



## CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

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### Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes from February 27, 2017 New Britain Educational Administration Center

#### Attendance

The meeting began at 6:04 PM.

#### Board Members Present

Ms. Grisselle Aponte, Ms. Mallory Deprey, Mr. Merrill Gay, Mr. Nick Mercier

#### CSDNB Committee Staff Present

Ms. Amy Anderson, Ms. Lara Bohlke, Mr. Matthew Cannata, Ms. Nancy Sarra

#### Discussion/Action Items

#### Review minutes from meeting on January 23, 2017

There were no recommended changes to the minutes from January 23.

#### NBHS Presentation – Program of Studies

##### Presented by Joseph Pinchera

Mr. Joseph Pinchera, Principal of New Britain High School and Ms. Sondra Sanford, Director of Community Partnerships at NBHS, made a presentation in regards to the proposed Mindset Academy, which would debut in fall 2017. The purpose of the Mindset Academy would be to better serve the academic and behavioral needs of NBHS students by offering an enriched environment in the Mindset Academy. It will serve three groups of students:

- Incoming ninth grade students who will most benefit from early intervention and close monitoring
- Upperclassmen looking to earn credits needed to graduate
- Non-traditional Advanced Placement students looking to experience college-level courses

Mr. Pinchera discussed several rationale topics, with a heavy focus on rising discipline numbers in the Freshman Academy. NBHS Administration feels that by going to a Mindset Academy and going back to the traditional 9-12 model, discipline issues will decrease.

The Mindset Academy would create additional opportunities for incoming freshmen to thrive academically to create better opportunities for current juniors who have not passed American Experience and World Literature and/or Algebra 1 and Geometry to earn credit. This academy would also make Advanced Placement classes more accessible to non-traditional AP students.

Students who are struggling in classes and looking to earn credit will be able to take those classes (Algebra I and Geometry and/or American Experience and World Literature) in half-year double-block classes.

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## **Sexual Education Curriculum in Grades 6-8**

**Submitted by Lisa Kawecki**

Ms. Lisa Kawecki, Curriculum Information Teacher, made a presentation in regards to Sex Education. The Department of Academics is recommending a change in CSDNB Sexual Education Curriculum. The recommendation is that it switches from abstinence-only to abstinence-based curriculum. The curriculum would be split between grade levels and each grade would focus on different areas. The recommended roll-out plan would be a letter to parents, changes/additional statement in parent/student handbook, and a policy change to distribute condoms in the School Based Health Centers in middle school. The rollout would be for the 2017-2018 school year.

## **Memorandum of Understanding: High Impact Instructional Practices: Production and Push | DiLoreto: Building-Wide**

**Submitted by Tricia Putnam**

The Consolidated School District of New Britain employs a substantial number of teachers who implement their daily instructional practices with varying degrees of consistency and effectiveness. As the focus of our District Strategic Plan to increase student engagement, language-focused instruction to support the skills necessary for students to read with comprehension and write academically at or above grade level will be rolled out to four elementary buildings who have are in the second year of Well-Managed Classroom professional development whose student population represents high percentages of EL students: DiLoreto.

The targeted audience will be the building administration and the K-8 teachers. Over the last four years, the district has made substantial strides in working to implement high level English Language Development (ELD) classes and has increased its reclassification rates. While the growth among ELD classrooms is laudable, the district seeks to prioritize improving achievement for all students. In order to accomplish this, the district has identified the need to extend language support into our reading and writing classes with High Impact Instructional Principles. This contract proposal describes in more detail the proposed 2016-2017 Principled Instructional Initiative, High Impact Instructional Principles: Production and Push, including the scope of consulting services to be provided related to its design, implementation and evaluation.

By definition, Production is the high leverage instructional practice to increase student discourse with a target of students talking 80% of the time. Push, another high leverage instructional practice, builds the teacher's capacity to increase the level of questioning as it relates to the objective.

For addition of grade 5 and the services described, the total consulting fee is \$85,375.00, which includes all consultant preparation, development, travel and overhead. Billing is monthly: after the completion of scheduled services for the contract period and upon the final day of the training progression. All services are guaranteed to meet the quality standards of the district. The funding source will be the Commissioner's Grant.

The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at the next regular meeting scheduled for March 6, 2017.

