

## Middle School Curriculum Meeting Minutes

Sept 21, 2011

In Attendance: Joanne Abbate, Jennifer Federmann, Kathy Rea, Sharon Becker, Holly Ash, Eileen Dershowitz, Karen Greiss, Marie Giulietti, John McNamara, Caroline Bock, Jill Gierasch.

The agenda included listing the topic for future meetings and review of the ELA state testing results.

The meeting began with an introduction of each committee member.

A question was raised as to whether or not report cards for Middle school report cards were going to be changed. The district will look into this after the new curriculum is aligned to the common core standards for 2012.

A list, of topics that the committee would like to cover at this year's curriculum committee meetings, was created. See below. The May 23rd meeting was left blank in order to cover any additional topics that may come up during the year or to finish any topics that we were not able to complete at another meeting.

Copies of the 2011 Grades 3-8 ELA State Testing Results Presentation given to the BOE on September 12, 2011 were distributed. The cut score for proficiency had been changed for the spring of 2010 exam. The cut scores were set at a level that prepares students to earn a college-ready Regents score. This means 75 or great on the English Regents and 80 or greater on the Math Regents. In summary, a student should make a year's worth of developmental growth; they will ultimately be on track for a college career ready Regents score.

The 2011 cut scores for proficiency were similar to last year (Spring 2010 tests) however, the test was more rigorous. The time to take the test remained the same in middle school with the exception of 7th grade ( increased time to 155 minutes from 90 minutes), however the number of multiple choice questions almost doubled, and the number of written response questions increased. Pilot questions were embedded in the actual exam. Essay questions were added to the exams in grades 3,5 and 7, previously essays were only written in grades 4, 6 and 8. The test questions were not released to the district after the test was administered to the children. The district is provided with information about the test results and what each question addressed in terms of performance indicators but they will not be able to determine why a child may have answered the question incorrectly, for e.g. vocabulary.

The test results showed a drop in our students Mastery scores. While it can be said that there is room for improvement in our elementary and middle school grades when we look at our high school students, we rank 3rd in the county in our college ready Regents score ( 75 or higher on the English Regents and 80 or higher on any Math Regents).

The numbers of days the state has given to administer the exam in the spring will be reduced to two days to ensure the integrity of the exam. The exam is scheduled for April 17th and 18th, which is right after spring break. If no snow days are used, the exam will be administered on the first day back from vacation. We discussed the importance of ensuring that April 17 is a school day in order to prepare for tests.

Plans are underway to implement new writing curriculum in grades 3, 5 and 6. The district will continue to determine target areas for improvement. The presentation that was shared with the committee can be found on the district website. Individual test results were mailed home today. Further discussions regarding the district's plan for ELA will be discussed at the November 30th meeting.

It is expected that in 2014, PARCC exams will be administered in alignment with the common core curriculum. These exams would be given twice a year with the possibility of even 4 times per year. PARCC exams are also expected for high school, or if the regent exams are still used, the regent exams would be made more difficult.

Our next meeting will be on October 26th and will cover the Climate Survey, Social Studies curriculum created over the summer, results of the Social Studies exam, the new Art 9 requirements, and review of Math State test assessment results.

October 26	Climate survey, Summer SS curriculum and standardized test results, Art 9 requirements and curriculum alignment
November 30	ELA common core curriculum and district plans, Math common core curriculum, update on unit and quarterly exam plans
January 11	Summer science curriculum projects, Guidance
February 29	Research 5-8
March 28	Electives, including library requirements, Music
April 25	Algebra and Math update
May 23	Open

Minutes submitted by Joanne Abbate