

**CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

August 25, 2008 at 7:37 PM
WARREN COUNTY CAREER CENTER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. David Wortman
Mr. Arthur Stewart
Mrs. Kim Angove

Mrs. Amy Stewart
Mrs. Rosemarie Green
Ms. Amanda Hetrick

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Thomas Knapp
Katherine Oudinot
Jeff Lockett
Donna Zariczny

Jack Martin
Kirsten Turfitt
Robert Terrill
Karen Pascale

Diane Martin
Darrell Jaskolka
Ruth Nelson
Debra Young

Stacey Ludwig
Brian Ferry - WTO
Lisa Niedzialek

1. Opening Activities

1.01 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 PM by Mr. David Wortman.

1.02 Public Comment

There were no public comments.

2. Old Business

There was no old business.

3. New Business

3.1 PSSA Samples

Discussion:

Mrs. Amy Stewart presented samples of the types of questions that are on the PSSA. The scoring guidelines and a link to more information were also provided. Mrs. Stewart explained how the test was administered. It was stressed that a lot of time is spent with students in preparation for the open-ended math questions.

The administration was asked if they felt that the PSSA was valuable. The response was that the curriculum is aligned with the state standards, and the PSSA is aligned with the state standards, so the assessment is a valuable tool to determine if our teaching methods are effective. One drawback that was mentioned is that the PSSA is a one-time event; if a student is emotionally stressed or not feeling well at that particular time, the assessment will not be an accurate measure of that student's abilities. The 4Sight assessment is closely aligned to the PSSA and is administered a number of times each year, so it can be used throughout the school year to determine student progress. Comments were made by committee members regarding the desire to see a system of assessments that would check for continual improvement rather than the proficient/not-proficient standard that is measured with the PSSA.

Dr. Robert Terrill stated that he feels that the quality and effectiveness of teaching strategies is the key to student improvement; all teachers should be able to teach reading, math, and writing. He also stated that students need to be made globally aware and become technologically proficient. He would like to see the Warren County School District's teaching methods and test scores compared to other school districts' methods and scores, and determine what is working best for others so that we may possibly instill those teaching methods in our district.

It was also mentioned that it would be desirable to see how our district compares to districts in other parts of the state and in the nation.

3.2 Physical Education

Discussion:

As was requested, Ms. Amanda Hetrick delivered a Power Point presentation that depicted the PE4Life program of physical education that has been adopted by the Titusville School District. A link to a site that would provide more information was included. Ms. Hetrick stated that there is grant money available for the implementation of this program if it is decided that the Warren County School District will use it. A copy of the presentation will be forwarded to all Board members. A committee member asked if this program would fit into the established Board Goals. Mrs. Amy Stewart feels that the PE4Life program could pull together what has already been discussed regarding the development of a revised Physical Education program.

Action:

The program will be considered, and further discussion will take place at a later date.

3.3 Language Arts Planned Instruction

Discussion:

Planned instructions for Journalism I, Journalism II, Journalism III, and Mythology were introduced. A planned instruction for SAT Verbal will also be introduced at the Board meeting of August 26, 2008. These are courses that were offered to students for the 2008-2009 school year, but due to the change of Curriculum Coordinators, did not yet have planned instructions in place.

Action:

The planned instructions will be forwarded to the Board for approval at the August 26, 2008 meeting. SAT Verbal will be set apart so that it can be discussed.

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of School Directors approves the planned instructions for Journalism I, Journalism II, Journalism III, and Mythology as presented.

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of School Directors approves the planned instruction for SAT Verbal as presented.

3.4 Additional Teachers for Reading Support

Discussion:

A request was made for five (5) additional teachers for reading support: two (2) at Warren Area Elementary Center, two (2) at Youngsville Elementary/Middle School, and one (1) to be used for Allegheny Valley Elementary School (AVES) and Sheffield Elementary School

(SES). The teacher for AVES and SES would be spending most of the time at AVES to support reading in the large fifth grade classroom. PSSA scores indicate that it is necessary to create smaller reading groups for two of the demographic subgroups in order to help raise their test scores, and additional staff is needed to avoid making the other reading groups too large. Funding for the additional teachers is available from a contingency fund and a fund balance.

Action:

This will be moved to the Board meeting of August 26, 2008 for approval.

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of School Directors funds the hiring of the additional 5.0 itinerant elementary teaching positions.

3.5 Student Assistance Program (SAP) Contract

Discussion:

Dr. Darrell Jaskolka presented a Letter of Agreement between Beacon Light Behavioral Health Systems and the Warren County School District for mental health, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug services. This is a rollover agreement which would be for the 2008-2009 school year.

Action:

This agreement will be sent to legal council for his input, and will be sent to the September 8, 2008 Board meeting for approval. The documents will be signed after approval.

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of School Directors approves the Letter of Agreement between Beacon Light Behavioral Health Systems and the Warren County School District for the 2008-2009 school year.

4. Informational Items

4.1 PSSA Results

Discussion:

Mrs. Amy Stewart presented spreadsheets that depicted PSSA summaries, noting that the red cells on the first spreadsheet were the major areas of concern. Students with IEP's and the Economically Disadvantaged students are the two subgroups that need to show improvement on the PSSA's. She explained that the asterisks in some of the cells meant that there were fewer than 40 students in that group, and the state does not consider groups of less than 40 students in the AYP determination. The question was raised as to whether we, as a district, could separate the Elementary/Middle and Middle/High schools into separate entities, thus allowing for more subgroups of less than 40, which would help to keep our AYP status higher.

Committee members expressed interest in seeing a comparison that included a category of all students who were not either IEP or Economically Disadvantaged, and comparisons to state results. Mrs. Stewart said that this could probably be done through PVAAS, and that she will try to do so.

The 4Sight assessment results can be utilized to determine the academic progress of students throughout the school year, making it possible to provide remedial instruction prior to the administration of the PSSA.

A number of states are pushing the federal government to track individual student progress, measuring continual improvement, rather than using the present NCLB method of using the proficiency level of a school as a whole. Mr. Jack Martin would like to find out who should be contacted to lobby for this idea.

5. Other

5.1 Tutoring

Discussion:

Questions were raised regarding the tutoring that will be offered during the school day. It was explained that the students will not be pulled from any of their core subjects or special classes, such as art or music. Certified teachers will be used as tutors. The program will be funded through the ABG and EAP grants. Tutoring outside of regular school hours will still be available.

6. Closing Activities

6.01 Next Meeting – Monday, September 29, 2008, 6:00 PM at the Warren County Career Center

6.02 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Niedzialek, Recording Secretary

Mr. David Wortman, Chairperson

Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology Committee