



## Board Curriculum Committee Meeting Monday, January 11, 2016 Minutes

Meeting called to order by Director Sinkler, Board Curriculum Chairman in the Edgeboro Room of the Education Center.

Member absent: Director Eugene McKeon

### 1. Courtesy of the Floor (30 minutes allowed) - None

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None

### 2. Discussion Items

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#### 2.1 Five Year Forecast for Educational Programs: 2016-2017 District Budget Implications

Dr. Silva shared a handout outlining the educational priorities for the next five years, district-wide, as well as individually at the elementary, middle, and high schools. The forecast shares numerous opportunities to build and extend successful educational programs in the BASD over the coming years that will help students achieve higher levels of performance. Beyond achieving core learning standards measured by state tests, improved BASD student performance means stretching each student to his/her potential as a learner, and helping him/her achieve career and college readiness after high school. Long range **district planning and budgeting must be "forward leaning"** and support the broader notion of school improvement by engaging students in personalized educational journeys that spark and nurture each student's unique talents and interests. More than ever, the Bethlehem Area School District embraces its mission of, "*Shaping the future. One child at a time.*"

At the elementary level, the BASD will dedicate enormous efforts to develop and execute a *BASD Grade Level Reading Plan* to have all students reading at grade-level by the end of Grade 3; phase in and support improved core instruction and adequate student learning gains; continue to and expand evidence-based and integrated systems of instruction and assessment that personalizes intervention efforts for each student; explore ways to bring world language instruction to the elementary grades; and in cooperation with the community, expand *Leader in Me* to all 16 elementary schools.

At the middle school level, we will improve and extend the elements of the developmentally responsive Teaming Model; update and align to more rigorous state standards and digital formats for math and science; and infuse Computer Science and Engineering into the middle school program.

At the middle and high schools, the BASD will move toward a more blended learning (combined face-to-face instruction and digital/Web-based formats) model, and embrace more personalized, data-informed, and technology-assisted academic programming. Digital content and modern learning tools will be expanding into hybrid learning classrooms in Grades 4-12. Restorative Practices will be instituted and maintained in all six secondary schools.

At the high schools, the BASD will maintain and expand its very successful *Project Lead The Way Engineering and Bio-Medicine* programs. PLTW programs will incorporate a growing number of community partnerships to enhance the authenticity and application of STEM learning. The high schools will develop integrated, multi-year programs (similar to PLTW) in the Arts & Humanities Pathway and the Business & Law Pathway that connects students to community organizations and resources.

We will continue to develop greater degrees of career and college readiness for our graduates. Each student will advance his/her post-secondary plans to his/her years in high school. The BASD will expand both excellence and access to stretch learning programs such as: *Advanced Placement* courses, dual enrollment courses at local colleges, on-line courses, high-demand vocational- technical certifications (NOCTI scores), apprenticeships, job shadows, internships, and career- focused community service.

District-wide STEM programming will prepare students for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The BASD will develop a K-12 computer science program. Areas will be maintained and expanded in the arts, music, communications, and humanities to engage students in the school and Bethlehem community.

Freedom and Liberty High School students will maintain and extend their success at the BAVTS, who will work in close partnership to maintain, support, and expand the four-year educational sequence to involve more BASD students and industry-placed assignments.

The BASD will develop, implement, and evaluate an *Excellence Through Equity Plan*. Equity is a commitment to ensure that every student receives what he/she needs to succeed. Using a combined program evaluation and a strategic planning methodology, BASD stakeholders will develop a five chapter of the plan that will create plans and guide actions needed to make opportunities to learn and grow accessible to ALL students in the areas of:

- Equity Research and Data—observing best practices in enhancing, reporting, and monitoring equity efforts.
- Equity in Core and Stretch Learning—assuring that all students access meaningful, rigorous, and future readying educational programs.
- Equity in Student Engagement and Personal Skill Development—assuring that all students access needed support services.
- Equity-Focused Professional Development—assuring that all school personnel employ culturally-proficient and equity-based practices.
- Equity in Parent Involvement—assuring that all parents access the school information and resources needed for their children to be successful.

In conclusion, the BASD will continue to share openly our highly-regarded educational programs with neighboring districts and successful community agencies. We will aim to recover students from the local Charter Schools and introduce them to our Roadmap goals, high achieving educational environment, and robust community partnerships. We believe that all students can and should find their educational home in the BASD!

Newly-elected School Board Member Thomas Thomasik inquired as to how the administration was planning to implement the key components of the Educational Five Year Plan. Dr. Silva summarized that into 3 areas ~ reading improvement, personalized digital resources and strong focus on educating the whole child. He elaborated on this points through the other presented items later in the meeting.

## 2.2 All Students Reading at Grade Level by the End of Grade 3 Plan

Mrs. Kim Harper, K-12 Literacy Supervisor, presented the All Students Reading at Grade Level by the End of Grade 3 Plan. Mrs. Harper reviewed the main components of the District's plan: (1) addressing readiness and basic needs of learners, (2) more time on task, (3) improved core instruction, (4) timely, effective, interventions, and (5) sustainability.

