum/PD

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The curriculum sub-committee meeting was called to order at 9:23 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. Curriculum Needs for the Future

Marjorie Light shared how there will be a curriculum focus on mathematics, which will last over at least a two-year period. The district will need resources for classrooms (textbooks, manipulatives, teacher texts, etc.) to accomplish this, as well as professional development training. One of the main components in a K-12 initiative is having a detailed scope and sequence using the standards across the grades. There is a need for summer curriculum work across the grades for this initiative.

Another large focus will be writing the curriculum using the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Marjorie shared how our district is ahead of many others in the state, thanks to the work of Susan Cavanagh, the Curriculum Consultant who works with grades K-5. Our middle school students are benefitting from the IQWST science programs. We are still in need of resources for the high school, as the textbook and supply companies have not caught up to the new demand generated by states adopting these standards. We need dedicated summer curriculum writing time for this endeavor. The science faculty has been working diligently in preparing students for the new NGSS assessments. New to this is how, in order to answer a question, students must manipulate a 3-D object on the computer screen, analyze it, and come to conclusions about it. Bob asked if Marjorie would give an NGSS overview to the board at their meeting and she agreed.

In addition to the above, Marjorie and Susan have been working with some of the teachers on updating the social studies curriculum. While some of the elective courses have been revised, the major classes need to become more current. During this discussion, both Bob and Sharon mentioned the lack of access for the 6th and 7th grade social studies students. There is only one class set of textbooks, which students are not allowed to take home. The texts are not available digitally without a cost to families. Digital access also creates an equity issue. As we move forward with social studies planning for the future, this type of situation should be kept in mind to help with student success in learning.

Also, while the frameworks have not changed for Health and PE, the teachers have updated the curriculum to include topics such as the dangers of vaping and addressing the opioid crisis. The revised curriculum will reflect changes in all grade levels.

Connecticut has recently adopted, for the first time, computer science standards. Therefore, we will need to reflect this change with the new computer science classes offered in EGPS.

III. Summer Curriculum Writing

As outlined above, the district has a need for curriculum writing opportunities to complete the required tasks. EGPS should have summer curriculum writing as a constant presence, which is standard across the state and the country. This way, we could create a three to five-year plan for curriculum revision and adoption.

IV. Integration of Software into Various Curricula

Marjorie and Steve Mosher, Technology Coordinator, have been working the last six months examining the software tied to curricula. There is a master spreadsheet to track start/end dates and costs. Steve has been collecting evaluation forms regarding usage and implementation. Marjorie and Susan Cavanagh are monitoring pilots of new software with small groups of teachers, as well as discussing usage with faculty and administrators. Marjorie and Steve have been developing an in-house website for professional development for teachers. Steve has been doing a great job negotiating contracts with software vendors, as well as dropping programs not utilized fully. We want our return on investment to be high with these types of tools.

V. Future Meeting Dates

The group set meeting dates for the next four months, all on Thursdays:

March 14, 2019

April 25, 2019

May 16, 2019

June 6, 2019

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

These minutes are issued pending Board of Education approval.