## **Memorandum of Understanding: Adding Grade 5 to the HIIP Training at Northend, Lincoln, Smalley and Smith**

**Submitted by Tricia Putnam**

The Consolidated School District of New Britain employs a substantial number of teachers who implement their daily instructional practices with varying degrees of consistency and effectiveness. As the focus of our District Strategic Plan to increase student engagement, language-focused instruction to support the skills necessary for students to read with comprehension and write academically at or above grade level will be rolled out to four elementary buildings who have are in the second year of Well-Managed Classroom professional development whose student population represents high percentages of EL students: Lincoln, Northend, Smalley and Smith.

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The targeted audience will be the building administration and our 3rd, 4th grade teachers and the addition of the 5th grade teachers. Over the last four years, the district has made substantial strides in working to implement high level English Language Development (ELD) classes and has increased its reclassification rates. While the growth among ELD classrooms is laudable, the district seeks to prioritize improving achievement for all students. In order to accomplish this, the district has identified the need to extend language support into our reading and writing classes with High Impact Instructional Principles.

This contract proposal describes in more detail the proposed 2016-2017 Principled Instructional Initiative, High Impact Instructional Principles: Production and Push, including the scope of consulting services to be provided related to its design, implementation and evaluation. By definition, Production is the high leverage instructional practice to increase student discourse with a target of students talking 80% of the time. Push, another high leverage instructional practice, builds the teacher's capacity to increase the level of questioning as it relates to the objective.

For addition of grade 5 and the services described, the total consulting fee is \$26,874.20, which includes all consultant preparation, development, travel and overhead. Billing is monthly: after the completion of scheduled services for the contract period and upon the final day of the training progression. All services are guaranteed to meet the quality standards of the district. The funding source is Alliance Carryover and Title II Carryover.

The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at the next regular meeting scheduled for March 6, 2017.

**Pre-School Re-Imagined**  
**Submitted by Kelly Grant**

Ms. Grant spoke about how the Department of Pupil Services is re-imagining preschool in New Britain. The long-term goal is to prepare all students to be future-ready through an engaging, personalized and comprehensive education. The core strategies will be to develop a well-defined, PreK-12 Curriculum that addresses the whole child and professional development to support curriculum implementation. Another one will be to also re-define the community and district preschool experience. The presentation will be given to the full board at the next regular meeting on March 20, 2017.

**Approval of 6, 7, 8 Reading Curriculum**  
**Submitted by Elizabeth Crooks**

Mrs. Elizabeth Crooks presented reading curriculum for grades 6, 7 and 8. In the past, many novels have been purchased at the middle schools; however, the process in which they were chosen was often absent. Even when processes were in place, some novels currently owned may have been acquired many years ago. This has resulted in the same texts being taught in a variety of grade levels from school to school, causing frequent overlaps for a student population where many are not avid readers, thus limiting the scope of their exposure to literature.

Being literate and measuring student achievement in literacy is critical to the success of CSDNB students. The district is measuring student achievement in literacy, not only through NWEA scores, but also through CFA's (common formative assessments). CFA's provide data through calibrated scores, but more importantly, through examining student work in a systematic process in order to identify overarching strengths and needs to inform instruction and curriculum revision. CFA's give more specific data than we can obtain from NWEA scores. In order to be most effective in driving curriculum and instructional revisions, the CFA's should be grounded in what students are doing on a daily basis in class, rather than stopping to do a standalone assessment that is not an integrated part of the curriculum. This requires better alignment in what is being taught district-wide across grade levels.

Literacy experts recommend that students must read often in order to become better readers. We must have enough novels that books can go home to encourage students to read often. When the novels remain only in the class environment (due to the limited number), this harbors a threefold detriment for students. First, students have limited ability to develop a love for reading, second, if all reading is done in class, little time is left for instruction, discussion, and deeper comprehension, and third, students are missing opportunities to develop habits that will enable them to be successful beyond high school. Developing the whole child, particularly habits of mind, is directly connected to the strategic plan.

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Core texts were chosen with specific attention to appropriate challenge for each grade level. They were chosen with attention to possible controversial issues, while still being cognizant of student interest. Each core is highly engaging and appropriate for the grade level chosen. The texts are well known, commonly taught texts that are core in many districts across Connecticut.

The Curriculum Committee will continue to discuss the reading curriculum in the coming months.

## **Closing and Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 8:20 PM.