

## CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 a.m.

February 18, 2016

District Office

Members Present: Stuart Long, Bob Runge

Others Present: Deb Sixel, Chad Ramminger, Louise Blankenheim, Sheila Lefeber, Dawn Mueller, Jenna Versch

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Elementary Math Member Long shared the goal of the curriculum committee is to review and understand the curriculum district-wide, know where the gaps are and what is being done to address those gaps. Members also want to monitor the progress of the strategic plan as it relates to personalized learning.

Member Runge is seeking information to better understand what the student expectations are at each grade level (5K-4) for math. Mrs. Versch reviewed the teacher workbook sharing the homework and memory pages and explained that family letters are also sent home. Member Long asked if the letters were signed and returned as feedback they receive as board members is that there is a gap with communication to parents. Dr. Sixel suggested possibly hosting parent meetings and/or a math night.

A concern was raised in regards to calculators being used at the elementary level. Currently, calculators are not being used, but with the previously used program, Everyday Math, calculators were utilized. The district has transitioned back to a more traditional math program, where students are learning multiple ways.

Member Runge inquired about how personalized learning is being addressed within the math program. Mrs. Versch explained that teachers are splitting students into groups and using supplemental resources to either enhance and/or support each student. Teachers identify the essential standards that each student knows and then differentiates their teaching based upon that information. Mr. Ramminger shared that this is a hybrid program containing both constructive and traditional math. It's about critical thinking and providing multiple ways to answer a problem. He has not received a lot of parent concerns about math and feels that it's more about public perception. Member Long expressed that board members, parents and community realize that

students needing additional support do not represent a majority of the student population.

Mrs. Versch explained how Student Support Team's (SST) works. SST provides teachers time to meet and talk about students who are not meeting certain areas and then adding the necessary supplements to meet their needs. She mentioned that language questions are difficult for some students. Mr. Ramminger noted that state assessments are computerized and there is a need for balance. Member Runge referenced the importance of reading and comprehension in education.

Mr. Ramminger shared that students receive a lot of math time (60-90 minutes) and that the parents' role is to support and reinforce what is being done at school. Interventions are also being done at a much earlier age. Do students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade who understand the math have the option to do middle school math work? Yes, this is being done through the G/T coordinator with the use of online and other supplemental resources. Due to the work of the G/T Coordinator the transition for these students is very cohesive.

Member Long broadly summarized the math focus for each level:

**Grades K-1** = counting, number sense/patterns

**Grade 1** = adding/subtracting 1-digit numbers, problem-solving, geometry, measurement, data

**Grade 2** = further computation, 2-digit adding/subtracting

**Grade 3** = multiplication/division, data, measurement

**Grade 4** = bring it all together, multi-step problems, discuss strategies, money

Teachers are currently working on developing the essential standards, which will be shared with the full board upon completion. Member Runge congratulated them on the work they are currently doing. Member Long feels that it is good for students to experience failure and to be honest when something is not completed.

## NGSS

Dr. Sixel explained the New Generation Science Standards and why the change. These standards have not been revised in 15 years and there has been a lot of advancement in the science and technology areas. We need to prepare students for college by providing them with a foundation to meet the standards. Dr. Sixel shared a video further explaining the change. Member Long expressed the importance of communicating these changes to the public as education is ever changing.

Dr. Sixel shared that professional development training was provided in 2014 for science teachers showing them how to understand and read the standards. They also did some professional reading, were provided time to work on curriculum, and attended formative assessment workshops. In summer 2015 there was additional training with a science consultant explaining vertical progressions, instructional sequence and unit. Dr. Sixel noted that the students would be tested this year on the old standards. There is a need to have the professional development on the front end for all staff and then we will see results on the backside.

Dr. Sixel shared what building level science teachers are working on:

Elementary is working on non-fiction texts into units; revising FOSS kits and correlating with NGSS; incorporating more science investigations and inquiries; and creating and implementing monthly STEM units.

Middle School is reviewing the standards and dividing them among grade levels; continuing the spiraling of curriculum; creating a component for an engineering unit; creating formative assessments; turning standards into "I CAN" statements; engineering component into PLC and SLO; utilizing mathematical, 2D, 3D, graphical, etc. modeling to show process and concepts into science.

High School is doing more inquiry labs; new unit not currently being addressed (fission/fusion); assessing specific skills; specific focus on planning and conducting investigations, data interpretation; using performance expectations rubric.

There is a desire to see more girls getting involved in STEM. Currently the 8<sup>th</sup> graders tour Kohler Company. Students are also exposed to STEM by participation in the middle school Pi Girls Club and SWAT Boys club. Member Runge asked if the district was able to financially support this. Dr. Sixel explained that what is needed is more professional development training for teachers in STEM and more specifically in coding. There is work being done to add coding to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade computer curriculum.

Member Runge inquired about software/hardware updates needed such as: 2D/3D modeling. The high school is exploring a 3D printer. Middle school students are doing their own research. Dr. Sixel is looking to create a "Maker's Space" which provides students an area with a wide variety of activities such as: knitting, robotics, 3D, etc). Again, how do we communicate this to the community. Member Long feels we need to focus on the story about how kids

are doing everything (research, costs, etc).....we need to take the community on a journey.

MS Algebra

Dr. Sixel informed committee members that in 2009 the middle school began offering algebra to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students but not for credit. Mr. Baumgartner and Dr. Sixel would like to see students be eligible to receive credit for algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students would receive credit, but it would not be included in their final GPA. Dr. Sixel indicated that a process is in place to ensure that the right students are taking the class. We currently do not have a policy limiting this, but it would be a change in practice for the Kiel eSchool.

The curriculum committee members supported 8<sup>th</sup> grade students receiving credit for algebra, thus providing them with the option to take higher level math courses in high school.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on March 10<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-10:00 a.m. and the agenda will include closing the gaps. This meeting will be held in the Middle School conference room. The April agenda topic will be on grading.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.