



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

New Britain Board of Education Curriculum Committee Meeting

February 16, 2021 - 7:00 PM | New Britain High School

Call to Order and Opening

Dr. Violet Jiménez Sims, Curriculum Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Board Members Present

Mr. Anthony Kane*#, Mr. Joseph Listro*, Mr. Nicholas Mercier*, Ms. Diana Reyes*, Dr. Violet Jiménez Sims*

*Committee members
#Participated remotely

CSDNB Staff Present

Ms. Amy Anderson, Ms. Lara Bohlke, Mr. Paul Kerrigan, Mr. Eric Nelson, Ms. Kristin Salerni, Ms. Sondra Sanford, Ms. Nancy Sarra, Ms. Margaret Shea

New Business

Review and Approve Minutes from the Curriculum Committee Meeting on January 19, 2021

There were no recommended changes to the minutes from the Curriculum Committee Meeting on January 19, 2021.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve the minutes from the Curriculum Committee Meeting on January 19, 2021 as submitted, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Accept Monthly EdAdvance Report

Ms. Lara Bohlke, District Coordinator of Curriculum for Grades 6-12, and Ms. Amy Anderson, District Coordinator of PK-5 Curriculum, shared a link to the Monthly EdAdvance Report with committee members. Committee members reviewed actions, accomplishments, and next steps for the month of January.

K-5 Illustrative Mathematics Presentation

Ms. Amy Anderson introduced committee members to the new Mathematics resource that the Academics Department is recommending at the elementary level for the 2021-2022 school year. The foundational resource we have been using for the past 11 years, Math Expressions, was originally published in 2009 and has not been updated since 2013. Ms. Anderson explained that LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics will allow us to prepare to receive our renewed curriculum while aligning with both our middle school mathematics curriculum and the profile of the graduate.

Mr. Jared Watson and Ms. Danielle McKean attended the meeting as representatives of LearnZillion/Edgenuity. Mr. Watson presented Curriculum Committee members with a high-level overview of the LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics platform and problem-based curriculum.

Ms. Bohlke explained the savings that would be incurred with the purchase of a 6-year digital subscription to LearnZillion compared to the costs for the 3-year and 1-year subscriptions. Ms. Anderson will share access to the recording of the LearnZillion

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Illustrative Mathematics Presentation previously presented to teachers and administrators with Board members.

Discuss Academic Purchase Orders

Ms. Bohlke spoke briefly about the following purchase orders for the Academics Department:

LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics (New)

In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education so our students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future. Our curriculum renewal timeline at the elementary school level turns to Mathematics for the 2021-2022 school year. The foundational resource we have been using for the past 11 years, Math Expressions was originally published in 2009 and has not been updated since 2013. To prepare to receive our renewed curriculum and to align our elementary mathematics to the middle school curriculum, we will be adopting a new resource, LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics. Illustrative Mathematics is a mathematics curriculum that is highly usable, well-designed and supported. The instructional materials for LearnZillion Illustrative Mathematics meet the expectation for alignment to the CCSS and connect the Standards for Mathematical Content and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. Where in the past we have purchased static textbooks that we have utilized for 6 to 12 or more years, we are in a time in education in which textbooks themselves are virtual resources that can be updated and revised in real time. This cost expenditure should be equated to the cost of new textbooks, albeit online and digital, that will last multiple years.

Our District Strategic Plan demands that we prepare students to positively contribute to a profoundly different future and promote an engaging culture for learning for all staff and students. This future will require students to problem-solve, to devise clever, creative solutions to unique problems, to collaborate around these solutions and to reflect and improve their solutions with feedback. This curriculum includes all of these elements coupled with planned embedded professional development. In selecting a resource to support our renewed curriculum, we were mindful of several variables. As we have learned in recent months, our students and teachers have become more proficient in accessing digital materials through their Google Classrooms. It was essential that a replacement resource include a robust, easily navigable digital platform that communicates fluently with Google Classroom and Clever. In addition, ensuring that extensive supports and scaffolds were included for our English learners and our students who require special education services was non-negotiable. LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics will be coming out of a Beta year in 2020-2021 and was designed as an extension 6-8 Illustrative Mathematics Curriculum which was given top ratings by edreports. It was piloted in many districts across the country including Norwalk, Bristol, and Los Angeles Unified School District in California.

LearnZillion K-5 Illustrative Mathematics is a comprehensive, flexible curriculum with easy-to-use lesson cards and built-in differentiation. Through inclusive instructional routines, students develop the skills to successfully learn math for life.

