

Newtown Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut  
Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

Minutes from the Board of Education Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee held on Tuesday, January 29, 2019, in the BOE Conference Room.

J. Vouros	J. Evans Davila	E. Holst-Grubbe	B. Burgess	J. Swann
M. Ku	K. Longobucco	M. Gerace	C. Crooke	

J. Vouros called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

J. Vouros moved to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2019 meeting.

M. Ku seconded the motion.

J. Vouros opened Public Participation; no members of the public offered comment.

Business Foundations - Curriculum Revision (C. Crooke, E. Holst-Grubbe): E. Holst-Grubbe stated that the Business Foundation curriculum had not been updated in approximately 10 years. C. Crooke stated that this revision incorporates technology and personalized learning. C. Crooke overviewed elements of the revision. For example, Units 1 and 4 address some skills from the prior course iteration, but with enhancements that include project-based learning, technology integration, and changes in the business world. Unit 2 (Information Technology) and Unit 3 (Global Business) are new additions to this curriculum, developed based on the fundamental skills required for success in the current business environment. Each student will identify a business to explore in order to apply their learning of required skills and content. The student's choice of business must align with elements introduced in Unit 1 (Economic Decisions and Systems). C. Crooke stated that students have identified businesses, such as fishing tours, visual effects, app to target marketing, product development and production of a hybrid pen-pencil. Students apply creative and critical thinking in the development of a project-based portfolio, serving as the summative assessment. Formative assessments (i.e., brief quizzes) help the teacher to monitor student mastery of business terminology and the foundational skills in the course. Students learn about financial statements; supply and demand with regard to price-setting and inventory control; and elements of production, such as personnel, workforce skills, and resources or materials. In addition, students learn to create databases and produce tables. The student portfolio is the culminating assessment, in PowerPoint format with the inclusion of databases, data tables and graphs, student-created documents, which can include other artifacts (i.e., video or digital media). The students are required to present the portfolio to their class for a panel review, with peer and teacher feedback submitted to the student in relation to course learning expectations and the potential viability of the business.

Personal Financial Literacy - Curriculum Revision (B. Burgess, J. Swann, C. Crooke): E. Holst-Grubbe stated that Personal Financial Literacy is taught by B. Burgess, J. Swann, and C. Crooke, who collaborated on the curriculum revision, previously updated in 2008, which now expands student learning opportunities in fulfillment of Connecticut's impending enhancement of high school graduation requirements. The revised curriculum incorporates project-based learning and integrates technology. The students and the instructors maintain a paperless instructional environment, using the Google suite of apps as the platform. This approach allows students to remain current with materials shared in class, the course expectations, instructional content, and assignments. In addition, the instructors and support staff assigned to work with students requiring specialized services have immediate access to shared course content, which provides greater fluidity in communication with the teacher. In addition, use of the Google apps in a digital environment supports students during absence from a class. The course revision was prompted also by significant changes that have occurred over the past decade within the business world; additionally, the revision now integrates elements of personal finance. B. Burgess discussed examples of student projects, including but not limited to, an assignment in the students estimate the cost of their chosen post-secondary pathways (college and/or career focused) and another assignment in which students identify aspects of a self-identified career, such salary and potential financial considerations, which

they apply to learning how to prepare an IRS 1040 Income Tax form. Students also learn about careers; management of bank accounts; the responsible use of credit, including an analysis of a Schumer Box which appears on the credit card statement to illustrate the impact of minimum monthly payments and interest rates on the fulfillment of a debt obligation. B. Burgess commented that the revised curriculum enables students to examine their own values and goals in alignment with the personal financial decisions this will entail. The summative and culminating assessment in the course requires students to design a budget based on their own identification a potential career choice, desired location for work and residence, and the estimated salary and expenses associated with these factors. Following the discussion of the revised curriculum, NHS Principal K. Longobucco and E. Holst-Grubbe noted although the new graduation requirements have not been enacted yet by the State of Connecticut, Newtown High Schools intention is to continue to promote Personal Finance as a valuable elective offering for students within the BEAT Department.

Water Safety Instruction (WS)/Lifeguarding Certification – New Course Proposal (Mark Gerace, B. Burgess):

The newly proposed WS/Lifeguarding Certification course can fulfill the additional half-credit in Health that is required by the State of Connecticut for the class of 2023. M. Gerace explained that these new requirements in credits will be discussed with incoming freshman students and their families during Open House. K. Longobucco and M. Gerace explained the steps they have taken to determine the impact of the additional half credit requirement on student schedules, which they report to be minimal if any. Lifeguarding, Fit for Life, and Weight Training are current course offerings that will fit into the PE electives, also fulfilling the required number of credits. B. Burgess, a teacher in the BEAT Department, has prior experience in a former district in which he taught this course and served as a swim coach; therefore, he will be one of the co-teachers of this proposed course, along with Physical Education teacher C. Lombardo. B. Burgess described the interdisciplinary connection of the course related to various job opportunities students can pursue with this certification. M. Gerace explained that Connecticut Statutes require a certified lifeguard to be present during public use of the swimming pool (i.e., a swim meet, or instruction in this course). The certified lifeguard is present during use of the pool in this course, in addition to the co-teachers of the class; for safety reasons, no course instruction will serve as both teacher and lifeguard when students are in the pool. In 2019-20, pending the Board of Education approval of this course, co-teachers C. Lombardo and B. Burgess will serve strictly in the role of jointly providing instruction to students while a third person will be present to fulfill the role of certified lifeguard (i.e., a student or a third staff member with lifeguard certification will assume these duties). B. Burgess noted that the typical cost for an individual to enroll in a lifeguard certification class can range from \$350 to \$800, making this an even more attractive course offering for our students at Newtown High School who choose to enroll in this elective offering. At the conclusion of the discussion, J. Evans Davila requested that the PE Department make a commitment next year to collecting the data that is identified in item 12 on the New Course Application, so the District will have measurable success criteria for the course.

M. Ku motioned to approve the Water Safety/Lifeguarding Certification New Course Proposal.

J. Vouros seconded the motion.

Assistant Superintendent Update (J. Evans Davila): J. Evans Davila overviewed her projected timeline for recently revised curriculum to be reviewed by C & I throughout the remainder of the current school year.

J. Vouros opened Public Participation; no members of the public offered comment.

J. Vouros adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

M. Ku seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Norling