

**RHINEBECK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT EDUCATION PLAN (CDEP)  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, February 23, 2015  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

**Members Present**

Ed Davenport	Jackie Dedrick	John Kemnitzer
Brett King	Marvin Kreps	Steve Jensen
Erin O'Brien	Joe Phelan	Cynthia Ping
Laura Schulkind	Susan Van Vlack	Liz Yearwood
Richard Zipp		

**Members Absent**

Bobbie Bie	Victor Britton	Diane Linenbroker
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The meeting began with a review of the proposed agenda and further input from the committee members was elicited. Listed below are items generated from that discussion.

- NYSED/DOE briefing of initiatives
- RCSD current status and student achievement
- RCSD initiatives underway
- CDEP plan development process
- Integration of ESL, Mentoring, Technology Plans into the next phase of CDEP
- Community engagement and communication with key stakeholders
- Professional development Planning
- School climate/culture initiatives at each school and surveys
- Curriculum governance structure to replace the previous vertical team structure
- APPR concerns and ongoing questions
- Vertical Alignment of curriculum, instruction and programming across CLS, BMS and RHS

**NYSED/DOE INITIATIVE BRIEFING**

The group on the initiatives set forth by NYSED/DOE. The State Education Department (SED) has overwhelmed school districts with many new policies in a short period of time creating many challenges at the local level. Given that the District must meet many of the new policy challenges it is important to utilize the CDEP process to develop plans that involve all key stakeholders. The basic policy areas are curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability. In order to meet the demands of Race to the Top SED implemented the common core standards and associated assessments in a very brisk timeline thus posing the District with many challenges. At this time the Math and ELA Regents exams are aligned with the common core standards.

The Board of Regents chose to delay the implementation of the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments and it is not clear if New York will ever administer them.

It was discussed that the accountability formulas were implemented at the same time that the new curriculum, standards and assessments were implemented thus denying districts time to prepare students for the more rigorous assessments. Under the new APPR regulations teachers are now held accountable for how their students perform on these assessments. Students are tied to teachers through their course rosters. While the accountability formula for APPR is being implemented and debated now, whole school and district accountability is still in place for the all student population as well as sub-groups. Chancellor Livingston Elementary School is currently on a Local Assistance Plan list due to economically disadvantaged, ESL and Special education students performing at low levels on

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state assessments. This is an example of how SED regulations have mandated planning processes that require district compliance thus taking away local control.

The group was reminded that, according to NCLB, all students were to be proficient in Math and ELA by 2013-14 or the school/district would be placed on an accountability list and required to submit a school improvement plan. Due to a variety of reasons, that goal was not achieved. New York State applied for a waiver from these federal requirements and currently, the new regulations under the waiver state that by the 2021-2022 school year, all graduating students are to be college and career ready as measured by Regents Exams in ELA and Math. Assessments in math and ELA will be aligned with the new standards and schools, teachers and principals will be held accountable for the performance of their students on these more rigorous assessments. This current reality creates an urgency to begin the CDEP process in order to meet these challenging new goals by the stated timelines.

It was asked if the accountability formula takes into account the needs and learning challenges of students in inclusion classrooms. SED has indicated that the accountability formulas have accounted for these students by making statistical adjustments. Special education students are compared to similar special education students for growth. However, the data seems to indicate that teachers and schools are disadvantaged if they have economically disadvantaged and/or special education students in their classes. This matter requires a focused analysis of the issues related to supporting these students in a manner that provides them with an opportunity to meet the more rigorous standards.

The new high school 4 + 1 pathway to graduation was discussed. Historically, students have been required to earn 22 credits and pass 5 regents exams (1 math, 1 ELA, 1 science, and 2 social studies) in order to earn a Regents diploma. Although that is still available to students, students may now replace one of the social studies regents (Global History) with a comparable high school examination in the humanities, LOTE, STEM, career tech education or the arts. Many of these pathways have not been fully developed at this time and the Board of Regents is continuing to review these options. Moving forward the District will have to make the necessary programmatic adjustments as additional information comes available.

The CDEP team briefly discussed the current status of New York State's Elementary Secondary Education Act waiver to the United States Department of Education. The application is currently under review by the USDOE. Meanwhile, there are several ESEA reauthorization bills in congress under consideration, so the current policy environment is ambiguous and uncertain.

SED has adopted a Five Year Plan to review and revise science education in NYS. The plan involves a review of The Next Generation Science Standards which are very different from the previous MST standards. The current plan requires that the new standards will be reviewed later this school year. Once the standards are finalized curriculum, instruction and assessments will begin to change accordingly. It seems wise to wait until the standards are released to begin doing any local planning to change curriculum.

The new Social Studies Standards have been adopted by SED and the District will begin the process of curriculum review and revision accordingly. It is important to engage with all teachers in this discipline to begin the curriculum articulation and alignment work.

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**ESL INTEGRATION**

Mr. Zipp reviewed the new regulations relating to ESL. The new regulations require that students must be integrated into the regular classroom to the extent possible. ESL teachers can only work with students within two contiguous grades only. It appears that the district may need to hire more ESL teachers to work with students pushing into classrooms. Teachers and teacher assistants who have ESL student in their classes are required to spend 15% of their professional development time in ESL and ESL teachers will be required to spend 50% of their professional development time in ESL training.

