



Centennial School District Education Committee of the Board

Meeting of January 25, 2010

Minutes

Attendance:

Board

Michael Hartline***
Thomas Hezel
Betty Huf
Mark Miller
Cynthia Mueller**
Jane Schrader Lynch*

Administrators

Bucky Clark
Jennifer Foight-Cressman
Khalid Mumin

Staff

Community

Leigh Lieberman
Robert Montgomery
Barbara Patrick
Paul Rokuskie
Robert Shaffer

- * Chair
- ** Committee member
- *** Alternate member

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Schrader Lynch welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Hartline made a motion to approve the minutes. Mrs. Mueller requested that the minutes be amended to reflect the comments made by Ms. McKeVitt at the prior meeting and to include Mrs. Mueller's reservations regarding the lack of longitudinal student achievement data kept by the district regarding the developmental Kindergarten program. The motion was amended to approve the minutes with corrections and passed 3-0.

CURTAILMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Dr. Turnbaugh explained that there are four causes contained in the Pennsylvania School Code that permit school boards to suspend employees: substantial decrease in pupil enrollment in the school district; curtailment or alteration of the educational program on recommendation of the superintendent; consolidation of schools; and when new school districts are established as the result of reorganization of school districts and when such reorganization makes it unnecessary to retain the full staff of professional employees.

In compliance with the Pennsylvania School Code, administration made the following recommendations to the Education Committee. Due to declining enrollment, administration recommended the following reductions in staff of a reading teacher (1.0 position) and an intellectually mentally gifted (IMG) teacher (0.4 position) at the middle school level. Administration also recommended curtailment of the middle school Mathematics for Proficiency courses and the Developmental Kindergarten and Transitional First Grade programs.

Education Committee members discussed and acted upon each item separately. As presented at the December Education Committee Meeting, administration recommended, with Commonwealth endorsement, to curtail the Developmental Kindergarten and Transitional First Grade programs. All incoming Kindergarten students would be placed in the regular Kindergarten program with the intention that we would eventually implement a full-day program, should fiscal constraints permit. By curtailing the Developmental Kindergarten and Transitional First Grade programs, three positions might be reduced. Mrs. Schrader Lynch expressed concern as to whether the district would be able to fund full-day Kindergarten. Dr. Turnbaugh reminded directors that the new elementary schools were being built with the capacity to house full-day Kindergarten so as not to exclude that possibility in the future.

Mrs. Huf expressed concern that the academic demands and expectations placed on today's Kindergartners are very high and wondered how the district might meet the needs of children who come to us without the readiness skills of their chronological peers. Mr. Hartline noted that we are currently "holding back" approximately one quarter of each class in the developmental program. Dr. Foight-Cressman agreed and stressed that we should be designing our program to meet the needs of the children rather than expecting the children to conform to the program. Mrs. Schrader Lynch and Mrs. Mueller both expressed concern that some children need more "time on task" to be successful. Consensus emerged among directors that the district should offer a full-day enrichment Kindergarten for incoming Kindergarten students who would previously have been recommended for the developmental program. Those children would then advance to first grade the following year. Mr. Hezel noted that criteria would need to be established for admission to the enrichment Kindergarten. Mrs. Mueller made a motion to curtail the Developmental Kindergarten and Transitional First Grade programs and establish one enrichment full-Day Kindergarten in each region. Mr. Hartline seconded the motion, which passed 3-0. The motion was moved to the full Board for approval.

The Mathematics for Proficiency course at the middle school level is delivered to those students who have not yet demonstrated mathematics proficiency in lieu of the regular mathematics curriculum. It is recommended that these students have access to the grade appropriate curriculum and be included in the regular education program, with additional supports and services if needed. The change in scheduling would permit a reduction of two mathematics teachers at the middle school level. Over the course of the discussion, it became clear that the two middle schools were scheduling students and assigning faculty differently. Directors requested additional data to be presented and discussed at the February Education Committee meeting; the item was tabled.

Because reading interventions K-12 have proven to be successful, fewer students are requiring intensive interventions at the secondary level. Dr. Foight-Cressman explained that class sizes may be increased without compromising quality of programming by grouping students across teams and grade levels. Directors were pleased that the reading interventions that have been put in place K-12 are demonstrating results for our students. Mrs. Mueller made a motion to reduce the number of reading teachers by one faculty member for the 2010-2011 school year and was seconded by Mr. Hartline. The motion passed 3-0 and was moved forward for Board approval.

Administration recommended that the Intellectually Mentally Gifted (IMG) program at the middle school be altered to mirror the recent changes to the high school program, in which students are assigned a content area teacher to monitor his/her GIEP and subsequent services, rather than be delivered exclusively through a designated IMG teacher. This change would be a departure from providing gifted services exclusively through the reading/language arts program. Making this change would enable the district to reduce gifted staffing by a 0.4 position. Dr. Foight-Cressman noted that advisory period at the high school and the tutorial period at the middle schools might be used to provide gifted students time with gifted peers and a teacher sensitive to the needs of gifted students.

Mrs. Mueller requested that the middle school teachers be provided with the professional development needed to facilitate this change and that parents be informed in a timely manner. Mr. Hartline made the motion to reduce the number of gifted positions at the middle school level by 0.4 of a position and was seconded by Mrs. Mueller. The motion passed 3-0 and was moved forward for Board approval

SECONDARY MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM RENEWAL PREVIEW

Dr. Foight-Cressman provided a brief update regarding the status of the secondary mathematics curriculum renewal process. She has been working with secondary administrators and curriculum resource team (CRT) teachers to identify mathematics texts and supplies to be adopted in order to implement the new mathematics program in September 2010. The CRT has already reviewed seven programs and has narrowed the selection down to three possibilities. A larger committee of teachers and administrators will meet in February. Administration will make a recommendation to the Education Committee in March to be moved to the full Board for approval and adoption.

Mr. Hartline made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mrs. Mueller. The motion passed in a vote of 3-0. Mrs. Schrader Lynch thanked all in attendance, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

JFC/rc