

November 24, 2014

School Board Education Committee

Centennial Administration Building Board Room

Minutes

PRESENT:

Committee Members: Mr. Mark B. Miller, Mrs. Jane Schrader Lynch, Mr. Charles Kleinschmidt

Staff: Dr. Jennifer Polinchock, Dr. Joyce Mundy, Mrs. Christine Matik, Mr. Michael Donnelly, Mrs. Cathy Perkins, Dr. Dennis Best, Ms. Julie Henrich, Mr. Travis Bloom, Mrs. Judith Hengst, Mr. Raymond Kase, Dr. Barbara Stevenson

Community: Mrs. Leigh Lieberman, Mr. Robert Shaffer

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. There was an introduction of all in attendance.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of October 20, 2014 by Mrs. Schrader Lynch, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt. The motion passed 3-0 to approve the minutes.

Course Proposals for the William Tennent High School 2015-16 Program of Studies

Dr. Dennis Best, principal of William Tennent High School, described the series of course additions and changes being requested for the 2015-2016 WTHS Program of Studies. The courses are: AP Macroeconomics, AP Microeconomics, AP Statistics, ESL Composition, Genetics of Cancer, Principles of Engineering, Project Based Assessment for Proficiency, and Centennial Virtual Academy.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch asked about the .5 increase in staff requested for the ESL Composition course. Dr. Best explained the need for additional course work for the ESL students to enable them to exit the ESL program. Mr. Miller asked if we keep any data on the ESL students with regard to how long they are in the district and how long they are in the ESL program. Dr. Best explained we track the ESL students through data that we have and the WIDA scores. The need for this ESL Composition course is an anticipated need for next school year. In response to a question from Mr. Miller about additional ESL students who would need the composition course by September, Dr. Best said the increase of .5 in staff would be adequate.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schrader Lynch, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to approve the requested additions to the Program of Studies for the 2015-16 school year. The motion passed, 3-0.

Mrs. Leigh Lieberman commented that the AP Statistics course is not as useful as some other courses in the math sequence and expressed some concern about AP Statistics competing with other needed math courses for the students.

Dr. Polinchock clarified that students would take AP Statistics along with another math course so this should not be a problem.

Mr. Robert Shaffer had questions about the engineering course. Dr. Best responded.

Teacher and Principal Effectiveness

Dr. Polinchock explained that as a result of Act 82 of 2012, educators' annual ratings include measures regarding student achievement data as well as job-specific performance data. She explained the breakdown of the rating percentages: 50% teacher observation/practice, 15% building level data/school performance profile, 15% teacher specific data and 20% elective data. The methods of collecting data include principal walkthroughs, the differentiated supervision model, and evidence of performance.

With regard to the implementation of professional development, Dr. Polinchock explained the steps that have been taken in 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. She noted that there has been a great deal of collaboration with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit to provide training and support.

Dr. Polinchock spoke about the principal effectiveness system and explained the data collection, implementation and professional development in this area, along with steps being taken with regard to recruitment and retention. Mr. Miller said recruitment and retention is important and he requested more information about this in the spring.

Special Education Audit Update

Mrs. Judith Hengst, Director of Special Education, did a presentation regarding the special education audit conducted in the spring of 2014. She explained the findings and identified areas of need for our district.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch said she disagreed with the finding that our supervisory staff level is low in comparison to neighboring districts of similar size. Mrs. Hengst noted that we were compared to other districts in Bucks and Montgomery County that were similar in size. Mr. Miller said he objects to the state telling us how many supervisors we need to have. Mrs. Hengst said she would get the statistics for him from the audit report. Improvement plans were required with regard to personnel training and parent training. Mrs. Hengst explained the steps being taken to address these concerns.

2014 William Tennent High School Student Assessment Report

Dr. Dennis Best presented the results from the 2014 administration of the Keystone Exams, ACT, SAT, and Advanced Placement Exams.

For the Biology Keystone test, overall proficiency rates were down. For PVAAS, there was significant evidence that students exceeded the standards for academic growth.

For the Literature Keystone test, proficiency rates were down slightly, but the students exceeded the standard for growth.

For the Algebra I Keystone test, there was a decline in the proficiency rates and growth is also needed in this area. Dr. Best said that realigning our math curriculum and eliminating B track classes this year should improve the test scores for this upcoming spring since all students are now exposed to the full math curriculum.

For the SAT scores, they were the highest they have been since 2010. Advanced Placement test results were the highest average scores in the past five years.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch commented that she does not think students take the Keystone test seriously. Dr. Best pointed out the current 10th grade students will have to take it seriously this spring since passing the Keystone exams is required in order to graduate.

Mr. Miller noted there are two documents to read at home. The next meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Schrader Lynch, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, 3-0 and the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dr. Jennifer A. Polinchock
Director of Teaching and Learning