

Riverview School District

Education Committee Meeting Notes Monday, March 7, 2011 7:00 - 9:30 PM

Central Office Conference Room

Present: Dr. Loeffler, Mr. DeMario, Mrs. Ashbaugh, Mr. Hackworth, Mr. Hornsby, Mr. Kadylak (7:06)

Absent: Dr. Stein, Ms. Shearon, Mrs. Dolan

Others Present: Dr. Erdeljac, Mr. Moser, Mr. Hadley, Mr. Shoaf, Mr. Zolkowski, Ms. Wiegand, Mr. Dunkle, Mrs. Stuart, Mr. Mizener, Mrs. Cecil, Mrs. Black, Students Chelsea Hendrix and Evan Lesnick, Parents Mr. Lapiana, Mrs. Teitelbaum, Mrs. Lazor, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Stolish, Mrs. Vitti, Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Sebastian

AGENDA:

1. 2010 - 2011 Curriculum Review Cycle Reports

Mrs. Black reviewed the *RSD Curriculum Cycle 2008 - 2014* document, highlighting the departments which are conducting reviews this year: Business Ed, Tech Ed, Family and Consumer Science and Science. The Math department, which was last year's focus (along with Health and PE) is in the second phase of the cycle: "purchase new texts, provide PD, implement changes."

- Family and Consumer Science Mrs. Barbara Stuart and RSD students Chelsea Hendrix (12) and Evan Lesnick (8)

Mrs. Stuart presented a 20 minute overview of the recent curriculum work she has completed for the Family and Consumer Sciences Department. Highlights included the importance of Standards, use of summative and formative assessment, updated technology/equipment and the status of planned courses of instruction. She thanked the Board for its continued support of her programs. RSD students Chelsea Hendrix and Evan Lesnick spoke enthusiastically about their experiences with FACS courses. Students also brought samples of the chocolate treats which they recently learned to make!

- Tech Ed Mr. Sean Mizener

Mr. Mizener spoke for 25 minutes about the Tech Ed Department. Highlights included a description of the courses included in the Tech Ed curriculum, updated software and equipment, and the importance of technology education in terms of promoting problem solving skills, developing STEM concepts, utilizing real life applications and stressing technological literacy. Mr. Mizener brought numerous student work samples to share with the Board. Mr. Hornsby discussed the need for updated technology (Lab View software to replace Lab Volt) and also raised a question concerning potential overlap between RHS and Forbes Road courses in specific areas.

- Science

Mr. Moser for Mr. Brian Ludwig

Mr. Moser presented a 15 minute overview of the *Middle School/High School Science Curriculum Review Report* prepared by Mr. Ludwig for his department. He noted that the Science Department has proactively undertaken the task of reviewing/revising the science department curriculum, courses and class sequence over the past few years. All revisions were reviewed. The current 11th grade class is the first group to have finished the new sequence. The report also highlighted efforts to "bridge" the elementary and secondary science experience. Mrs. Black mentioned that an article included in the Board packet's informational items is directly related to the revised AP examination in biology ("Rethinking Advanced Placement," New York Times, January 7, 2011). A parent discussed the invitation he received from Ms. Pomatto to speak with RJSHS 8th graders about his career in engineering and suggested that this type of presentation is needed for upperclassmen, as they approach post high school choices, as well.

2. Mathematics

- Math Update/Documentation
- Mrs. Cathy Cecil, Department Chair and Dr. Diane Briars, Math Consultant

The remaining 90 minutes of the meeting were spent discussing mathematics. Mrs. Black provided a quick review of the *RSD Math Goal* document, which is a chronology of mathematical events dating from May, 2009 to the present. Highlights include collaboration with Dr. Peg Smith and her recommendations, the release of NCTM's *Focus in High School Mathematics: Reasoning and Sense Making*, the Board's approval of Dr. Diane Briars as RSD math consultant, and a list of the wide array of teacher professional development opportunities in which teachers have been involved. She pointed out several documents included in the Board packet: *Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice, CMP2* and *Discovering lesson design templates* and a copy of the recently administered *RSD Math Teacher Survey*. She also provided a list of southwestern PA school districts using *CMP* or *CMP2*. Mrs. Black introduced Mrs. Cathy Cecil, RJSHS Math Department chair, as well as Dr. Diane Briars, RSD math consultant. Mrs. Cecil presented a Math Department Update focused on topics that are new this year, department concerns, questions and ideas for next year. Several Board members had questions. Mr. Hackwork inquired about the ability of the new materials to accomplish district goals. Dr. Briars reassured him that the current learning process is efficient. Mr. Hackworth also asked about pacing and calculator use. Mr. DeMario inquired about how teachers are providing effective instruction for students with differing ability levels. Both *CMP* and *Discovering* were designed to address the needs of students at all levels and provide numerous teacher resources. Mrs. Ashbaugh asked about lesson design and remarked that the materials provided in the packet were useful, but that she would like Mrs. Cecil to "walk her through" an actual lesson, which Mrs. Cecil did. Mrs. Ashbaugh also asked about the training that National Honor Society students have received to be successful in their role as math tutors. Mr. Moser remarked that, in the early phases of this program, NHS students have helped mainly with homework, but that additional supports for tutors will be added to this program if it is continued next year. Dr. Briars was asked to comment upon the progress of math initiatives so far. She cited the effectiveness of both programs in meeting Common Core content/process standards, the strong support which the district/administration

has provided and commended the math teachers for the changes they have made in their practice. Dr. Erdeljac opened the meeting to parent questions. Parent comments centered on the following:

- the benefits of co-teaching ?
We believe that co-teaching can help meet the needs of ALL learners to ensure they meet their full potential. Some benefits are: decreased student/teacher ratio resulting in more opportunities for individual attention/instruction; the expansion of teacher instructional expertise through opportunities to co-plan, co-deliver and co-evaluate lessons; opportunities for students to experience a wider range of instructional approaches; enhanced student participation/engagement; greater facilitation of flexible grouping; increased facilitation of collaboration between regular/special ed if that is the co-teaching team
- opportunities for students to "make up" class time/work when they are absent ?
No responsible student should be penalized for missing class time/work due to absence from class. Principals must work with teachers to be sure that specific practices for making up class time/work are in place. These might include asking students to meet with the teacher before/after school to get "caught up," posting assignments/other instructional information on teacher websites, contacting parents by telephone or email to inform them of the assignments that have been missed, using "Sorry you were absent; here is the work you missed" forms similar to those used in elementary classrooms, greater student/parent access to CMP and/or Discovering websites, holding more frequent parent nights to inform parents of program instructional practice, encouraging students to check with a "buddy" regarding missed work, etc. Although it is the student's responsibility to inquire about missed work, teachers should continue to make every effort to facilitate the process.
- the need for additional "practice" materials and/or parent resources
Both CMP2 and the Discovering series have numerous practice materials and parent resources. The parent site for CMP is www.phschool.com/CMP2. The "For Parents" tab includes a parent web site developed by Michigan State University, as well as a Parent Guide. Another excellent CMP site can be found at NCTM's (National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics) www.nctm.org/resources/families.aspx. The Discovering Algebra, Geometry and Advanced Algebra site is www.keypress.com. Check out the Products and Parent/Student Resources tabs. Discovering teachers also have *Condensed Lessons—A Tool for Parents and Tutors*, *More Practice Your Skills* student workbooks and *A Guide for Parents*, which includes tips for working with students, chapter summary exercises and review exercises with complete solutions. Keymath.com is another online resource for students, families and tutors, as is Key online. Parents should contact their child's building principal or Mrs. Black, Director of Student Achievement, if they are having difficulty accessing these resources.
- the growth one parent has seen in her special needs child's mathematical progress (student is in a co-taught class)
The co-teaching model has provided IEP students with greater access to the math curriculum; it ensures that students not only get necessary modifications, but are provided instruction by a

content specialist as well. Federal law mandates this for students who have been identified as having special needs.

- internet sources from other districts critical of CMP and Discovering ?
Dr. Erdeljac suggested that parents exercise caution when using the internet to learn about CMP and/or Discovering implementation in other school districts. Please refer to sites listed above.
- the completion of sufficient grade 7 CMP modules for students to be ready for the next year of math ?
Dr. Briars, Mrs. Black, Mr. Moser and Mr. Hadley have been working with grade 7 CMP teachers to ensure that six of the eight modules are addressed before the end of the year. This practice is consistent with what is accomplished in most other CMP districts. Teachers have been modifying their pacing guides to meet student needs as the year has progressed.
- the possibility of a secondary summer school opportunity for mathematics ?
This is a great idea and one which the administrative team has been discussing and will continue to consider.
- the need for rigor in all math classes
RSD teachers and administrators participated in a lengthy text/program evaluation phase before selecting CMP2 and the Discovering series. These programs were chosen because we believe they offer greater opportunities for students to engage in rigorous programs focused on reasoning and sense making. Students are provided with opportunities to analyze problems, implement strategies, seek and use connections across different math domains, contexts and representations, as well as reflect upon solutions to problems on a daily basis.

Parents were given the following materials:

- *Transitions from elementary to middle school math*, NCTM, Teaching Children Mathematics, February, 2010.
- *A Family's Guide to High School Mathematics: Making Reasoning and Sense Making the Focus*, NCTM.
- *Mathematics Standards grades 6 - 8: A Handbook for Parents*, Math and Science Collaborative, 2005.
- *Mathematics and Science Standards A Handbook for Parents Grades 9 - 12*, Math and Science Collaborative, 2009.

3. New Course Request: Probability Statistics II

To be addressed at March 14 Study Session

4. Textbook Request: *Realidades 3* (Spanish)

To be addressed at March 14 Study Session

5. Riverview Jr./Sr. High Block Schedule

Overview document provided by Mr. Moser and Mr. Hadley

6. Grade 9 Netbooks

To be addressed at next Education Committee meeting

Informational Items in Your Packet:

- Arts Education Collaborative Proposal
- RMUNC 2011 Proposal
- RJSHS Library Circulation Data
- January 17 and February 4, 2011 PD Agendas
- PDE Keystone Exam/CDT Update
- PDE 4 Year Graduation Cohort Update
- "Rethinking Advanced Placement," Christopher Drew, *New York Times*, January 7, 2011
(Please refer questions about any of these items to Mrs. Black or to the appropriate building principal.)

Preview of April 4th Education Committee Agenda:

- RSD PVAAS Data
- PSAT Data