The curriculum:

- *Was designed by noted mathematician and standards author, William McCallum
- *Contains embedded support for culturally responsive pedagogy
- *Includes digital interactives powered by Geogebra and Desmos *Builds confidence and growth mindset through productive struggle
- *Builds conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and application
- *Is Classroom- and distance learning-ready, with comprehensive teaching support
- *Includes tools for active instruction, effective differentiation, and assessments that empower students
- *Includes instructional routines that promote collaborative discourse
- *Is a 2020 Tech & Learning Awards of Excellence winner

The attached quotes include a 6-year digital subscription to LearnZillion at \$771,167.50. Comparison quotes include a 3-year digital subscription for \$579,716.50 and 1-year digital subscription for \$422,628.50 These amounts reflect our year 1 cost for either 6 years, 3 years, or 1 year for: Digital Licenses for Teachers and Students, Student Print Consumables, Teacher Print, Manipulative Kits (plus shipping for kits only), and Professional Development. The quotes also show the yearly cost for student print consumables for years 2-6 which average \$122,725.00 which is about \$20, 000 lower than our average yearly consumable

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cost of \$142,000 for Math Expressions. Additionally, our Math Expressions digital access expires this year. Last year we were provided with a renewal quote of \$338,952.60 for 1 year (or \$2,033,715.60 for 6 years).

The total is \$771,167.50 and the funding source is Academics - Text Books 1010-961-2200-56410.

Edpuzzle (New)

In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education so our students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future.

In these uncertain times, we must be prepared to meet our students where they are. We must be equipped to provide our students and staff with varying approaches and platforms to receive and interact with content. Our teachers need options for providing synchronous and asynchronous virtual teaching both in the classroom and remotely. Edpuzzle provides teachers and students with a tool to collaborate virtually through Google Classrooms and in person classes.

Teachers have been using Edpuzzle as an educational tool since the fall of 2020. The free version limits each teacher to twenty video lessons, while the paid-for version allows for unlimited storage per teacher, allowing educators to create and share Edpuzzle lessons among all their classes or across content areas. The district currently has 349 teachers who have been active on Edpuzzle this year. Of those teachers, 62 are out of or almost out of storage space. Staff have created 5,267 assignments utilizing the Edpuzzle tools. Through a brief survey to teachers, just over 80% of the over 200 responders said they would take advantage of the expanded access to Edpuzzle provided through a district subscription.

Edpuzzle offers the following:

- *Unlimited video storage
- *Flipped and blended learning
- *Curriculum resources and lessons covering all subjects, grades K-12
- *Curriculum Standardization - creation of a unique digital lesson library for the school/district.
- *Programs that allow students to get certified in topics such as digital citizenship, emotional intelligence or personal finance
- *District/school customized database of video curriculum build through collaboration across the district
- *Dedicated support, training, and coaching
- *Integrates with Google Classroom, Pear Deck, and Screencastify
- *Track student progress
- *Monitor teacher usage
- *Create self-paced learning for students
- *Privacy protections - Connecticut Privacy Pledge compliant
- *Staff create their own videos or pull in Youtube videos
- *Create interactive video lessons with questions, audio and notes
- *Live mode allows teachers to project a video live while students answer questions in real time on their devices and work in cooperative groups
- *Curriculum Curation by instructional coaches or designated staff members who have *Curriculum Specialist rights in Edpuzzle
- *Built-in video editor
- *Dedicated School Success Manager - to help the district onboard teachers to Edpuzzle, data reports, tech support, and training materials

The total is \$45,007.50 and the funding source is Academics - Licenses and Fees - 101096010001-55302.

S.P.I.R.E. Reading Intervention Program Training and Materials (Renewal)

By providing special education teachers with planning opportunities as well as training and feedback in research/evidenced based methodologies, teacher practices will improve, which will result in student academic gains in literacy. The SPIRE reading program is a Tier II and Tier III reading intervention that is supported by the International Dyslexia Association. It requires a 6 hour training program in order to implement. We had 12 special education teachers trained at the beginning of the 20 -21 school year and purchased kits for each one of them. Implementation started by the end of September. We have now trained an

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additional 9 special education teachers who require the kits in order to implement the program. There will be a follow-up training in March for all the special education teachers that have been trained as a means to provide support in their first year of learning the program.

The total is \$16,012.30 and the funding source is IDEA Grant 611 202096912002 56110.

The Curriculum Committee favorably recommended to refer all of the academic purchase orders to the Finance, Facilities, and Transportation Committee for further review at their next meeting.

NBHS Course and Pathway Presentation

Engineering Pathway

Mr. Eric Nelson, NBHS Mathematics and CTE Teacher, presented a slideshow to committee members providing an overview of the Engineering Pathway and rationale behind offering the introductory course, Engineering Essentials, to students next year at New Britain High School. Mr. Paul Kerrigan, NBHS CTE Teacher, stressed that industry partners are on board with this pathway and looking for skills and knowledge in the area of robotics as well.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve creation and offering of Engineering Essentials as a course at NBHS for 2021-2022 school year, seconded by Mr. Listro. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Safety Course

Ms. Margaret Shea, Associate Principal of NBHS, spoke to committee members about student interest and development of proposed Public Safety course for all students at New Britain High School next year. Ms. Shea and Mr. Kerrigan provided a course overview highlighting the police, EMS, and firefighting sections that would be covered. Ms. Sondra Sanford, Coordinator of Partnerships and Engagement, spoke about how this course would help to facilitate a pipeline to the public service sector.

Mr. Mercier motioned to approve creation and offering of Public Safety as a course at NBHS for 2021-2022 school year, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Closing and Adjournment

Mr. Mercier motioned to adjourn at 8:06 PM, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.