



Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOVEMBER 17, 2016

Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee

The Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee met on October 12, 2016 and November 2, 2016, and reviewed construction projects and equipment needs, food service, and other issues.

1. **Schools Development Authority (SDA) Regular Operating District (ROD) Grant Local Share Projects:** Plans toward renovations and making PHS bathrooms compliant with the American Disabilities Act are underway. Discussions took place for PHS exterior work.
2. **2015 - 2016 Audit:** The audit is nearing completion.
3. **PHS Planetarium:** With the current system no longer operational and past its life expectancy, the committee is reviewing new planetariums.
4. **Food Service:** Efforts to ensure all families who are eligible sign up for free/reduced lunch continue. The Administration is working to include unpaid food service balances in Genesis, alerting parents to potential problems.
5. **Transportation:** Assessments are underway for transportation of equipment for the Superchiefs Marching Band.
6. **Hourly Employee Information:** The committee reviewed a summary of district employees who are paid an hourly rate.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee met on Monday, November 7 to begin planning PiscatawayREADS, and discuss technology resources currently used throughout the district, as well as curriculum updates.

1. **Piscataway Reads:** Piscataway Reads is scheduled for Wednesday, April 5, 2017. The committee discussed event themes and will begin to review books surrounding the selected theme.
2. **Technology Resources:** Mr. Coleman offered examples of technology in the classroom, including:
 - Language Arts** – web images used in association with poetry and other written work. Padlets -- closed blogs -- allow students to share ideas and get feedback.
 - Social Studies** employs content from Geoinquires, Gloster, and Google Drive.
 - US History 2 Survey of International Relations** uses resources from choices.edu (Brown University), aligned with PARCC and NJSL-ELA.
3. **Curriculum Updates:**
 - Creative Writing** – online activities include blogs and submission of work to online competitions.
 - Film Studies** – examines the influence of film on society and social issues and uses web-based curriculum.
 - Journalism** – general news, sports, op-ed, etc., as well as ethics, throughout various media platforms.
 - Language Arts Support** (formerly Basic Skills) – reinforces reading and writing skills for Tier 3 (most at risk) students in grades 1-5.
 - Public Speaking** – reviews speaking skills including body language. Multimedia examples will be used to study speaking skills.
 - Yearbook Class** – skills include journalism, business, art, etc. Curriculum and software is provided by Balfour Yearbook Company.
 - World Language Arts** -- Curriculum Connector ensures sufficient overlap between classes. Voces software package aids conversational Spanish skills.

Policy & Legislative Committee

The Policy & Legislative Committee met on Thursday, November 3, 2016 and reviewed current and proposed policies, the transition to Strauss Esmay policy service, and policy information learned at the NJSBA Workshop 2016:

1. **Policy 8454 Management of Pediculosis:** The Committee discussed preliminary input from the Administration.
2. **Policy 5514 Student Use of Vehicles on School Grounds:** Mr. Rubin presented a policy template to the Committee, with choices concerning the use of student vehicles on school grounds. The Committee will discuss this policy further after input from the Administration.
3. **Policy 6151.1 Parameters for Class Size:** This policy expands existing policy for optimal class size in grades K-3 to grades 4-8, now setting an optimal class size of 28 students throughout intermediate and middle school. The Committee approved the policy.
4. **Move to Strauss Esmay Policy Service:** Strauss Esmay continues to convert the District's policies to their format and will provide an initial draft of a new policy manual in the coming months.
5. **Legislative Update:** Mr. Stern attended the Legislative Session at the NJ School Board's October 26th Workshop. Concerns centered on school funding proposals. Mr. Connors updated the Committee on the activities of the Resolutions Subcommittee of NJSBA's Legislative Committee, focusing a shift of the burden of proof in special education due process hearings to the party requesting the hearing. Mr. Peng attended a workshop on suicide, and sought assurances that District staff are trained in suicide prevention and awareness.

Community Relations Committee

The Community Relations Committee met on Wednesday, November 16 and reviewed project goals and updates for 2016, including the Conackamack Fitness Trail, Our Inspiring Heroes, the "Know Your Schools" Newsletter, Social Media, and a potential Key Ambassador Program.

1. **Conackamack Fitness Trail:** Design and location of the trail are under development with student input.
2. **Our Inspiring Heroes:** The online nomination went live in September with regular reminders distributed through the District's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Ideas were identified to increase awareness of the program with consideration of implementation after the New Year.
3. **Newsletter:** The first edition of "Know Your Schools" newsletter was mailed to the community in June. The committee was very pleased with the content and look of the newsletter. A second addition will be prepared and distributed in the first quarter of 2017.
4. **Social Media:** The District's Facebook page and Twitter account continue to see new sign-ups. Information continues to be disseminated regularly through all of these outlets.
5. **Key Ambassadors:** The concept of establishing a Key Ambassadors group was discussed, including the value, the organizational set-up and procedures for implementation.