Mr. Zipp explained that students that come into the district in elementary and/or middle school seem to do much better. When new ESL students come in the high school, it makes it so there's not enough time in the day to earn the requirements for graduation. The regulations require that districts have a comprehensive plan to implement the new regulations.

**RCSO CURRENT INITIATIVES**

The current initiatives under way in the district were reviewed. In the area of technology it was reported that the network has been and continues to be undergoing upgrades. The District replaced much of the infrastructure and added WiFi across campus. The technology department continues to upgrade and optimize the system which the technology director expects it to be an ongoing process. Many XP machines had to be replaced and some changes were made in software by going with Microsoft 365 which was done in response to the old email system which was weeks away from crashing.

At CLS, a tech infusion program was begun where each teacher was given a laptop, K-2 grades went with iPads and 3-5 grades went with Mac Airs. Professional development related to using these devices in the instructional program was initiated during a recent conference day but professional development and technology support to teachers remains challenging. At CLS, a new initiative called Tech Wednesday is in place where Mr. Jensen is available to address technical issues. It was reported that Smartboards continue to pose significant challenges as the technology is changing and being replaced with newer products.

The District continues to await guidance from NYSED regarding how to access the technology funds from the NYS technology bond that passed in the fall of 2014. The District is expecting to receive around \$277,000.00 but it is not yet clear how to access these funds nor what will be allowable purchases. More guidance is expected from SED in the coming months.

District administration continues to work with the middle school staff regarding next steps in technology deployment. There is an identified need to conduct focused curriculum development work in the elementary and middle school levels to integrate technology and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills into the instructional program. At the secondary level google apps for education is being deployed. Access to the system and professional development is underway.

**CURRICULUM PROJECTS**

At this time there is a real focus to complete the K-12 ELA curriculum. At the elementary and middle schools teachers have been working with the balanced literacy consultant to articulate and align curriculum with the NYS ELA standards and assessments. These projects are nearing completion and the curriculum office anticipates providing the board of education with drafts of these curricula in the

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coming months. The high school ELA department is collaborating with a consultant to articulate and align the ELA nine, ten and eleven course with the state standards and assessments. The first student cohort to take the new ELA Regents exam will be the 2015-2016 eleventh grade. The ELA department will be making the curricular adjustments as part a summer curriculum project.

The Project Lead the Way project “Launch” was initiated this school year at CLS with two modules per grade level K-5 currently being delivered. It is currently under discussion to expand that program to four modules per grade level next school year. This will require a full time STEM teacher at CLS. At this time it is not clear if the budget support exists to implement this plan next school year.

### **SCHOOL CLIMATE/CULTURE**

There are funds available to conduct a climate survey at the three schools and the parents. It is planned to use the same climate that was used in previous years. The National School Climate Center has a survey entitled, “The Comprehensive School Climate Inventory” The resultant data from the survey is intended to be utilized in support of the effort to ensure positive school climate and culture for students and staff.

The elementary school expressed interest in a new Bully Proofing program at CLS. The implementation process is currently under discussion at the building level planning team. This initiative will be discussed at future CDEP meetings as information comes available. The initiative is sponsored by the Dutchess County Mediation Center and would support Responsive Classroom approach to classroom and school wide climate and culture work.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Mr. Kreps presented a power point presentation of student achievement for 2013-14. See attached power point presentation for detail from the presentation. The data demonstrate that while students in grade K-8 find the rigorous new standards and assessments challenging at the high school level students continue to perform above the national and state average on all metrics. Although, there is cause for celebration in these data there are also challenges that must be faced if the high school outcomes are to continue. Mr. Kreps reviewed with the committee some potential opportunities for growth:

- Strengthen teaching particularly with regard to students who find the new rigorous standards challenging.
- Strengthen leadership practices
- Continue the focus on developing positive and healthy school climates and cultures for students and faculty.
- Celebrate/acknowledge success
- Build climates of high trust, high expectations with high support
- All students in the regular class – look at Response to Intervention
- Curriculum governance
- Ensure that horizontal/vertical alignment exists at all levels
- Honest conversation around professional development to improve practice that focuses on developing committees of practice.
- Alignment of curricular areas to Common Core Learning Standards

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**CDEP PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

The committee conducted a dialogue regarding next steps for reviewing the CDEP plan to accommodate all the new regulations and policies. And to update the existing CDEP to reflect new challenges to be addressed in the next three years.

The committee discussed the process going forward. Suggestions to have Mr. Kreps present to the faculty and give them an opportunity for comment before we start working on goals. Due to time constraints, the committee decided to meet once again to work on the plan for the current school year based on the two pillars on increasing student achievement and improving student climate. Mr. Kreps asked whether hiring an outside consultant to help facilitate a process would be beneficial. It was suggested that the committee consider using a consultant if it is affordable and a suitable candidate can be found.

Mr. Kreps summarized the discussion by reporting the following:

- A mechanism is necessary to engage all faculty as soon as possible
- CDEP committee to meet again to create a draft for faculty consideration
- Create opportunities for faculty to meet vertically for discussion
- Develop a plan to operationalize the next CDEP plan

The committee agreed to schedule two more meetings, one before spring break, to draft a CDEP document.

The meeting was adjourned.