

Quincy Public Schools Curriculum Committee Minutes

Board Office Conference Room #231

February 9, 2015

Committee members present: Debby Cashman, Jan Zeidler, Cheryl Vogler, Sheldon Bailey, Denette Kuhlman, Jim Rubottom, Stephanie Erwin

Committee members absent: Jan Leimbach, Loren Kiest, Jan Cory

Board members, staff and others: Kim Dinkheller, Jeff Kerkhoff, Julie Stratman, Ed Husar, Denise Drebes, Carol Frericks, Jody Steinke, Kailee Niemann-Flesch, Annette Johnson

1. Call to order

Sheldon Bailey, who has succeeded Jeff Mays as committee chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Sheldon noted that item C on the agenda would be addressed first this evening, in order to accommodate the schedules of those presenting.

2. Committee Discussion Items

A. Curriculum Proposals/Textbook Adoption Report

Curriculum Proposal for Instructional (Special Education) Math Course Sequence- Kailee Niemann-Flesch (QHS math teacher) and Annette Johnson (QJHS math teacher) elaborated on the following *Proposal for 7-12 Instructional Mathematics Re-alignment*; stating that currently the Integrated Math course offered in 9th grade was providing less rigor than students are receiving in the 8th grade Pre-Algebra. Students are required to have 3 math credits for graduation and those credits must come from courses that have algebra and geometry content. It is also felt that the stronger algebra background provided in the proposed 7-12 sequence could help students become more proficient in math, which could improve their scores on standardized tests. They stated they are adjusting instruction to address the new state standards.

Current 7-12 Instructional Math Course Sequence

7th grade: Pre-Algebra
8th grade: Pre-Algebra II
9th grade: Integrated Math
10th grade: Foundations of Algebra
11th grade: Foundations of Geometry
12th grade: Business Tech Math*

**The current 9th grade Integrated Math course includes a survey of Algebra and Geometry. As a result, many students opt out of the Foundations of Geometry course and take Business Tech Math during their junior year to meet the current graduation requirement of 3 credits of mathematics.*

Proposed 7-12 Instructional Math Course Sequence

7th grade: Pre-Algebra I
8th grade: Pre-Algebra II
9th grade: Foundations of Algebra part I
10th grade: Foundations of Algebra part II
11th grade: Foundations of Geometry
12th grade: Business Tech Math

Rationale for Sequence Change:

- Will provide students with a more solid foundation of Algebra by learning/building Algebra skills over the course of two years. (*Focus, Coherence and Rigor*)
- Will ensure students continue taking math courses through their Senior Year (College and Career

Sheldon made a motion to recommend the *Proposed 7-12 Instructional Mathematics Re-alignment*, to the Board for approval at the February 25, 2015 meeting.

Junior Achievement (JA) Economics for Success – Denise Drebes, Junior Achievement in Northeast Missouri and West-Central Illinois, District Manager addressed the Curriculum Committee regarding JA

Economics for Success. This is a program being proposed at the 6th grade level for implementation during the 2015-16 school year in Quincy Public Schools. JA is currently in place K-5, 7-8 and at QHS in Consumer Education courses. This 6th grade program consists of six 45 minute sessions. The program will be taught by a community volunteer and is sponsored by the United Way. The classroom teacher assists in the classroom with the community volunteer guest during JA classes. Denise stated that the United Way had committed funding for 3 years to implement JA in Quincy Public Schools. Denise pointed out that JA will take over the fund raising efforts after that to ensure the continuation of JA programs at QPS. The committee was in agreement that this proposed program for 6th grade will provide a great opportunity for students. Jim Rubottom made a motion to recommend the *JA Economics for Success* proposal to the Board for approval at the February 25, 2015 meeting.

