



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORT

December 14, 2023

Curriculum

The Curriculum Committee met on Dec. 4, 2023, to discuss the dance and theater curriculum; updates in math, vocabulary, and radio broadcasting; and more.

Dance/Theatre K-8 Curricula - Rebekah Sterlacci

The Dance and Theater curriculum has been put together by grade band (K-2, 3-5, and 6-8) to meet standards. There are dance and theater opportunities aligned with existing PHS dance and PHS and middle school drama programs. These have been occurring, but are now clearly documented.

Course Modification – Chris Irovando

Radio Broadcasting is moving to a semester course from a full-year course to allow more students to fit it into their schedule. The pacing guide is being modified so the course covers the same topics. The aim is to allow more students to take additional classes in this elective.

Math Update K-5 – Rebecca Dayton

Rebecca Dayton shared the core and supplemental resources available for use in elementary math. This included logging into the new Go Math platform called Ed. While in Ed, Ms. Dayton showed how to access various materials to support students and families at home.

Domain-Specific Vocabulary – Janine Albanese

The Sadlier vocabulary program has been rolling out in Grades 4-8. Vocabulary units are being taught and students have workbooks. Teachers have gotten positive feedback and the vocabulary is being used in student writings. Domain-specific vocabulary consists of word lists based on what is being taught. The aim is to standardize these lists.

Student Success and Retention - Brad Butler

Brad Butler, an educational consultant and author who has spoken around the country, would like to do keynote presentations for students and/or do professional development for teachers. The Hope Program curriculum is a character development program to help foster students into peer leaders.

Artificial Intelligence – Niles Kikle

Niles Kikle, a practicing computer science engineer, discussed the uses and impacts of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for students and teachers and why it needs to be a part of the educational discourse. Dr. Baskerville requested that further questions be deferred until the February 5 meeting, when John Bartruff, district manager of information systems, will be in attendance.

Culture, Climate, and Community Relations

The Culture, Climate, and Community Relations Committee met on Nov. 21, 2023, to discuss positive messaging, community partnerships, and wellness services.

Positive Messaging

- Monthly themes, quotes, and marquee images for the end of October and November were shared and discussed. The November theme was Gratitude and Thanks. Marquee images included Veterans Day and Diwali.
- The Committee discussed the possibility of sending out a positive voice message to all families with words of encouragement or posting positive messages thanking parents and guardians.

Community Partnerships

- Planning is under way for PHS Business Academy students to be mentored by Rutgers Business School students. Regular meetings have been taking place with the NSBE Jr./MEET Club under the guidance of the supervisor Mr. Hamrani. The District will explore ways to continue to make families aware of these opportunities.
- The District formed a partnership with Junior Achievement of NJ, and programming will take place across the district throughout this school year. Junior Achievement's purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.
- On October 25, Jersey Cares engaged in a full day of service activities at Martin Luther King Intermediate School. They beautified the teacher faculty room with

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Culture, Climate, and Community Relations (Continued)

new furniture and an inspirational quote on the wall. They also created an outdoor classroom and constructed two outdoor library stands and furnished them with books. They also made class presentations to fifth-grade students on the topics of principles of flight; keys of recycling; and 3-D printing.

Wellness Services

- Information was shared about the Haven family night being held on November 30 at 6 p.m. The family night flyer was to include more details like the schedule of events for the evening, as well as the end time.

New Business

- Information was discussed about Dr. Lanise Stevenson, the lead researcher for our district's equity audit. She recently was in district to visit PHS and middle schools. At the November 2nd board meeting, she shared details and results of her equity audit work to date.

Fiscal Planning & Operations

The Fiscal Planning and Operations Committee met on Dec. 6, 2023, to discuss the 2022-2023 Audit; the 2024-2025 budget, capital projects, and more

2022-2023 Audit

- Piscataway was one of only 27% of school districts statewide that met the audit report filing deadline of Dec. 5. Dave Gannon from PKF O'Connor Davies reviewed a presentation summarizing the audit process, the financial performance of the District, the healthy reserve/fund balance accounts, and another successful year with no audit findings. Mr. Oliveira discussed the balance in the Capital Reserve and the use of the funds for the door hardware project and other capital projects.
- Mr. Oliveira informed the Committee about our selection for Consolidated Federal Desk Monitoring. The review will include ESEA, IDEA, and ARP-ESSER federal funds.

