

RSU 19 Education Committee

Minutes: September 6, 2016

Members Present: Ken Sands, Samantha Brown, Susie Hopkins, Robin McNeil, Chad Stratton

Members Absent: Paul Carter, Don Mendell, Winn Price

I. Public Comment

Sherri Gould asked what the Education Committee's goals are for 2016-2017. In the absence of any developed, she requested that the committee set goals and develop an action plan to meet those goals. Don Roux suggested that the Education Committee and the Finance Committee may want to hold some joint meetings to collaborate.

II. Curriculum Update

Sherri Gould shared that upon learning that Dr. Morse would not return from medical leave this year, Sherri had rescinded her resignation as the Curriculum Steering Committee Coordinator and was excited to return to the position. She reported that the CSC met for the first time today for this academic year. Subject Area Leaders (SALs) will continue to develop summative assessments (piloting and revising them as appropriate), unpack performance indicators to write learning targets, build unit plans for each of the assessments, and finalize topic charts as we continue to work toward district-wide consistency.

One of the decisions that will need to be made this year will be around how math will be taught in the district.

In June 2016, the CSC added a Pre-K SAL to its membership. This year, a Health SAL has been included as well. Sherri, Jean Haeger (GSP), Mr. Hammer, and Jane Blais (MSFE) will meet soon to finalize some remaining details: revised SAL job descriptions and stipend amounts; SAL and Assistant SAL for Social Studies and Career & Education Development; and scheduling half-day/all-day work sessions by content-area for the year.

III. Review of Bullying and Conflict Resolution Discussion

Don Roux explained some examples of what bullying is and what it is not. He may have had (8) actual cases last year, most of them included some form of cyberbullying. He is addressing this through emphasis on Positive Behavior Intervention and Support - rewarding students for positive behavior. He is also using some aspects of restorative justice - having students reflect on how their actions affect others and how to fix the situation.

Chad asked if there was a correlation between bullying and attendance. Don discussed that this isn't the case and it is other factors affecting attendance.

Ellen Surprenant, Lori Merrow, and Denise Kimball discussed the elementary aspect of bullying. It isn't really an issue based on the age and maturity of the students.

Ellen referenced the flow chart detailing the choice to identify bullying as such. The elementary grades focus on dealing with feelings, teachable moments in peer interactions, being positive and kind and specifically the language of adults in dealing with these situations - supporting the students. Corinna is doing a book study on the "Power or Words".

Hartland has had numerous parent events in the spring, fall and has presently passed on the challenge to the PTF group. They have had the Maine Parent Federation included as well. Attendance of parents is an issue.

At Sebecook, Angela articulated some of some concerns that Somerset experiences, including a lot of bus issues brought into school. She and her staff are focussed on decision making, perception of the situation, contacting parents early and having a protocol for handling the situation. She prefers to have intervention at the lowest level with the person directly involved with the situation being the first to handle it. Lastly, having students looking at their personal choices and giving them the resources and tools to handle these situations.

Cell phones were quickly discussed. They are to be out of sight and if it becomes a habitual problem parents become involved and we ask that they not come to school. The fact that students depend on them for security is important to remember.

Committee would like to hear from Ms. Nadeau at the next meeting.

IV. Student Enrollment

Robin indicated that she and Ray had discussed this and that it needs to be a focus of the district. We need to understand the perception of parents on this and are there things we can offer or "fix" to get students back into our schools.

Separate grade appropriate meetings with parents may be an option as is reaching out to them independently. (Mike will forward list of home schoolers to all principals for follow up)

Are there areas we can focus on or specialize in to get more students? Tri County was mentioned as a bright spot.

V. Other

Brought up as Public Comment

Some discussion on Science, Social Studies content while we have been focused on Math and ELA. We haven't been standing still, the focus on ELA has a positive impact on other areas. We will need to see how curriculum improvements affect the bottom line of the budget.

VI. Items for Next Agenda

Visit from guidance regarding college entrance requirements

Alternative Education

NWEA and SAT data

Extra Curricular programs as educational experiences

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Hammer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "M".

Mike Hammer
Superintendent of Schools