

# Bemidji District Curriculum Advisory Committee

Tuesday, May 12, 2015  
District Board Room, Downtown Education Center

**Members Present:** Ami Aalgaard, Vince Beyl, Brent Colligan, Mary Fairbanks, Dave Gooch, Dr. Jim Hess, Donna Hickerson, Drew Hildenbrand, Carol L. Johnson, Maura Johnson, Kim Kusler, Kathy Palm, Craig Rypkema, Brian Stefanich, John Truedson, Sonia Wadena, Janine Wahl

**Guests Present:** Brian Murphy & Tami Wesely

## Minutes:

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 a.m. with members introducing themselves and reviewing the March 17, 2015 minutes.
2. The committee discussed Bemidji District Graduation Requirements for students attending district alternative secondary programs including: AEC, BYLaW, First City, and Oshki. These students do not have a four-period day schedule, so earning 28 credits in four years is difficult. The waiting list to get into the AEC this year has been at 90-100 students. They improved this by adding Compass Online Learning, but it is still difficult for students to complete the 28 required classes to graduate in four years.

The secondary principals recommended that the district diploma follow the Minnesota state requirements and require 24 credits to graduate. The following recommendation would be in effect for this year's sophomores.

Subject	Minnesota Minimum High School Diploma Requirements	Bemidji High School Diploma Requirements	Proposed Bemidji District Diploma Requirements
Language Arts	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mathematics	3.00	4.00	3.00
Science	3.00	4.00	3.00
Social Studies	3.50	4.00	3.50
Arts	1.00	1.00	1.00
Health		.50	
Physical Education		1.00	
Electives	7.00	9.50	9.50
<b>Total Credit Requirements</b>	<b>21.50</b>	<b>28.00</b>	<b>24.00</b>

The committee discussed whether these reduced diploma requirements would encourage students to take the easy way out and transfer to the AEC for fewer credits. Principals and counselors will review individual student situations to determine if they qualify for this alternative diploma option, possibly considering students completing Credit Recovery. This option is designed for students who are at risk of not graduating, and not for students who want to accelerate their high school graduation.

Motion: A motion was made by Vince Beyl, seconded by Brent Colligan to recommend to the Bemidji School Board that they change the number of credits for a Bemidji District Diploma to reflect the Minnesota requirements and set that number at 24 credits. The motion passed unanimously, so Kathy will bring this to the May 18, 2015 School Board meeting for the first reading.

3. Dr. Hess provided an update on the Bemidji Career Academies. So far, seven academies have been drafted including: Communication, Construction Trades, Graphic Design, Health Career/CNA, Information Technology, Mechatronics, and PLTW Engineering. These academies are based on classes already offered at BHS, and more academies are being developed. The academies connect high school to post secondary, business and industry, the Chamber of Commerce, and economic development. We are hopeful that the academies will provide students with a solid connection to college and careers, and they could provide a worthwhile option for students in alternative programs as well.
4. Dr. Hess also provided a progress report on the new 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school. The land has been purchased, and he is in the process of seeking approval from the Bemidji Joint Planning Board with plans to complete the school in time for the 2016-2017 school year. The Bemidji School Board will also consider naming the school at the next board meeting.
5. Kathy Palm provided a summary of the 2015 state testing. It has been a challenge this year with Pearson as our testing company. We have had several days of shut down because of their internal security issues. It has been the worst year ever for the test monitors. We also discussed the Grade 11 ACT testing that took place at the Sanford Center. That process worked well, but it was a considerable cost to the district.
6. The District Curriculum Advisory Committee meets at 7:00 a.m. the second Tuesday every other month and additional times as needed. The following schedule is set for 2015-2016 at the District Board Room, Downtown Education Center:
  - Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 7:00 a.m.
  - Tuesday, December 8, 2015, 7:00 a.m.
  - Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 7:00 a.m.
  - Tuesday, May 10, 2016, 7:00 a.m.
7. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

**Update:** At the May 18, 2015, school board meeting, the Bemidji School Board moved to accept the district Curriculum Advisory Council's motion for the Bemidji District Diploma, but to add back .50 Health requirement and reduce the number of electives to 9.0. This was the first reading, and it will become policy upon successful completion of the second reading June 15, 2015