During the first semester, SPARK and Kindergarten teachers will work together to strengthen, standardize, and align schedules. Validating data and dedicating time to core instruction will be a focus, as well as providing professional development to improve our instruction. Efforts will continue between our Special Education and Regular education programs and students.

During semester two, continued refinement and adjustments will be made based on the outcomes of the assessments of the progress. Building level plans will be developed by July 1. Meetings, workshops, and trainings will continue throughout the school year for building principals and instructors.

School Director Ortiz asked if the Summer Programming would be mandatory. Dr. Silva gave an overview of what he believes the summer session should resemble. He is looking to offer a 4-week intensive experience to motivate and re-invigorate reading skills. He does not see the program being mandatory, but struggling students will be encouraged to take advantage of the extra help.

School Director Thomasik asked if the newly-hired candidates are bringing early learning reading skills with them to their new positions. He wanted to know if there was also any offering for current teachers may be offered tuition reimbursement to become dual certified in the area of reading. Dr. Silva answered "yes" and "yes." The BASD has already begun the push toward this goal and were encouraging our principals to try and forward candidates with strong literacy skills and backgrounds. Dr. Silva usually interviews all candidates receiving a contract and assured the Board that he is very interested in their backgrounds and plans for improving reading instruction.

School Director Beck-Pooley wanted a little more clarification on MTSS and RTii. Dr. Silva explained the Rtii system as an academic framework of tiered instruction and interventions.

## 2.3 2016-2017 Preliminary Budget Presentation

The Board was presented with a PowerPoint describing the financial challenges of the past year and highlighting the goals and projections for the coming year. The slides provided timelines, conditions, possible scenarios, and recommendations that will need to be adhered to and considered going forward with budget planning.

Dr. Roy, Dr. Silva and Mrs. Gober guided the Board through the aspirations and intentions of the administration related to the District's Roadmap, as well as the ongoing challenges inherited by State decisions and contractual obligations. Included were slides on district goals, district assets, program initiatives, revenue sources,

and expenditure summaries. Mrs. Gober developed a structural budget proposal which once again is severely impacted by the most costly and problematic areas of mandated retirement contributions and Charter school tuition.

Slightly different from previous years, Dr. Roy pointed out that all the District included all their "wish list" items. In the past, the administration would review and identify "shelf items" that could be considered for elimination. This year, Dr. Roy and his Cabinet kept all their desired budget items in the initial presentation. The administration recognizes that this initial list will be reviewed, revised and probably reduced many times before a final budget will be adopted. The administration recommended to the Board that they once again grant approval for allowable exceptions in the Preliminary Budget to give flexibility throughout budget deliberations.

School Director Neiman inquired as to whether there has been any discussion at the State level about Charter schools, their current structure, and the part the Public Schools are mandated to partake for their existence. Board President Faccinnetto explained that there is little to no talk about the issue. It has become a useful lobbying tool and not enough negative publicity has surrounded the fact that Charters are drawing heavily from public school budgets and impacting their own forward movement. School Director Patrick suggested that the Board become more active in publicizing and marketing the amount of tax dollars that fund Charter Schools. That Charter Schools are not free. They are funded through our tax dollars. She asked that the Board and administration get creative in getting the word out about this substantial loss to the BASD, and that taxpayers become more knowledgeable about where their tax dollars are actually going. All were in agreement that ways should be investigated to positively promote the District and educate the tax community as to their options and avenues to express their concerns and desire for change. School Director Faccinnetto stated that he agrees with the suggestion, but feels that the campaign would need to come from groups other than the BASD and Board of School Directors. School Director Sinkler suggested that the Proposed Education Policy Components be put out to the public and that the public know that these are the items they can and should be addressing with their local legislators. Dr. Roy will continue to work with his administration to find creative ways to keep the BASD aligned and funded in the best interest of our students, families, and staff.

In conclusion, the administration will continue to work toward achieving their goals and missions outlined in the District's Roadmap while creating the most balanced and financially level budget possible. The Board will continue to discuss budgeting in future meetings.

### 3. Information Items

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None

### 4. Agenda Items for January 25, 2016 Regular Board Meeting

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#### 4.1 Step-by-Step Learning LLC Services Agreement

Dr. Silva explained in detail the services the BASD is already receiving from Step-by-Step Learning. The Agreement will be added to an agenda item which will be presented on January 25th at the Regular Board Meeting. The services being provided and received by this consulting firm have already proven invaluable and vital toward the success of the Reading at Grade Level Plan. The agenda item will include the \$200,000 cost of the service agreement. The Board approved the inclusion of the item for the regular agenda.

#### 4.2 Impact Aid, Section 800

A commonly seen request for federal funds to assist local school districts with the cost of providing programming to children with federally supported housing and who have a parent on active duty in the uniformed services to the US. This item was approved for inclusion in the January 25th regular agenda.

## 5. Courtesy of the Floor

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### 5.1 Public Comment

Mr. Antalics of Ridge Street in Bethlehem spoke about combining a structured, as well as nurturing environment to all students in their educational "home." He brought up the positive effects of an active recess time and offerings of breakfast and healthy lunches.

## 6. Open Forum

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None

## 7. Adjournment

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Mrs. Sinkler adjourned the meeting, with a second motion at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Charisse Pfeiffer  
Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent for Education