

Seymour Board of Education

CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 23, 2020
Zoom
4:00 p.m.

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 4/27/2020
TIME: 11:00 AM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kristen Bruno
Jim Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Ed Strumello

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rob Dyer, Director of Technology
Jodie Roden, Principal SMS
Jim Freund, Principal SHS
Stacey Albertson, Assistant Principal CLS
Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal BES
Pat Boyle, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Mrs. Tencza called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 4:09 p.m.

II. ELECTION OF A CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Garofolo nominated Ms. Harmeling to be the Chairperson of this committee, Ms. Bruno seconded that nomination. There were no other nominations and all were in favor of Ms. Harmeling being the chairperson.

III. INFORMATION

A. Library/Media K-12 curriculum update

Ms. Tencza wanted to give the committee an update on the Library/Media curriculum. Currently, the middle and high school have been without a Library Media Specialist for a couple of years. The administration would like to reinstate this position but felt that a robust curriculum needed to be written before this could be presented to the board. A committee was formed consisting of the two elementary Library/Media Specialists, Mr. Freund, Ms. Roden and Ms. Tencza. Ms. Tencza secured the services of Jerilyn Van Leer, a highly qualified specialist with over 40 year's Library/Media experience to assist with the curriculum (see attached resume). The first meeting was held on March 12, 2020. Ms. Roden and Mr. Freund felt the one day of work with Ms. Van Leer was very beneficial and they felt everyone was on the same page with the curriculum. Ms. Van Leer is currently compiling the next steps. It is this groups hope to have the curriculum to present to the board by December. At that time, they would like to recommend a Library Media Specialist position be added to the 2021-2022 school year to be split between the middle school and high school. Then the following year another position would be included in the budget bringing the total number of Library Media Specialists in district to four.

B. Math Pilot Process K-5 update

Ms. Tencza told the committee that the current, Math Expressions, being used by the elementary schools has reached the end of its life span. A committee consisting of Ms. Albertson, Ms. Reid, Ms. Tencza, both SRBI math teachers, one teacher per grade from each school as well as a special education teacher from each school was formed to review four of the top math programs listed on EDReports. The committee narrowed the selection to Bridges and Envision Math. At that time, it was hoped that committee members could pilot the two programs and visit schools currently using them. Ms. Tencza has been in touch with both math programs and they are willing to extend the piloting process into the fall, and host schools are willing to reschedule visits in the fall. Any teacher wanting pilot the programs is more than welcome to do so. At the end of the pilot process feedback will be solicited from teachers,

parents and students on the program that felt was a better fit. Ms. Albertson and Ms. Reid said the teachers are really engaged with picking the best program to fit our needs. They have analyzed our performance and achievement data to identify strengths and areas of challenge and have also met with the six grade teachers to see what would be helpful for the elementary to work on to transition to middle school.

IV. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Chromebook 1:1

Ms. Tencza said Mr. Dyer has been absolutely amazing with dealing with the issues implementing distance learning. She and Mr. Dyer have been working for months on being able to implement a distribution of 1:1 devices to students for the 2020-2021 school year. Distance learning, due to the coronavirus pandemic, certainly sped up this process. Originally the thought was for students to have a dedicated device from grades 2-12 but with the advent of distance learning they are now thinking K-12. Due to the Covid-19 shutdown, currently around 900 Chromebooks have been distributed to families. Mr. Dyer said the life expectancy on a Chromebook is roughly 6 years. So Ms. Tencza and Mr. Dyer would like to see student dedicated Chromebooks assigned for a 1:1 use in Kindergarten and 7th grade. Ms. Tencza and Mr. Dyer request the policy committee consider the 1:1 Chromebook policy as well as a self-insurance fee. The fee would cover the cost of replacing lost or broken items. Mr. Garofolo asked who repairs the devices. Mr. Dyer said since he came in to district the IT Department does all repairs except those under warranty. Mr. Garofolo asked about students who have been restricted from access due to discipline issues, etc. Ms. Tencza said this is a very rare and if it occurs, it is for a short duration and the teachers make sure the students receive instruction in the same content standards, just without the use of technology. Ms. Harmeling asked about the BYOD policy. The purposed of eliminating the BYOD was to be able to protect our security. We have internet filters and firewalls, if students bring their own devices these could be breached or infect our system with viruses. The initiative will eliminate the need for students to bring in devices from home. Ms. Tencza and Mr. Dyer also would like the policy committee to look at the policies dealing with internet as they are in need of updating. Ms. Bruno felt Policy 6141.32 Teacher Practice needs to be re-written with a clearer vision about integrating technology. Ms. Tencza also informed the committee that Ms. Holmes would be applying for a grant for \$20,000 to help defer the cost of any equipment that was lost or broken during distance learning.

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec. Ms. Bruno) to move Chromebook 1:1 Initiative to the Policy Committee.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling

V. REPORTS

A. Chairman's Report

Ms. Harmeling would like to have another meeting prior to school resuming on the best way to restart schools, but was unsure if it was a full board issue or this subcommittee. Ms. Harmeling would like to possibly see a "Summer Boot Camp".

B. Superintendent's Report

Ms. Tencza said virtual learning has had many success and challenges. The state has decided that staff members will not be evaluated this year. The administration will still be having an end-of-year meeting with all staff to reflect and celebrate their accomplishments. They will also help those that struggled with distance learning. She also wants everyone to know that SHS is almost done with scheduling for next year and that SMS is working on completing their schedule for this year and is planning to convene a committee of staff to revise a new schedule for the following year, 2021-2022. Ms. Roden would also like to present this committee with some modifications to their current courses at the next Curriculum and Technology Committee. Ms. Tencza thanked everyone for holding this meeting and will reach out next week with another brief meeting to hear Ms. Roden's ideas for course modifications for 2020-2021.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo /sec. Ms. Bruno) to adjourn the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling

SO VOTED

Submitted by:
Pat Boyle