

Newtown Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

Minutes from the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee held on Tuesday, October 13, 2020.

M. Ku	A. Uberti	M. Correia
J. Vouros	C. Tischio	

Also present Board of Education member Deborra Zukowski.

J. Vouros called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

J. Vouros moved to approve the minutes from the 9/21/2020 meeting.

M. Ku seconded the motion

Public Participation: None

Presentation of Grade 5 Reading & Writing - Carla Tischio and Matt Correia

C. Tischio presented the Grade 5 Reading and Writing curriculums, on behalf of the writing team which also included Peggy Kennedy and Jackie McMahon. Principal Matt Correia supported the work. She provided an overview of the learning objectives and assessments for each of the units:

Grade 5 Reading:

- It's Like Riding a Bike
- Say It Like You Mean It
- Over the Rainbow
- Trash and Treasure
- Just the Facts

Grade 5 Writing:

- Stop, Jot and Write!
- Short and Sweet
- Based on a True Story
- What Do You Know?
- In My Opinion

M. Correia and A. Uberti acknowledged the leadership of C. Tischio in assisting the team's development of the newly revised English Language Arts curriculum. M. Correia emphasized that Ms. Tischio is guided by what is best for kids to learn and grow. M. Ku and J. Vouros thanked C. Tischio and the team.

M. Ku asked how the curriculum is rolled out to staff following adoption. C. Tischio and A. Uberti explained that the fifth grade teachers have already begun implementing the units and that there will be opportunities for feedback from the full team throughout the year. If necessary, minor changes will be made at the end of the year based on that feedback. Any significant changes would require curriculum come back before the board. C. Tischio also explained that the units are reviewed in the teams meeting time with emphasis on teaching the concepts, not just focusing on skill or activities. A. Uberti noted that Curriculum Council has defined what components must be contained in a completed curriculum. Any teacher should be able to open up a new curriculum and understand exactly what needs to be taught, how and when. She also added that we would like to plan more training on the delivery of instruction to ensure that teachers maintain the integrity of teaching a concept-based curriculum. J. Vouros added that he has had personal experience with the early units of the fifth grade curriculum and it is outstanding.

Update on Devices/Impact on Instruction-Anne Uberti

The original order of devices is still backorder until at least December. C. Amodeo was able to secure 625 devices from another vendor. They have been received and deployed to students at Reed. A. Uberti acknowledged the hard work of the entire Tech Department throughout the pandemic. The devices that had previously been distributed to Reed students will be collected and redistributed to students at the four elementary schools with some going to the middle school to get them to 1:1. A. Uberti shared that the goal for this year is to get to 1:1 for students in Kindergarten through grade 9. Beginning in 7th grade students will be issued a device that they will keep for their remaining years in NPS. Devices are only supported by Google Apps for 6 years so that will basically use up the life of the devices. Each year we would replenish devices in 7th grade. This plan will get the entire district to 1:1 in the next three years. Each level will decide on whether devices will remain in school or travel back and forth to home based on what is developmentally appropriate for the age of the students.

Professional Development Plan: 11/3/2020-Anne Uberti

A. Uberti provided an update on the November 3rd Professional Development Plan. Dr. Derrick Gay will present as the keynote speaker on the topic of equity and diversity. Breakout sessions will then be facilitated for all staff by the CT Center for School Change on "How to Be an Anti-Racist." Other choice sessions will be offered based on feedback from a recent staff survey.

Student Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Council -Anne Uberti

In an effort to increase student voice regarding curriculum and instruction in the district, A. Uberti announced that she will be piloting a student advisory council for that purpose. The council will have two students per grade, 8th through 12th, ideally representing diverse perspectives including English language learners, special education students and students from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. The

composition of the council is still under consideration but will probably include F. Purcaro, Director of Teaching and Learning, A. Uberti, and 2 or 3 teachers. The hope is to launch in November and hold four meetings this year. Each meeting will be dedicated to a broad topic and will allow students to give feedback on curriculum and instruction related to that topic. The first meeting will focus on the goals of the council and will elicit suggestions and feedback regarding the format. A. Uberti will update the C&I Subcommittee as the plan progresses.

Public Participation: None

J. Vouros adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

M. Ku seconded the motion

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Norling

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE.