



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORTS

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Culture, Climate & Community Relations

The Culture, Climate & Community Relations Committee met on January 21, to discuss pending projects, including positive messages at Conackamack, Black History Month messaging, and Rutgers partnerships.

- 1. Positive Messaging at Conackamack:** School Administration is working with staff and Junior National Honor Society students to select messages. Students are experimenting with painted calligraphy to apply positive messages in restrooms.
- 2. Black History Month Messaging:** During Black History Month, all schools worked together to showcase positive messages from prominent African Americans on their marquees.
- 3. Rutgers and Corporate Partnerships:** Administration shared follow up with Rutgers Division of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement to provide student volunteers for Education Foundation and school events. Discussion took place regarding Susan Robeson appearing at Piscataway READS to share her picture book about Paul Robeson. Updates for a presentation on preventing hearing loss from local company Signia also took place.
- 4. Volunteer Outreach:** The committee discussed the appropriateness of Sign Up Genius for district events, census job outreach, and district vision services.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee met on February 3, 2020 to discuss November conference feedback, new course offerings, and other ongoing efforts.

- 1) Vocabulary Phonemic Instruction/Cursive Writing:** The committee discussed practices inside/outside the district for increasing vocabulary and meeting student needs. Administration shared that cursive writing will be introduced in third grade curriculum next year.
- 2) QSAC Audit/Middle States Accreditation:** QSAC will audit the district for compliance in study areas: Amistad, Holocaust, LGBTQ, Mental Health Instruction, and Erin's Law (PK-12: Sexual Assault Education). Middle States Accreditation is moving forward, with the narrative portion currently under revision.
- 3) Professional Development:** Staff enjoyed the November Conference structure/offerings. The district will move toward a hybrid structure, which will include an EdCamp component, with teachers facilitating sessions and staff selecting which sessions to attend.
- 4) PHS Course Updates:**

New courses reviewed including Aviation Honors Ground School; Personal Finance for Cadets; Musical Theater; Academy Honors English 2; Music of Literature; American Sign Language; Academy US 1/Law; Conceptual Biology/Physical Science; Facing History and Ourselves.

Course name changes include: Spanish 2 to Spanish 2 Language and Culture and Spanish 2 Honors; AP Physics to AP Physics C; Composition and Mythology (English IV) to Composition and Mythology (English III); Art Around the World to World of Art; Art Independent Study to Visual Art Workshop; Performing Arts Independent Study to Performing Arts Workshop.

Course Credit Changes: SAT Prep: 2.5 credits to 2.5 (1.25 each Math and English); AP Biology: 7 credits to 10 credits; AP Chemistry: 7 credits to 10 credits; Dynamics in Healthcare: 3 credits to 2.5 credits; Intro to Organic Chemistry: 3 credits to 2.5 credits; Research in Molecular Biology: 3 credits to 5 credits

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee met on February 4 to introduce new committee members to recent accomplishments, including the reorganization of the district policies through Strauss Esmay to be introduced this month, and to begin planning policy review through the end of the year.

Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee

The Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee met on February 5, 2020 to review the 2020-2021 budget process, capital projects, and other ongoing projects.

- 1) 2020-2021 Budget:** The Business Office has gathered budget input from all schools and is preparing the preliminary budget due to the County by March 20.
- 2) State Aid:** The Business Office reviewed parameters for a presentation on the history of Piscataway's state aid, including the SFRA calculation formula, for an upcoming Board meeting.
- 3) Capital Projects:** Planning has begun for upgrades to all Middle School auditoriums, the PHS auditorium, and the PHS Family Consumer Science Room, with bids expected to go out in April.
- 4) Cenergistic LLC:** This energy conservation company has been working in district this school year and has identified approximately \$270,000 in cost avoidance energy savings.
- 5) Transportation:** The Business Office recommended renewing the contract with Layla Transportation pending the release of the CPI renewal rate in the spring.
- 6) Food Services:** The committee discussed the move to fixed price vs. cost reimbursable contracts, and the impact to PHS lunch periods with scheduling changes in the 2020-2021 school year.
- 7) Wellness Committee:** The committee reviewed staff wellness initiatives.
- 8) Business Office:** The Business Office discussed the process of creating the district's new five-year capital plan.