

March 24, 2014

School Board Education Committee

Centennial Administration Building Board Room

**Minutes**

**PRESENT:**

**Committee Members:** Mrs. Betty Huf, Mr. Mark B. Miller, Mr. Charles Kleinschmidt

**Board Members:** Mr. Michael Hartline, Mr. Steven Adams

**Staff:** Dr. Joyce Mundy, Dr. Jennifer Polinchock, Mrs. Christine Matik, Mr. Dennis Best, Mrs. Paula Voshell, Mrs. Cathy Perkins, Mr. Michael Johnson, Mr. Michael Donnelly, Ms. Andrea DiDio, Dr. Susan Klyman, Mrs. Keely Mahan, Mrs. Mary Ellen Donnelly, Mr. Jim Ford, Mrs. Cindy Wiegand, Ms. Allison Kuchler, Mrs. Isie Franklin, Mrs. Cindy Henry, Mr. Anthony Quintangeli, Mrs. Gail Gismondi, Mr. Daniel Julius, Mr. Christopher Goppold, Ms. Lorraine Stieber, Mrs. Danielle Benner, Mrs. Susan Dilts, Mrs. Annemarie Catalano, Mrs. Kathleen Waddington

**Community:** Mr. Robert Shaffer, Ms. Margaret Yane, Mrs. Andrea Ballow, Mrs. Tracy Costello, Mrs. Peggy Anne Cammarota, Mrs. Heather Miller, Mrs. Emily Cohen

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. There was an introduction of all in attendance.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of February 24, 2014 by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt. The motion passed 3-0 to approve the minutes.

**Middle School Program Update**

Dr. Jennifer Polinchock, Director of Teaching and Learning, said she has been joined by members of the Middle School Task Force Committee to discuss the proposed enhancements to the middle school program. She noted the focus is on increasing rigor and exposure for our students to different types of learning pathways. They are looking at the whole child, K-12, with a focus on academics along with the social and emotional needs of the students.

The proposed enhancements to the middle school program are:

1. Keep the team structure in grade 6, and departmentalize in grades 7 and 8. Honors courses will be available and will begin with an honors English class in

- grade 8 in 2014-2015, with more honors courses being phased in the following year.
2. Expand exploratory courses to include student choice and STEM opportunities.
  3. Increase reading instruction to a full year in grades 6 and 7.
  4. Include scheduled performance music courses.

Mrs. Gail Gismondi, math curriculum resource team teacher at Log College Middle School, spoke about the math program at the middle schools. She said the focus is on getting all students ready for Algebra I.

Ms. Lorraine Stieber, gifted teacher at Log College Middle School, talked about the gifted program at the middle schools. She said they looked at the gifted students' learning goals and next year they will be working on embedded curriculum projects.

Mr. Anthony Quintangeli, technology education teacher at Klinger Middle School, explained the STEM I and STEM II options for students. He explained that these courses aim for higher level thinking skills and can prepare students for our future global economy.

Mrs. Kathleen Waddington, special education teacher at Log College, spoke about the needs of the special education students at the middle school level.

Mr. Christopher Goppold, music curriculum resource team teacher at Log College, explained the new configuration of music courses. They are recommending an A-Day/B-Day schedule in order to continue with music instruction throughout the year. Ensembles would still meet, but this might be after school.

Mrs. Annemarie Catalano, reading teacher at Log College, explained the need to continue the team structure for grade 6. They are requesting to continue to have two sixth grade teams at each building next year, with additional exploratory options being offered.

Mrs. Cindy Wiegand, social studies curriculum resource team teacher at Klinger, spoke about meeting students' needs. There is a request to create a curriculum and student liaison position to provide additional support.

Mrs. Jennifer Polinchock concluded the presentation with an explanation of the curriculum and student liaison position and the lead teacher position. She also briefly explained the proposed implementation plan.

Mrs. Tracy Costello, parent of two children at Log College, said she would prefer the team setting to be retained for all grades since she feels the team provides a lot of support for students. Dr. Mundy clarified that the proposed plan for middle school is not designed to cut teachers or staff. This plan has multiple components to meet the needs of students.

