

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Student Achievement Committee met remotely on Monday, July 20, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

**Committee members present:** Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, and Dr. Taylor

**Administration present:** Dr. Serino, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. DiMaggio, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, and Mr. Falcone, Principal at CRHS

**Community members present:** Ms. Commins

**Student members present:** N/A

Dr. Friedrich called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Approval of Agenda**

*Dr. Friedrich made a motion, second by Mr. Roraback and Mrs. Petrella, to approve the agenda, as presented*

*In favor of approving the agenda as presented: Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Roraback, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, and Dr. Taylor.*

### **Approval of Minutes - April 27, 2020**

*Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roraback and Mrs. Petrella, to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2020 meeting, as presented.*

*In favor of approving the minutes of April 27, 2020, as presented: Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Roraback, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, and Dr. Taylor.*

**Link to presentation:** shared by Mrs. DiMaggio

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Pzzxxqm6GT57hZcQHJnPMuhQQ-IRltHG9EgVD1ik770/edit?usp=sharing>

Mrs. DiMaggio stated that the Student Achievement Committee will be meeting again as we continue to receive new information.

Mrs. DiMaggio asked Mr. Falcone to review the new high school courses.

### **2020-2021 New High School Courses**

Mr. Falcone stated that this is a unique situation as new courses are normally reviewed in April. There are usually 12-15 new courses, but not they do not run every year as it depends on student enrollment. Schedules are built off of student interests. COVID-19 has also impacted what courses cannot be offered, due to safety and possibility of distance learning.

-Exploring Careers in Arts and Entertainment (Senior Field Experience) - 1 credit

This class is designed to provide students with real world experiences through partnerships.

-Equity in Society: Everyone's Voices - .5 Credits

This course will explore the idea of societal constructions of equality in race, gender, and individualism in our modern world. This is a pilot class that will be taught by a Social Studies and English teacher. Maybe a graduation requirement for the next school year. Students will read novels and discuss history. Our students are young adults with their own views.

-Genocide Studies - .25 Credits

This course will use critical thinking skills to evaluate multiple perspectives, engage in constructive debate, conduct research and problem-solving as they explore this topic.

-Modern Women's History and Gender Studies - .25 Credits

Topics of study will include modern women's movement, feminism, and the continued struggle for economic equality and a political voice

-Algebra 1A - 1.5 Credits

This course prepares students for success in a four-year college. This is an in-depth study that emphasizes an understanding of abstract concepts and their anticipated use in subsequent math courses. This provides extra time for students to understand the content. SAT and PSAT scores showed an area of weakness here.

-Team Sports - .25 Credits

This elective course is designed to incorporate a full complement of team sports and lifetime sports, with fitness and conditioning exercises.

Reviewed with PE teachers - students intimidated - different levels

-Advanced Team Sports - .25 Credits

This class offers a higher level of competition and leadership in team and partner sports

-Introductory Woodshop - .5 Credits

Students of all abilities have the power to use their creativity, drive, and interests to make positive change happen in and out of the classroom. This is a one semester course.

Reviewed with Tina Hurlbert - students intimidated - different levels

-Intermediate Woodshop - .5 Credit

This one semester course will build upon skills and techniques mastered in Introductory Woodshop. Students will utilize professional 3D modeling software.

Coding and Robotics II - .5 Credits

This course extends students' pre-existing robotics and coding skills as they work in teams to build and fly a quadcopter. Students learn team management skills, project design skills, and programming skills.

These new courses have been impacted by COVID restrictions or low enrollment:

Advanced Body Sculpting

This course has been cancelled. The weight room has been shut down due to cleaning concerns - touch points

Emergency Medical Technician Initial Training Course (EMT-B)

This course has been cancelled due to the possibility of distance learning. A lot of interest in this course. 180 hours for training - instruction will be impacted

Science and Technology Immersion (Senior Field Experience)

This course is not offered due to low student enrollment (only 3 students signed up)

Problem with job shadows if students are under the age of 18

UCONN Health and Education in Urban Communities

This course is not offered due to low student enrollment. Dual credit course. Field study - students leaving the district.

Street Law

This course is not offered due to low student enrollment.

Per Mr. Falcone, the high school is faced with declining enrollment. Courses can't be run every year due to the pool of students interested in. Most utilize teachers.

Dr. Taylor commented that he would be happy to mentor and have students shadow him in the ER.

Mrs. Petrella asked if Algebra 1A is required for all students or in addition to their Algebra. Mr. Falcone stated there are 3 levels of Algebra. (Algebra Honors, Algebra A - credit and a half, Algebra 1 and 2 over a 3 year period)

Mrs. Petrella asked if there was a book list of novels for the Equity in Society course. Mr. Falcone will provide the list to the committee members.

Mr. Roraback commented - Diary of a Part Time Indian was a book that was read by the entire student body over last summer at the high school he teaches at. This book was a conversation starter on equity among the entire student body.

