

## Curriculum Committee Meeting

### Minutes

November 28, 2016

Present: Laura Schulkind, Deirdre d'Albertis, Deirdre Burns, Marvin Kreps, Brett King, Joe Phelan

1. *Age of students entering kindergarten.* Brett King joined the committee to discuss this topic. New York State age cutoff (Age 5 on 12/1 of year entering K) is a recommendation. Decision can be made at local level. BK shared some research on the topic. Looking at what's best for children's emotional development. Concerns at CLS about the Common Core shifting expectations at K-1 - more academic, "more intense." Most kids do fine but teachers and BK observing more angst and frustration as kids adjust. An easy thing for the district to do to ease the transition would be to move the age of entry so the younger children would wait a year to enter K. K teachers support having this discussion. Changing entry date would impact our families, perhaps a multi-year roll out would make sense with lots of communication to preschool parents. Will also impact number of students and perhaps staffing. Laura asked for more historical data on AIS numbers (as they progress through CLS). Joe pointed out that parents are now able to hold off entry of their children into K. One or two parents a year discuss that with BK. We do not counsel parents to delay entry - we leave the decision up to parents. Joe asked for data on the impact on class size - if we had made a change in birth date cut off for this year - what would be the impact on classes this year? The conversation links to questions about the CLS curriculum, particularly K-1. These concerns were raised by staff at board breakfast and also have been raise by parents. Is our curriculum too academic at the younger ages? Are we getting away from hands on projects and teaching skills that are not part of common core (tying shoes, social skills, etc.). Will have further discussion on a)age of entry into K and b) K-1 curriculum expectations at the January 23 meeting.

2. *BMS Tech Curriculum.* Much of this discussion centered on revisiting the history of developing the tech curriculum and the various locations of technology learning. Marvin shared some context.. RCSD received a grant from RSF to develop the BMS computer lab and we also had recommendations from the CELT audit. The curriculum is an effort to operationalize the goals of the RSF grant and the audit. How does technology fit into our curriculum and instruction? Part of the model is to infuse technology in to the classroom. But we also updated and modernized the BMS lab. Goals of the RSF grant: a. update lab (done); b. curriculum development (ongoing); c. professional development (ongoing); d. build out curriculum K-12. Stakeholder feedback on curriculum development is important. Board member feedback will go back to the curriculum group.

The document we have includes a framework for expectations of skills/learning K-12 along with the BMS specific curriculum. It is possible to separate the two pieces. Laura noted that there are many different locations for tech learning (classrooms, library), what is the best use of the lab? Also, concerns were raised about the amount of time the lab is being used for testing. Can that be altered?

We reviewed the composition of tech teaching at BMS:  
NYS requirement for a 1 credit tech class in middle school. That requirement is now met through PLTW lab downstairs: .5 credit class/one semester in 7th grade and .5 credit/one semester 8th grade  
Upstairs computer lab: 6, 7, 8 grades - all year/every other day - a computer science curriculum, local requirement

One of the challenges for technology teaching is where students learn the specific, i.e. skills and the more general, “meta” learning. Also, overlap with subject areas. Having a document that lays out a K-12 framework, along with technology class specific curriculum creates transparency and sets expectations.

Board members should continue to send questions and comments to Marvin and the Curriculum Committee. BMS document and K-12 framework will be the topic at that meeting.

Next meeting: December 19, 2017. Agenda: Tech curriculum.  
Submitted by Deirdre Burns