Spring 2015 6th Grade Accelerated Pre-Algebra Math Proposal – Julie Stratman addressed the committee stating that the current 6th grade accelerated math course is lacking and they would like to backwards map to align with the courses being taught in 7th and 8th grade. Julie passed around the proposed textbook material, *Glencoe Math Accelerated, Course 1* for committee members to look at, as well as an informational sheet outlining the benefits of this material for students and teachers. Julie stated that rigor is lacking in the current 6th grade accelerated course, and it is not aligned to the new state standards. The 6th grade accelerated math teachers have reviewed the proposed material and they like the layout and the opportunity for higher level thinking provided by this material, and the fact that it aligns with the 7th grade (*Glencoe Math Accelerated, Course 2*) and 8th grade (*Glencoe Math Accelerated, Course 3*) materials. The proposed material, *Glencoe Math Accelerated, Course 1*, will be available in Julie’s office for 1 month, should anyone want to look at it further. This proposal will be tabled until the next Curriculum Committee meeting on March 9, 2015.

The math options for 6th grade accelerated math students as they transition to Quincy Junior High School were discussed. The concept of students “flexing” into accelerated courses as their standardized test scores improve was also discussed. Member Kuhlman will provide Julie with past documentation on flexibility.

B. Textbook Inventory

Committee members were provided a draft document of an inventory of textbooks from Quincy Junior High School (QJHS) and Quincy High School (QHS). Kim Dinkheller (QJHS) and Jody Steinke (QHS) compiled the list. The draft document provides the following:

- course name
- textbook title
- publication date
- number of books on hand
- student enrollment in that course

- Y/N response to whether the text is used by teachers number needed to provide 1 to 1 textbooks

Kim and Jody pointed out that many of the district's textbooks are outdated and many times there are not enough books for all students enrolled in certain classes. In some cases classrooms utilize class sets, which provide enough textbooks for the class to use during class time. Digital books versus hard copy books were discussed. The upfront cost for hard copies is higher and some books can't be updated. Digital books can be updated each year but the district may need to pay an annual per-student fee for each book downloaded. It was noted that the new library system does provide access to some books online outside of the classroom. Committee members agreed that the district needs a strategic plan to address textbook replacement. Carol asked for, and was given direction by the committee, for district administration to prepare a budget proposal for textbook replacement over the next three to five years, and present this to the Board. Julie will gather data for K-6 and Carol will provide data for 7-12, along with input from teachers, and they will begin drafting a textbook replacement proposal.

C. Update on Assessment Inventory – Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The Assessment Inventory CAC has met 3 times, and will be meeting for a 4th time tomorrow, February 10, 2015. The members have looked at the district assessment inventory, how the assessments are used, who is using the assessments and checked the status of the assessments. The committee represents all stakeholders; administration, teachers, parents and community members. A district-wide online survey has been prepared for K-6 and 7-12 teachers regarding the assessment inventory and grading practices. This survey is only for teachers. The survey has been reviewed and revised by CAC members. A sub-committee of the CAC was established to develop grading practices survey questions, and they met on February 5, 2015. The goal of the sub-committee was to have conversations regarding grading practices PK-12 and to develop survey questions specifically geared towards grading practices. The Assessment Inventory CAC will determine when the survey will be completed, and then collect and analyze the data. They will then make a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee in April, regarding grading practices and assessments.

Items brought up for discussion at the last meeting:

- Assessment Framework on the QPS website has been updated.
- Illinois Report Cards have been updated on the QPS website.
- Retention - Informal report this month and a formal report will be presented at next month's Curriculum Committee. The first part of the conversations on retention will begin with Parent Conferences on February 13th. Students are tracked by a team in each building, and the data

gathered is used to determine acceleration or remediation plans for individual students. There was discussion on what is considered retention.

3. Recommend to Board of Education for Action

- Approval of the *Proposed 7-12 Instructional Mathematics* Course Sequence
- Approval of the *JA Economics for Success* 6th Grade Course

4. Consider any other matter relating to the Curriculum needs or concerns of the District

- Project Lead The Way –Will the new Bio-Medical Science courses be grade weighted?
- Will honors courses be provided for core subjects in 7th and 8th grades in the future?
- Data about inclusion classes.

5. Questions and comments from the Public – none

6. Adjourn: 6:30 pm

Next Meeting: Monday, March 9, 2015