**Textbook Approval**

Algebra 1 Honors - College Prep Algebra - Grades 8 and 9 - Cost of textbook is \$130.75 (includes 6 yr online subscription) requested by Megan Kavanaugh

High School Books - 30 total books Middle School Books - 45-50 total books

SAT prep questions

Algebra 2 Honors - College Algebra - Grades 10 and 11 - Cost of textbook is \$199 (includes 6 yr online subscription) requested by Megan Kavanaugh

High School Books - 65 total books

Tutoring videos, resources

Latin Book - Cambridge Latin Course, Unit 1 - Grades 7 and 8 - Cost of textbook - digital \$15.75 requested by Katy Reddick

Text for distance learning

Dr. Taylor questioned if the committee members had to approve textbooks as he has not done so in the past. Mrs. DiMaggio stated that yes the Board of Education members need to approve textbooks for the district. Teachers need to fill out textbook request forms.

Mr. Roraback stated that he would approve the request for hard copies of the textbooks, but we should also have a PDF format of the book as well. Mrs. DiMaggio confirmed all purchased textbooks have digital access. This will be helpful for distance learning.

**Summer Learning**

Mrs. DiMaggio stated that the enrollment in distance summer learning was 52 students, currently 49 students are participating.

Staffing includes - 5 instructional teachers and 2 facilitators that are splitting the lead position.

The structure of the program is two twenty minute sessions and morning meetings. Each student is provided two 1 on 1 sessions per week. Teacher focuses on math and reading skills. Students have independent work assigned by the teacher and feedback is provided to the student. Mrs. DiMaggio shared a sample schedule of summer school.

No transportation issues as it is distance learning.

Teachers were provided student profiles prior to summer learning starting. Teachers stated that students show up and are enthusiastic - positive feedback from them.

Mrs. DiMaggio will follow up with a parent survey for feedback on this program.

Mrs. DiMaggio shared the Summer Learning Padlets (for all students in the district) that were created by Phil Moriarty. This is located on the RSD13 website, under Summer Learning. The Padlets are separated by different grade levels (entering kindergarten - grade 8) that include Reading, Writing, Math, STEAM, and Wellness. There will be a July and August Padlet edition for the students to do.

Mrs. Petrella asked if the Padlets are required to be completed by all students. Mrs. DiMaggio stated that students will be asked to share one activity when they return to school in the fall but that they are not required.

### **Distance Learning 2.0, Self-selected Hybrid, Mandatory Hybrid – updates**

In-Person Learning - 100% of students in school

Self-Selected Hybrid - Students attending distance learning while peers are learning in-person

Mandatory Hybrid - 50% students attending with alternating schedule

Distance Learning - 0% students attending “Quarantine” - no students in school

Distance Learning Essentials - combination of synchronized and asynchronous learning, consistent schedule with flexibility, individualized feedback and formative assessments, accelerated lessons with curriculum compacting, graded standards for grades K-5 and graded courses for grades 6-12

Mrs. DiMaggio shared what a distance learning schedule will look like at the elementary, middle school and high school level.

Start the class with a morning meeting. The coaches will have a strong role in supporting the teachers with recorded lessons. These lessons will be the same per grade level. This will give the teachers time for small live sessions. Large sessions were cumbersome and younger kids seemed to be overwhelmed. Students can view the videos later on as a reference as well.

On Wednesdays teachers can meet with each other, use this time for planning, related arts can use this day for social and emotional instruction, Intervention and Special Education can use this time to meet with students. It is also a break for the students as 5 days of distance learning was too much.

Mr. Falcone shared his Distance At Home Learning model. The classes will be in 45 minute blocks. Live lessons. Teachers will also post videos. There will be 15 minute breaks for kids in between classes. Office hours will be provided. Grading system will be in place. These changes will better help the students and meet their needs. Also offering student support for those who are struggling. (small groups or one on one)

Mrs. Petrella asked what the start time of the school day is. Mr. Falcone stated 9:00 AM. But this needs to be reviewed in the teachers MOU per their contract/agreement.

Mrs. Booth asked if everyone is off on Wednesday's, do those days still count towards the schools required 177 days. Mr. Falcone stated yes it does as the teachers and students are still working on Wednesdays.

Maureen Hamilton will develop Padlets for grades 4-8 (maybe K-2) for distance learning.

Self-Selected Hybrid Approach - students with health concerns, illness, or quarantine order will participate in this model. Students will learn from home with parent support in place. The State of CT has designed a Remote Learning Hub. Per Mrs. DiMaggio, this resource will not be used in the district, only as supplemental materials.

Dr. Friedrich asked why the district would not use the Remote Learning Hub. Mrs. DiMaggio replied, we would use it for resources only. She does not feel it is robust enough. There are many links on that website. The district can provide better instruction to students with live videos. Mrs. DiMaggio feels it is not rigorous enough for the students.

Mr. Roraback commented that there is no one size that fits all districts in curriculum.

Self-Selected Hybrid Instructional Options - per Mrs. DiMaggio we are currently waiting to receive data from families and staff surveys on the number of students and staff who opt out of in-person learning.

Option A: teachers and staff not returning can support students in grades K-12 for distance learning based on their certification. (Feasible for grades K-8)

Option B: One teacher is selected per grade level (grades K-4) and content area (grades 5-8) to record live lessons in class.

