



Centennial School District Education Committee of the Board

Meeting of November 23, 2009

Minutes

Attendance:

Board

Thomas Hezel**
Mark Miller
Michael Monaghan**
Cynthia Mueller
Jane Schrader Lynch*

Administrators

Jennifer Foight-Cressman
Sandy Homel

Staff

Albert Catarro
Heather Stek

Community

Leigh Lieberman
Robert Schaffer

* Chair

** Committee member

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

Mr. Monaghan moved to approve the minutes from October 26, 2009. Mr. Hezel seconded the motion. The minutes were approved in a vote of 3-0.

WILLIAM TENNENT HIGH SCHOOL "GETTING RESULTS" IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Despite making Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2008, William Tennent High School is now classified as being in Corrective Action II, Year 2. The William Tennent School Improvement Planning Team, comprised of central office and building-level administrators, teachers, and PaTTAN and Bucks County Intermediate Unit consultants, has worked collaboratively to create a plan that addresses the needs of students receiving special education services and who are classified as having a low-socioeconomic status. Dr. Devitt outlined the major points of the plan and indicated that the team was going to focus on prescriptive plans for individual students and encourage greater involvement on the part of their families through the use of the Academic Assistance Team. The Snack and Study Center on Wednesday afternoons has already proven to be extremely popular. National Honor Society students have been assisting with tutorial services.

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to move the 2009 "Getting Results" School Improvement Plan to the Board for approval and was seconded by Mr. Hezel. The motion passed 3-0.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS BETWEEN BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Partnership Agreements between Bucks County Community College and Centennial School District are due for renewal in January 2010. Drafts of the agreements have undergone solicitor review and were provided to the Education Committee in draft form for review by directors. The agreements have been in effect since 2003. Students pay a fee to take an assessment that enables them to “test out” of Introductory Accounting, Principles of Accounting I, and/or Essentials of Networking and earn credit at Bucks County Community College. Credit is recorded on a Bucks County Community College transcript and is accepted as transfer credit by many colleges and universities. Dr. Turnbaugh and the directors in attendance were in agreement that they would prefer the contract to run through June 30, 2013, rather than December 31, 2012, to follow the school rather than calendar year. Dr. Foight-Cressman stated that the document was a draft and that Bucks County Community College had expressed a willingness to work with the district in terms of amending the contract to meet our students’ needs.

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to move the agreement with the requested date extension to June 30, 2013 to the Board for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hezel and passed 3-0.

WILLIAM TENNENT HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS COURSE OFFERINGS FOR INCLUSION IN 2010-2011 PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Mrs. Homel, Dr. Devitt, and Mrs. Heather Stek, William Tennent High School Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator, presented three courses for consideration by the Education Committee for inclusion in the 2010-2011 William Tennent High School Program of Studies. The three proposed courses were: Independent Progress Mathematics, Problem Solving, and SAT Prep - Mathematics.

Independent Progress Mathematics would be an individualized program for students in ninth and tenth grades that utilizes software that enables students to move through the course content of Geometry and/or Algebra II at their own paces. Should a student master the content for both Geometry and Algebra II, those courses would be listed on his/her transcript. Student progress would be measured through cornerstone assessments, unit tests, and mastery of Pennsylvania eligible content. Several Board members expressed enthusiasm for the course but cautioned that they would prefer to view it as a one-year pilot to be revisited at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

The Problem Solving course has been designed to provide students, who do not intend to pursue a career that requires advanced mathematics, with a fourth year of mathematics study.

The SAT Prep - Mathematics course is intended to relieve the financial burden of families whose students require additional assistance in preparing for the SAT. Mrs. Mueller expressed concern as to where such a course might be accommodated in the current six-period day schedule and noted that the SAT preparation courses were dropped after the high school moved from the block schedule.

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to move the three mathematics courses to the Board for approval and was seconded by Mr. Hezel. The motion passed 3-0.

SPECIAL EXPERIENCE ROOM/PLANETARIUM TO DISTANCE LEARNING ROOM

Dr. Turnbaugh provided an overview of the discussion he had with Mr. James Vogel, Architectural Consultant, Division of School Facilities, Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management, at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Dr. Foight-Cressman and Mr. Preston of Burt, Hill were also present. Dr. Turnbaugh pointed out that there has been turnover within the

department at PDE and that it was important to establish a relationship with the new consultant as we move forward with our various renovation and building projects. Dr. Turnbaugh indicated that we were continuing to operate under the premise that five or more members of the Board would prefer to maintain the special experience room as a district facility attached to one of our buildings. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has recommended that the new special experience room be designed as a multiple use facility, including a distance learning laboratory, and that it be a part of the high school renovations, rather than attached to an elementary building. The facility would not be eligible for reimbursement from the Commonwealth if attached to an elementary school. Integrating the special experience room and distance learning room into the current design would require a substantial change and could not be accomplished through a change order. As the high school bids came in under the estimated cost, including the facility at William Tennent High School would not trigger Act 34. The facility would be staffed by a teacher certified at the secondary level who could facilitate other classes when the facility was not being used as the planetarium/special experience room. By placing the facility at the high school, the combined new elementary and high school campus would place half of our student population within walking distance of the special experience room.

The distance learning classroom, to be located at William Tennent High School, would be a large, technologically sophisticated space that would be flexibly designed to support a variety of purposes and functions and meet the needs of many different audiences throughout the day and across the year. The facility would contain a wireless laptop computer lab, interactive whiteboards, video conferencing equipment, and moveable chairs and tables to encourage flexible arrangements. Students would benefit from the distance learning classroom by being able to work collaboratively with their peers in another district or across the world, participate in video conferences and digital simulations, study with educators and professionals in many disciplines, and develop the 21st century skills that will enable them to be competitive in the global workforce. The distance learning classroom would provide a space in which the entire faculty could convene for professional learning, faculty meetings, networking, and technology training. Centennial School District, in concert with the other twelve districts in Bucks County, is exploring creating a countywide cyber-school in order to attract students and revenue back to Bucks County; this facility would be an ideal venue through which to participate in that endeavor. In keeping with the philosophy that the new academic building would provide a learning hub for the Warminster, Ivyland, and Southampton communities, the distance learning classroom would also be a resource for area businesses and community groups. Additionally, the distance learning classroom would also be outfitted to contain the current planetarium equipment so that students, faculty, and community members might continue to take advantage of curricular offerings, K-12, evening sky tours, laser shows, and other special events.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch indicated that it was the consensus of the Education Committee to keep the special experience room as a district facility and requested that administration work with the architect to prepare designs that would incorporate the space into the high school plan.

Mrs. Schrader Lynch requested that the minutes reflect the committee's appreciation for Mr. Monaghan's dedicated service and outstanding contributions to the Education Committee. She noted that he has been a tremendous asset to the committee and has kept our children at the heart of all of his work and decisions. Mrs. Schrader Lynch noted that, "We will truly miss you."

Mr. Hezel made the motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Monaghan. The motion passed 3-0. Mrs. Schrader Lynch thanked all in attendance for their attention and participation and adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

JFC/rc