

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

FEBRUARY 27, 2012
WARREN COUNTY CAREER CENTER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Paul Yourchisin, Chairperson
Mr. Michael Zamborik
Mr. Jack Werner

Ms. Amanda Hetrick
Mrs. Diane Martin
Mrs. Amy Stewart

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mary Anne Paris
Thomas Knapp
John Grant
Arthur Stewart
Nancy McDanel
Cody McGraw
Kellie Lindstrom

Brandon Hufnagel
James Miller
Michael Kiehl
James Grosch
Brian Collopy
Matthew Jones
James Young

Claudia Solinko
Louise Tharp
Darlene Albaugh
Brian Ferry (WTO)
Josh Cotton (WTO)
Melissa McLean
Approx. 15 others

1. Opening Activities

1.1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM by Dr. Paul Yourchisin.

1.2 Public Comment

There were no public comments.

2. Old Business

There was no old business.

3. New Business

3.1 Music Department Planned Instructions

Discussion: Planned Instructions for Homeroom Orchestra and Homeroom Madrigal Choir were presented. There are already planned instructions for full period courses for both of these, but offering these courses during homeroom will make it possible for students to participate in these courses when they already have a full schedule. Some schools already offer these courses in homeroom, but there have been discrepancies in the awarding of credit. These new planned instructions would eliminate the discrepancies as they are specific regarding credit. The courses are similar to the full period courses but are focused more on performance, having

reduced expectations regarding sight reading, ear training, music theory, and the number of pieces required.

Action: The planned instructions will be moved to the Board for approval.

Motion: That the Board of School Directors approves the planned instructions for Homeroom Orchestra and Homeroom Madrigal Choir as presented.

3.2 Bids for WCCC Machine Technology Shop Equipment

Discussion: Bids were received for a CNC Lathe and a Vertical Machining Center Mini Mill to supplement the existing machines in the Machine Technology shop. The purchases will be funded by the Ellwood Grant, which was designated to support the Machine Technology program. Five packets were sent to receive bids, but only one bid was received as the others could not meet the required specifications. The new pieces of equipment are the same as are used by local businesses.

Action: This will be forwarded to the Board for approval to accept the bids.

Motion: That the Board of School Directors approves the bids for the equipment for the Machine Technology program.

3.3 High School Feedback Reporting Agreement

Discussion: The Pennsylvania Department of Education is collecting data from post-secondary schools that will be used to provide feedback to high schools to help guide curriculum development to ensure college and career readiness for graduates. A PowerPoint presentation was available to explain the process. A copy of the agreement was also presented. Principals, guidance counselors, and Central Office staff would be allowed access to the information that would be provided. There would be no additional work required of the District; the state would be using information that we are already required to provide.

Action: This agreement will be forwarded to the Board for approval.

Motion: That the Board of School Directors approves the agreement as presented.

3.4 Petitions on Change.org

Discussion: The administration was charged by the Board to review the website for change.org to see if it would be advantageous to participate in a posted petition or post a petition of their own. After reviewing the petitions that were already posted, the administration felt that a new petition would better express the school district's position and the position of rural schools in general. The proposed petition was presented.

Action: This will be forwarded to the Board for authorization to post the presented petition. If the posting is approved, the public will be notified how to access it.

Motion: That the Board of School Directors authorizes the administration to post the petition as presented on the www.change.org website.

4. Informational Items

4.1 Full Day Kindergarten Presentation

Information was presented which supported the value of full-day kindergarten. Included were a PowerPoint presentation which included data that depicted a substantial rise in reading skills after the implementation of full-day kindergarten, letters from teachers, a fact sheet, and an article from “WestEd”. Two teachers, each with many years of experience teaching kindergarten, addressed the committee, stating that PA Common Core Standards now include the kindergarten program, students are exiting the kindergarten program as readers, students have a higher level of independence, socialization is allowed to occur, cognitive learning has improved, and full-day kindergarten has been a successful program for five years.

A Board member has had a child who was in the half-day program and one that was in the full-day program. She said that the child who attended full-day kindergarten was totally different than her other child; he could read and do problem-solving when he finished kindergarten. She feels that we need to be able to cut dollars from the budget without cutting our programs.

The principal of South Street Early Learning Center stated that students are learning skills and functioning independently, that the gains are significant with full-day kindergarten. She also mentioned that the transition to first grade is nearly seamless as the children are already accustomed to attending school for the full day. She was concerned that if the District goes back to a half-day kindergarten, attendance may drop due to transportation and day care issues.

A Board member mentioned that he had read that half-day students would be “caught up” by third grade. In response, it was stated that research indicates that the number of students that cannot read at grade level in third grade is used as a dropout indicator, and that full-day kindergarten leads to a much improved number of students that are “on grade level” in third grade. It was also mentioned that students with special needs benefit greatly from the full-day program.

The parents in attendance were commended for their interest as it shows the Board that they value the program.

4.2 School Counseling Presentation

As requested by the Board, a presentation was made that described the roles, responsibilities, and the impact of the counselors in the Warren County School District and how they meet students’ needs in regards to academics, career development, and personal and social development. The presentation also indicated how many counselors are presently available in each attendance area.

Research has shown that school counseling has a larger effect than aspirin for preventing heart attacks and Zoloft for treating depression.

There are some highly needy special education populations within the District that rely on school counselors.

Two of the District’s counselors addressed the committee, stating that no day is the same as another, that preventive measures at the elementary level set the stage for the following years of education, that it takes up to one and a half months to get private counseling in this

geographical area and counselors fill that void in the meantime, and that counselors often do home visits to bring kids to school as there is only one truancy officer for the whole district.

A Board member feels that school counselors are an integral part of a team that creates success for our students. She added that the staffing for counselors is appropriate for our enrollment.

A student representative stated that counselors play a major role in shaping a student's academic future, giving the student information that can't be found other places, and that they also help students with their social problems.

A committee member asked the counselors if the job is getting done with the staff that we have. In response, all of the counselors stated that they are overworked and understaffed.

5. Other

There were no other items.

6. Closing Activities

6.1 Next Meeting – March 26, 2012 at the Warren County Career Center, following the Personnel / Athletics and Co-Curricular Committee meeting.

6.2 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ms. Lisa Niedzialek, Recording Secretary
Dr. Paul Yourchisin, Chairperson
Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology Committee