



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORT

June 8, 2023

Culture, Climate & Community Relations

The Culture, Climate & Community Relations Committee met on May 16, 2023, to discuss positive messaging, community partnerships, wellness initiatives, and more.

Positive Messaging

- Positive messaging displays on school marquees were discussed. Themes included the Month of Hope for April and Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month for May. A request was made that activities connected to the monthly themes be shared with the committee.
- Student-to-Student Mentoring messages regarding clubs & activities and time management were shared with the committee. Committee members suggested showing the videos at freshman orientation, in waiting areas around the school, on the district website, or on district social media. A recommendation was made to ensure all students and families are aware of all of the clubs and activities that are available.
- The revised district marketing brochure is being shared with the community.

Community Partnerships

- Dr. Gray gave an update on partnerships with Rutgers. PHS Business Academy students participating in a mentoring program with the Rutgers Business School visited the New Brunswick campus on May 16. Rutgers engineering students attended a recent National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club meeting at PHS and plan to participate in more NSBE Jr. meetings next school year.
- Jersey Cares volunteers will engage in a service project at Schor on June 22. Representatives from Jersey Cares met with Principal Lisa Parker on May 11 to plan and explore possible projects, including refreshing the teacher's lounge, new landscaping, or painting a mural.

Wellness Services

- Research into delayed school start times will continue this summer as the staff, family, and student surveys will be finalized. Plans will include administering the surveys at the start of next school year.
- Feedback was positive on the Haven Parent Webinars. There was discussion about notifying the school community in advance, and about recording the sessions so they could be made available afterward.

New Business

- Dr. Gray shared data on the various languages spoken by district families, and how they compare to the languages spoken by staff. Ways of sharing information in more of these languages was discussed.
- Dr. Gray shared that that he spoke to the Supervisor of World Languages/ESL, about creating a brochure to orient our ELL families with the country and our district.
- The committee discussed ways to support the school PTOs. A suggestion was made to advertise PTO events in advance through social media platforms.
- Mrs. Rashid suggested that student clubs and the community work together to celebrate and plan cultural events. The committee shared ideas about reaching out to senior citizens, such as invitations to the school play or holding movie nights.

Curriculum

The Curriculum Committee met on June 5, 2023, to discuss the NASA Tech Rise Challenge, changes in learning platforms, interim report consistency, ESL teacher dual endorsement, the VPA Department, and more.

NASA Tech Rise Challenge – PHS engineering teacher Paul Mazur and his seven students described their project that was selected to take part in the NASA Tech Rise Challenge. The PHS team is the only NJ High School accepted into the challenge. The device they designed and created, which consists of sensors and a camera, will be carried by a high-altitude balloon into a suborbital flight to collect data on how climate change and ozone levels may affect agriculture. The students are Kanika Syal, Brinda Guntur, Ananya Guntur, Aaron Aguila, Palash Keswani, Vaishvi Patel and Vivek Mistry. Robyn Kay thanked Mr. Mazur for all of his work and the committee praised and encouraged the team for their work.

Seesaw – Dr. Baskerville and Christopher Irovando – Elementary schools will switch from Google Classroom to the Seesaw learning platform. Google Classroom worked well for remote instruction during the pandemic, but needs

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Curriculum (continued)

changed along with the urgency and relevance of the tool. Grades 2-3 will also join higher grades in using Schoology.

Middle School and High School Interim Reports – Dr. Baskerville described a change to the interim report process that would address issues raised by parents, teachers, and administrators. Concerns were about the accuracy of the report from the time it is placed into Genesis, reviewed, and made available to the parents. Moving forward, Mid-term Progress Checkpoints will be given on a specific date each marking period so that students' grades and teacher gradebooks are current. Weighting and grading requirements have been streamlined and will be made available to parents at the start of the 2023-24 school year.

ESL Dual Endorsement – Due to a large increase in ESL enrollment and shortage of ESL teachers, the district is enrolling 15 current teachers in a one-year program at Rutgers to attain their ESL certification. ESL enrollment has nearly tripled since 2014, from the low 200s to around 594 students. The district chose Rutgers after also reviewing programs at Kean and Rowan. The program is scheduled to begin around June 26, and the district will cover the cost of teachers through grant funds. Teachers were required to apply for entry into the program and will be required to remain employed by the district and complete the program with conditions that are consistent with the PTEA contract. The committee commended this effort and planning.

Visual and Performing Arts Year Recap – Rebekah Sterlacci shared the accomplishments of the VPA Department this year through a short video and some other links to VPA resources, and shared some goals for the future. She also highlighted the importance of showing students that careers in the arts are viable. The committee commended the department on its accomplishments and work this year. Ms. Sterlacci shared ongoing efforts in encouraging students to find their passion in the arts and also about recruitment.

Course Name Change: Orchestra to String Ensemble – Ms. Sterlacci shared that the Orchestra class at PHS has always been referred to as String Ensemble, but called Orchestra in Genesis, causing confusion. This will be changed to String Ensemble. The curriculum remains the same.

Curricular Highlights – Dr. Baskerville highlighted the achievement of Quibbletown teacher Kelly Alu and her students, who have completed over 980,500 math skills on the IXL learning website. Their goal is 1,000,000 before the close of school. He also commented on the resources we have in the community – in parents, community members, and the committee. Dr. Baskerville highlighted Mr. Patel's software, and he demonstrated it for the committee.

New Committee Member – The committee welcomed Mrs. Yamunan. She shared her background and her commitment to education through her work and experience as a tutor, substitute teacher, and district parent.

Policy & Legislative

The Policy and Legislative Committee met on May 4, 2023, to discuss proposed policies and regulations.

- Mr. Rubin led the Committee in a discussion of the following proposed policies and regulations, which were approved to move forward to the Board agenda for First Reading:
 - Policy 0144: "Board Member Orientation and Training (Revised)"
 - Policy and Regulation 2520: "Instructional Supplies (Revised)"
 - Policies 3217/4217: "Use of Corporal Punishment" with change of title to "Use of Corporal Punishment and Physical Force"
 - Policy 5305: "Health Services Personnel (Revised)"
 - Policy and Regulation 5308: "Student Health Records (Revised)"
 - Policy and Regulation 5310: "Health Services (Revised)"
 - Policy 7440: "School District Security (Revised)"

- The Committee recommended that the Board abolish Policy 9100 ("Public Relations") which was deemed unnecessary in light of existing Policy 9120 "Public Relations Program."
- The Committee tabled the following proposed policies and regulations for consideration at a future meeting after further administrative review:
 - Policy 6112: "Reimbursement of Federal and Other Grant Expenditures (Revised)"
 - Regulation 6115.01: "Federal Awards/Funds Internal Control – Allowability of Costs"
 - Policy 6115.04: "Federal Funds – Duplication of Benefits"
 - Policy 6311: "Contracts for Goods or Services Funded by Federal Grants (Revised)"
 - Policy and Regulation 9140: "Citizens Advisory Committees (Revised)"