Students in grades 9-12 can use Edgenuity for their classes as many of the courses have certifications.

Brenda Parness, Ken Pietrasko, and selected teachers will be testing technology equipment on Tuesday, July 21st so teachers can interact with students via audio and video. Mrs. DiMaggio expressed that the equipment might be back ordered and funding for this needs to be determined.

Google Meets - Directors and Administrators now have the option to record meetings. After September 30th this option will be removed.

Mandatory Hybrid Schedule - Mrs. DiMaggio shared this schedule with the committee. The LEARN Region had adopted this model as well as Cromwell and Portland who are in our consortium. Cohort A (Alpha A-M) in person on Monday and Tuesday. Cohort B (Alpha N-Z) in person on Thursday and Friday. Wednesday all on Distance Learning. Custodians will have Wednesday to thoroughly clean the schools (safety and security of the children).

Students stay in their Cohorts. Maybe establish cohort buddies/study buddies.

Dr. Taylor commented if this is an easy approach to having a hybrid schedule in the district and if this is the right approach for us? Convenience vs. what is actually needed. Is this a general approach? Mrs. DiMaggio stated it is not a model of convenience. Nothing takes the place of in class learning. The safety and security of all students and staff in the district is the main focus. This is a set schedule with flexibility for families. Transportation and equity across the towns.

Mrs. Petrella wanted to confirm if it was one teacher per grade level, so there would be consistency in the instruction. Mrs. DiMaggio confirmed that one person will deliver the instruction to home vs. in class.

Mrs. Booth asked why the hybrid model changed since her prior call with Dr. Serino. Mrs. DiMaggio stated that she just received this from LEARN and reviewed this with principals and teachers. Mrs. Booth wanted more information as to why students were not in school on Wednesdays. Mrs. DiMaggio stated that the custodians need the day for deep cleaning in between the cohorts - more feasible.

Mr. Falcone reviewed the hybrid high school model. Periods 1,2,3,4 will meet on Monday and Thursday while periods 5,6,7,8 will meet on Tuesday and Friday. Dividing the school alphabetically will decrease the classroom size.

Dr. Friedich wanted to confirm that starting school in September, the district will have both students in school and distance learning. Mrs. DiMaggio did confirm yes at this time.

### **Assessments moving forward**

Mrs. DiMaggio confirmed that we will still be assessing students when they return to school in the fall. This is important for the district to determine the students' current instructional levels. The district will be cutting back on some assessments that we have done in the past.

Maureen Hamilton (Enrichment Teacher for Grades 4-8) has a list of students she will be testing when they return in the fall.

Dr. Serino stated that there have been some discussions on assessments in the district. We do not want to add any undue stress to students. Some assessments are needed to determine special education and intervention needs. Direct instruction to the level of the student.

### **Single Academic Approach**

Dr. Serino reviewed the outcome of a Portrait of a Citizen aligned with the single academic approach. She expressed the great need for consistency within the schools.

As noted, the vote did not pass for BOE to close schools.

Dr. Serino suggested school based designed teams should reconvene in November. Pick up where the team left off.

Building Utilization Committee to relook at building conditions and enrollment projection numbers. Come back together - move forward. Educational design.

Enrollment is still decreasing at the high school level.

Dr. Serino looked at different possibilities for John Lyman School (timeline) .The building condition needs to be examined within the next 2-3 years. Thoughts on turning Lyman into a grade K-2 school - move grades 3-4 to Memorial, needs to be reviewed. What would it look like?

Are we moving forward with bonding?

Dr. Serino expressed concern about how now is not the time to take anything away, like school choice. But two things to consider school choice vs. projected enrollment and geographic study linked to enrollment. Next steps? Keep us on track.

Mr. Moore stated he would like to move towards a slower paced plan for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. He stated that the Superintendent search will start next week and he thinks it would be best if there is a more stable next 3 or 4 months to focus on this process.

Dr. Serino stated the administrators need to relook at the Portrait Plan. Also the need is to focus on a safe opening of the schools for students and staff and provide the best academic program. Need to reassess on how to move forward.

Dr. Serino will provide more information on the BOE meeting Wednesday night on the Hybrid model.

### **Related Arts**

Mrs. Petrella commented that Mrs. DiMaggio shared a Google Doc with her with links that were provided by the related arts teachers. These links were used during distance learning at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Petrella thought the links were good quality and they were engaging to the students. She stated that Cori and the administrators did a phenomenal job. Teachers spent a lot of time putting this together.

Mrs. DiMaggio will share the Google Doc with the committee.

### **Public Comment**

None

Mrs. DiMaggio thanked all principals and teachers for working on the plans. She stated that we have wonderful people in the district and a wonderful team to work with. Everyone is working hard over the summer months. Thank you to the entire team who has been working over the summer.

Mr. Moore thanked Mrs. DiMaggio

### **Adjournment**

*A motion was made by Dr. Friedrich and seconded by Mrs. Booth and Dr. Taylor to adjourn the meeting.*

*In favor of adjourning the meeting: Dr. Friedrich, Dr. Taylor, Mrs. Booth, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, and Mrs. Caramanello*

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Smith

Administrative Assistant to the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment