

Curriculum Committee Meeting

September 19, 2015

Attendees: Deirdre d'Albertis, Laura Schulkind, Rick Walker, Marvin Kreps, Joe Phelan

NYS Regents

Marvin reported that the NYS Regents finished their most recent set of meetings and adopted some additional rulings.

- Reduced the length of the 2015 NYS Assessments.
There are very few details, but it appears as though there will be fewer multiple choice questions, reading passages and comprehension questions, and fewer writing passages.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Common Core Learning Standard (CCLS) assessments in relation to the new testing vendor - Questar.
NYSUT, UFT and the Administrator's associations appreciate this step. The Opt-Out Movement continues to be vocal in their opposition.
- APPR
3012-d is the law, and it must be negotiated. The Regents have included an appeals process for teachers receiving an Ineffective rating on the State 20% (now 50%). They will be reviewing the growth models with psychometricians for developmental validity.

There is still no list of approved assessments for subjects without a state assessment. This leaves Districts in the position of negotiating the APPR without knowing on what basis certain teachers will be evaluated. If a District uses their own District-developed assessment, it has to go through a Request for Qualification process which requires a psychometric procedure to prove the measurement has value. Most Districts are not going through this process.

K-8 ELA Curriculum

Marvin provided the front section of the "penultimate" version of the K-8 ELA curriculum documents to the committee. Balanced Literacy Planners, Week-by-Week Planners and Assessment descriptions are all complete. Every teacher and Marvin has copies from which to work. There will be a process to review the Balanced Literacy and Week-by-Week planners to ensure that the CCLS skills are all being addressed through the lessons.

Rhinebeck has been very specific in engaging with and empowering the professional educators in our district to develop a unique curriculum that both addresses the requirements of the new standards while creating a meaningful course of study for real students in Rhinebeck. It is important to note that the documents we approve as a Board are a snapshot of the "state of play" today. These documents have been designed to remain somewhat fluid in order to respond to the needs of the students from year to year.

A strategic decision was made to create an integrated curriculum which allowed for Social Studies and Science concepts to be infused into the ELA block. CLS has the most overt integration given that these students are with a specific teacher for most of their day. At BMS, themes and topics from other subjects are picked up to address the non-fiction/expository writing requirements while preserving the importance of literature. Of course, the teacher becomes the key component in the delivery of literary curricula, and will bring their professional styles into play.

There will be an action item on our 10/13/15 Board Agenda to approve the K-8 ELA Curriculum. The documents will be made available to the rest of the Board at our 9/22/15 meeting.

RHS Draft ELA Curriculum

Marvin shared the first draft of the High School English curriculum. The teachers worked over the summer to develop what is ultimately a “road map” of the curriculum. They are testing their work in the classrooms this year and making notations along the way for any changes they feel are necessary. The teachers will then reconvene in the summer of 2016 to finalize the document.

The lesson designs are slightly different from CLS and BMS as there is no Balanced Literacy component. At first glance, it looks to be an incredibly rich curriculum covering poetry and classic literature along with newer selections.

The challenge of this new curriculum will be to meet the needs of the students who struggle to meet “College Ready” standards. In the past, “Modified” classes were used to address these students’ needs. Rhinebeck is no longer employing that method and has all students participating in Regents level classes. The current thinking is that these students are better off being exposed to the rigor of Regents level work. Instructional supports have been built into the curriculum to differentiate the learning without needing a separate class. The reading specialist and special ed teachers collaborated with the english department over the summer to build these supports and have a better base from which to provide support in the Resource Room. The Writing Lab will also be an instrumental addition to the program in delivering extra support to struggling students while providing space for all students to work with their teachers on particular writing assignments.

Agenda (post 10/13 Board Meeting):

- Explore ways the work of the CDEP Committee should and will interface with the Curriculum Committee
- Review RHS Electives - Ed Davenport will be invited to provide a comprehensive review of our course offerings
- Update on BMS Tech curriculum
- Forward planning for projects in the works

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Schulkind