Mr. Miller said it is important to note that our middle school program has been in place since 1991 and we need to update it to keep up with other school districts who have already gone with departmentalization.

Mr. Hartline spoke about the need for the Finance Committee to look at the fiscal note.

Mrs. Peggy Ann Cammarota, parent, asked about the length of the class periods in the middle school. Dr. Polinchock said the periods would change from the present 50 minutes to 46 minutes.

Mrs. Heather Miller, parent, had a question about the language program. Dr. Polinchock explained there are no changes to the language program in this proposal.

Mrs. Emily Cohen, parent, said it seems like with this middle school program there will be a seamless transition to the high school for the students.

Dr. Mundy summarized and said that the primary focus is on strengthening our secondary program and supporting our students. We are spending more money on gaps in learning and remediation. The committee looked at ways to improve the middle school program and make it relatively staff neutral.

### **Lead Teacher Proposal**

Dr. Polinchock provided information about reinstatement of the lead teacher model. The proposal is to have lead teachers in the areas of English, Science, Math and Social Studies. The lead teachers would teach half of the day and the other half of the day would be to work on curriculum. A list of the duties assigned to the lead teachers was provided. The compensation is \$4,000.

Mr. Hartline requested the number of the current CRTs and would like a comparison with the new proposal.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to move the proposed middle school enhancements and lead teacher proposal to the full School Board at their April 8 meeting and he asked that these items be discussed by the committee as a whole. Questions for the Finance Committee can be answered at the April 8 School Board meeting. The motion passed, 3-0.

### **Curriculum/Student Liaison**

Mrs. Cindy Wiegand talked about the curriculum/student liaison position. This position would replace the CRTs at the middle school. There would be six positions per building. The stipend would be \$1,000 per year. This is budget neutral.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to move the curriculum/student liaison proposal to the full School Board for consideration at their April 8 meeting. The motion passed, 3-0.

### **Autistic Support Classroom Proposal**

Mrs. Isie Franklin, Interim Director of Special Education, introduced Ms. Allison Kuchler, special education supervisor, and Mrs. Danielle Benner, autistic support teacher at Klinger Middle School. Ms. Kuchler explained the savings to the District over three years and the various tiers of support based on student needs. Mrs. Benner talked about the autistic support program at Klinger.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to move the autistic support classroom proposal to the full Board for consideration at the April 8 School Board meeting. The motion passed, 3-0.

### **Centennial Satellite School and Cyber Academy Update**

Mr. Dennis Best, principal at William Tennent High School, gave an update on CSSCA. He is presenting the second report this year and it is based on the first semester at CSSCA. Our goal is to eliminate the need for the 13<sup>th</sup> year of school. 71% of the students at CSSCA are there and scheduled based on the need for credit recovery. 29% of the CSSCA students are there because they are at risk. 92% of grade 12 students at CSSCA are on track to graduate in June 2014. More than half of the CSSCA students reduced or maintained their frequency of unexcused absences during the first semester. Mr. Best noted the efforts of the staff at CSSCA, the teachers, guidance counselor and assistant principal. He said they have worked many hours with the students and their parents to provide them with support to be successful in school.

Mr. Miller noted that one of the objectives of CSSCA was to try and recover some of our students attending cyber schools. Mr. Best responded by saying that since the School Board approved the Bridges program, he has composed a letter that he wants to send out about a parent information night. At the evening event, the Centennial staff would be able to provide parents of students who attend other cyber schools with information about the benefits of attending CSSCA.

### **Summer Enrichment Camp**

Dr. Jennifer Polinchock provided an update on the proposed summer enrichment camp. She noted that Centennial Education Foundation has provided the funding for the camp and it is for students going into grades 4 through 9.

Mr. Miller said we should make it clear that the camp is only available to Centennial School District students.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Kleinschmidt, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, 3-0 and the meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dr. Jennifer A. Polinchock  
Director of Teaching and Learning