2024-2025 Budget

- School and department budget submissions were made on December 1. Meetings will be scheduled to review the budget submissions over the next two months. Salaries and benefits have been rolled over into the budget and the financial impact is being assessed.

Facility Capital Projects

- The generator and water cooler replacement projects are complete. Approval of the final change orders will be on the December Board meeting agenda.
- The architect and engineers are exploring options for the replacement of the dust collection equipment in the PHS wood shop. Bid release is anticipated for January.
- The survey of the buildings for door hardware upgrades will be completed this week. Finalization of the bid specifications should occur this month.
- The Department of Education approved our application for the addition of 11 preschool classrooms to Eisen-

hower Elementary. The state share would be 40% of the estimated cost of \$10,497,500 – or \$4,199,000. The local share would be \$6,298,500. District administration is reviewing the feasibility of proceeding with the project.

Energy Savings Improvement Program

- Window blinds have been installed on the PHS windows and transformer upgrades at PHS were completed. The District held a meeting with Siemens to discuss the lack of progress on the project. Siemens is allocating resources from other departments to help with the project.

Food Services Update

- Policy 8500 Food Services is being recommended for approval by the Policy and Legislative Committee to reflect updates from Strauss Esmay. Policy 8500 will consolidate and replace the District's previous policies 8500, 8540, and 8550.

New Jersey School Business Legislative Update

- The Committee discussed A4496 regarding the construction of school facilities and A5687 regarding the requirement to assess cooperatives for every purchase. Mr. Oliveira reported on the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials Legislative Committee meeting with Senator Ruiz.

Policy & Legislative

The Policy and Legislative Committee met on Dec. 7, 2023, to discuss various policies and regulations and pending legislation.

- The Committee discussed and approved the following policies and regulations to be placed on the Board of Education agenda for First Reading:

P 3161	Examination for Cause (Revised)
P & R 3212	Attendance (Revised)
P 4161	Examination for Cause (Revised)
P & R 4212	Examination for Cause (Revised)
P & R 5116	Education of Homeless Children and Youths (Revised)

- The following additional policies and regulations were approved for final adoption on First Reading pursuant to Board Bylaw 0131:

P 6112	Reimbursement of Federal and Other Grant Expenditures (Revised)
R 6115.01	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Allowability of Costs (New)
P 6115.02	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Mandatory Disclosures (New)
P 6115.03	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Conflict of Interest (New)
P 6115.04	Federal Funds - Duplication of Benefits (New)
P 6311	Contracts for Goods or Services Funded by Federal Grants (Revised)
P 8500	Food Services (Revised)
P 9140	Citizens Advisory Committees (Revised)
P 6115.01	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Allowability of Costs

- Mr. Rubin provided the Committee with background information on when and how medical and psychiatric examinations for staff occur under Policies 3161 and 4161, including due process for affected employees.
- Committee members expressed concerns about the accumulated unpaid meal charges. While the Committee approved Policy 8500 as a stop-gap measure, it recommended that the Board establish a committee to examine the issue in more depth.

- The Committee also approved the abolition of the following policies and regulations:

P & R 3432	Sick Leave
P & R 4432	Sick Leave
P & R 5460.02	Bridge Year Pilot Program
P 8550	Unpaid Meal Charges/ Outstanding Food Service Charges
Policy 8540	School Nutrition Programs

- Proposed Policy and Regulation 5111 - Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students - was pulled from the agenda for further review.
- Mr. Rubin briefed the Committee on several pieces of pending legislation, including proposed amendments to the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, and a bill providing for video cameras on school buses to catch drivers illegally passing them.