



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

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

Attendance

The meeting began at 6:07 PM.

Board Members Present

Ms. Grisselle Aponte, Ms. Mallory Deprey

CSDNB Committee Staff Present

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

Discussion/Action Items

Review minutes from meeting on February 27, 2017

There were no recommended changes to the minutes from February 27, 2017.

Approve Autism Portal Affiliation Agreement with the Hospital for Special Care

Presented by Maria Pietrantuono

Ms. Maria Pietrantuono from the Hospital for Special Care spoke about the Autism Portal Affiliation Agreement with the Hospital for Special Care. She answered all questions from the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at their next regular meeting.

Districtwide – Grades 6-8 Classroom Libraries

Submitted by Liz Crooks

While there is a need to standardize instruction throughout CSDNB, there is also a need to increase student choice. Most English Language Arts classrooms in grades 6-8 do not have a classroom library allowing students the opportunity to experience books of their own choice for independent reading in and outside of school. We know that if we do not provide students with opportunities to read, they will not become lifelong readers, which is critical to their success.

Scholastic recommends that classroom libraries have a minimum of 600 books with at least thirty percent non-fiction. We are beginning with 300 and redistribution of novels the district already owns. They also recommend a span of two to three years below and above grade level for classroom libraries to allow access for struggling readers and challenge for more fluent readers.

Penny Kittle, states, that, ‘Students need time to read in class in order to create a habit of reading and set the stage for homework reading, and teachers need reading time to confer individually with students about their choices, stamina, engagement, and goals.’ This is a model where teachers are actively engaged in students’ independent reading. We have plans to provide professional development around this model. She also states, “Students need to make choices in reading that reflect their interests because interest drives engagement. Teachers should encourage wide reading in all genres as well as students who pursue an author or genre study. Allow students to reread favorite books and to abandon a book that no longer interests them.”

Penny has outstanding success in matching students to a book they will love and helping every student develop a love of reading.

New Britain Board of Education

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She consults internationally and contracts with Heinemann, as well as teaching high school English. Student engagement in reading has led to increased scores in all areas.

This directly relates to district goals to improve literacy. Getting students engaged and loving reading is the first step to increasing reading comprehension in not only English and ELA classes, but across disciplines.

Choice directly relates to educating the whole child and the goal of increasing student engagement. When students have guidance from a knowledgeable teacher and the opportunity to choose what they will read, that directly correlates to differentiated instruction. With proper oversight it will enable students to make educated choices at their independent reading level.

Once teachers have modeled skills with core texts to facilitate student understanding of close reading, annotation, and independent exploration of major ideas, that will also allow choice that will increase engagement as students begin to read text that interests them. The engagement and choice will lead to opportunities for trained teachers to continually move students away from their comfort levels to more complex texts. Teaching is truly an art of knowing one's students and moving each individual to the next level.

The total cost is \$44,000.00 and the funding source is Alliance, DW Instructional Supplies, 234196910001-56110. The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at their next regular meeting.

Districtwide – Grades 6-8 Reading

Submitted by Liz Crooks

Ms. Liz Crooks, Principal of HALS Academy, presented reading curriculum to the board. The process is ongoing and the curriculum will be reviewed again prior to the end of the school year. Ms. Crooks answered all questions from the Curriculum Committee.

Out-of-State Field Trip Approval for NBHS Stem Team

Submitted by Eric Nelson

15 students from New Britain High School in grades 9-12 will be taking an out-of-state field trip to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. Our STEM team is one of the few teams that qualified for the national STEM Finals! Our goal has been consistent from day 1 - to win proving New Britain can have one of the best stem programs in the country.

The competition is the culmination of a variety of STEM project-based-learning tasks. There are 10 sub-competitions listed below; each graded and scored on a rubric. Each event is graded 50% of the points on the product and 50% on the process. All students will be will all be competing in different roles. The overall winner is decided via the sum of the subcategories scores.

- 3 Short course races
- Aerodynamic Design (with written report)
- Drag Racing (with written report)
- Autonomous RobotCar (with written report)
- Student Created Data Driven Design project (with report and presentation)
- Energy efficient car (with report and presentation)
- Enterprise, marketing presentations and management (with several written reports and 3 presentations)
- Graphic Design
- Community Outreach (with report and presentation)
- Web-Based National Points Race

The total cost of the trip per pupil is \$380, with each pupil paying \$340. The \$510 registration fee is being defrayed by the United States Army. The full cost of the trip will be approximately \$5,100 for one bus and hotel rooms. The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at their next regular meeting.

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Out-of-State Field Trip Approval for NBHS JROTC

Submitted by LTC Mark Durfee

New Britain High School JROTC students will be participating in the JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge in Massachusetts. The camp is always professionally planned, organized and executed by over 50 JROTC instructors with decades of experience. Almost three hundred high school cadets from Connecticut/Rhode Island and Massachusetts participate. Every aspect of cadet life at camp is attended to. NBHS JROTC has participated in this event since beginning 20 years ago. I have brought New Britain cadets every year since 2002. Students will leave NBHS on June 19 at 8 AM and arrive at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts at 10:30 AM. Students will be lodged in Army Barracks and will return home at approximately 12:00 Noon on June 23.

The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at their next regular meeting.

Approve Memorandum of Understanding between CSDNB and Klingberg Family Services

Submitted by Ryan Morgan

Klingberg Family Center was recently awarded a state "Partnership for Success" state grant for drug and alcohol prevention from The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Klingberg is representing the interests of The Coalition for New Britain's Youth and was identified based on grant eligibility requirements. CSDNB has been a primary partner throughout the application and early implementation process. The grant was written to allow Klingberg to contract with CSDNB as a consultant on year one of the project, for \$5,000, in an effort to support the salary of Safe Schools/Healthy Students Project Manager Ryan Morgan. Morgan will advise the grant coordinator, recently hired by Klingberg and Coalition leadership to follow prevention best practices and connect the work back to the mission and vision of CSDNB.

This partnership directly relates to several core values identified in the District Strategic Improvement Plan. The two primary pillars this aligns to are Culture and Climate and Partnership. As we continue to strive to cultivate and sustain engaging family-school-community partnerships for student staff and success, it is imperative we maintain open communication with The Coalition for New Britain's Youth to align missions. The Partnership for Success drug and alcohol prevention grant should directly tie into the work being done by The Department of Academics to review and edit the health curriculum. CSDNB should consult on this project to ensure our work is directly supported and reinforced by the community because the outcomes of the work will improve our Culture and Climate. Students who are not using drugs and alcohol are more likely to attend school and be an engaged member of the community and are less likely to require disciplinary action.

Klingberg Family Services will pay \$5,000 for a consultant fee to the Consolidated School District of New Britain. The Curriculum Committee recommended this request be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at their next regular meeting.

NBHS Satellite Careers Academy – Chronic Absenteeism

Presented by Michael Foran

Ms. Deprey noted that there was confusion for her because the school has the highest chronic absenteeism rate in the district but the graduation rate has also increased. Mr. Michael Foran, Principal of the NBHS Satellite Careers Academy, spoke about chronic absenteeism in the school and how the laws dictate how the numbers are reported. Since they were chronically absent at New Britain High School, they are still considered chronically absent at SCA. Mr. Foran answered all other questions from the Curriculum Committee.

Districtwide – Grades K-5 Classroom Libraries

Submitted by Amy Anderson

This agenda item was tabled to the Curriculum Committee meeting in April.

Closing and Adjournment

The meeting ended at 7:24 PM.

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