

LAMOILLE UNION DISTRICT #18 BOARD
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2009

Committee members present: W. Sander, P. Ingvaldstad, D. Osborn, K. Roberts, J. Eisenhardt, D. Baker, S. Hamlyn-Prescott. Others: B. Schaffer, C. Hindes, J. Laithe, D. Taylor.

The meeting started at 5:32.

W. Sander asked C. Hindes for an update on the preparedness of kids who arrive at the MS. C. Hindes said lack of coordinated curriculum does impact students arriving at the MS. They are arriving at different levels of readiness in math and language arts. C. Hindes distributed some information about MS initiatives.

K. Roberts thought we should clarify what we mean by curriculum. Her understanding is that all the elementary schools *are* using the same math curriculum, in the sense that they have the same textbooks, workbooks, etc. When we talk about coordinating curriculum, what are we really trying to get at? Not just using the same workbooks – that’s not working. C. Hindes said his understanding is that not all schools are using the same instructional methods. K. Roberts said she thought there might not be agreement on expectations. (*D. Taylor arrived at 5:42.*)

C. Hindes talked about MS initiatives. For the 2009-2010 school year, they are adopting team schedule rotation and team leader rotation. Eighth period will be a combination of content-based study halls, Chorus, Band, and other activities. Teachers will be using worksheets for curriculum mapping and aligning to VT Standards/GE’s. Teachers are strongly urged to take classes in Differentiated Instruction. Some are already using DI strategies. The possibility of 7th to 8th grade looping is being discussed. Under this approach, 7th graders would be separated from 8th graders.

P. Ingvaldstad asked, is it worth looking at old work that was done on curriculum coordination in the past? C. Hindes said the state has provided a good roadmap in the form of GE’s.

W. Sander asked how much alignment there is between the MS and HS. C. Hindes said he and B. Schaffer talk every day, and often talk about curriculum. J. Laithe said he thought students should take algebra at least by junior year. C. Hindes thinks we have strengths throughout the SU in language arts. We’re working on math. The January in-service will include Act 154 (drug and alcohol) training and time for teams and departments to work on curriculum mapping. D. Taylor said a curriculum mapping project is something you do when you are ready to initiate curriculum work within a school system. Prior to winter break, she shared with administrators a book called *Schooling by Design*, which has a well-researched common framework for outlining curriculum. The first step is mapping, which has to be done at the teacher level. All

schools will be doing mapping, using the same approach, as the initiation of curriculum work across the SU.

D. Osborn asked how acknowledging the individuality of students fits into this talk about uniformity of curriculum. What about kids who already know some part of the curriculum? C. Hinder said delivery of curriculum is important. Teachers should use differentiated instruction, assessing each student's level of readiness and knowledge. If knowledge is already there, there is no reason to teach it again, so the student is accelerated. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to address individual students' needs. W. Sander said there might be lacks in certain areas that aren't being addressed even if students seem proficient overall. K. Roberts asked C. Hinder where he sees integrating kids into curriculum mapping. C. Hinder said it is important to know your students, and know how they learn best. K. Roberts asked, do we tell kids what the GE's are? B. Schaffer said we are moving in that direction. C. Hinder said grading criteria needs to be upfront; kids need to know what they need to do to get the highest grade. He likes to see daily goals or objectives on the board in the classroom.

B. Schaffer distributed information about the graduation exam committee and a sample course syllabus outline. He said LUHS's poor NECAP performance was one of the best things to happen to the school. It caused discussions with students and departments, and let people know things needed to change. The graduation exam committee is working on coming up with some system in addition to Carnegie units to ensure students can read, write and compute at a high school level upon graduation. Tying the NECAP to a graduation requirement may motivate students. K. Roberts said she is opposed to making the NECAP a make or break graduation requirement, because there is no practical way to readminister it, and there are a lot of questions about its validity and how it relates to our GE's. B. Schaffer said there are other potential ways to assess competency, including a portfolio. P. Ingvoldstad said he is opposed to having one final test as a graduation requirement.

The meeting ended at 6:28.