

Bemidji District Curriculum Advisory Committee

Tuesday, December 13, 2016
District Board Room, Downtown Education Center

Committee Members Present: Ami Aalgaard, Erin Curran, Mary Fairbanks, Jim Hess, Donna Hickerson, Drew Hildenbrand, Karie Hougard, Carol L. Johnson, Maura Johnson, Ann LongVoelkner, Amanda Mix, Kathy Palm, Ken Schreiber, Brian Stefanich, John Truedson, Kathy VanWert, Sonia Wadena

Minutes:

1. The meeting started at 7:00 a.m. with members introducing themselves. We then reviewed the October 11, 2016 minutes.
2. Kathy introduced the 2015-2016 World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Summary which is also posted on the web at: <http://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us/> under Curriculum and World's Best Workforce. She discussed the five WBWF goals: 1) All students ready for kindergarten, 2) All students reading well by third grade, 3) Closing the achievement gaps, 4) All students are college and career ready, and 5) All students graduating from high school. Bemidji achieved the Ready for Kindergarten and College and Career Ready goals. We made improvement but did not meet our Read by Third Grade or Closing Achievement Gaps goals, and our Graduation goal is for 2016, for which state information is not yet available.

Kathy VanWert reported that less than half of the 217 kindergarteners at Paul Bunyan Elementary attended a preschool program prior to kindergarten. We discussed how we can better serve area preschool students to better prepare them for kindergarten. We need additional funding to make this possible for all children, so we will again apply for the state voluntary preschool grant. The greatest barriers for families are transportation and the lack of space in programs. Community Education will change their school readiness schedule next year to provide all students with 2.5 days instead of some three days and the rest two days.

We also discussed the other required questions in the WBWF Summary, and Kathy asked for input on those responses. She also shared the Minnesota Report Card 2015-2016 Staffing Report, which she used for the final question of the summary. We discussed schools which have a higher level of new teachers because of retirements. Overall, Bemidji's percentage of teachers with less than three years' experience (5.4%) is less than the State (9.7%), and Bemidji teachers with more than 10 years' experience (67.6%) is higher than the State (58.3%).

The Bemidji School Board will review and hopefully approve the WBWF Summary at their December 19, 2016 meeting, and then Kathy will send it to MDE and post it on our district website.

3. Kathy shared the 2016-2017 School Improvement Plans, and each member received a booklet. These are also posted on the web at: <http://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us/> under Curriculum and World's Best Workforce. The principals and their site teams are doing a better job every year with creating SMART goals and using data to improve student achievement.
4. Kathy shared the Fall 2016 NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and AIMSweb results. Grade 2 students generally struggle with the fall MAP test because it is their first exposure to a computerized test. Grades 6-9 were more than three points above the norm RIT in all reading and math strands, and the elementary grades were within three points of the norm RIT.

The Fall 2016 AIMSweb reading and math were given to the kindergarten and grade 1 students. Our students performed better in math than reading. We need to put more emphasis on early reading skills to help all students read well by third grade.

5. We have new ESSA Requirements for Transporting Students in Foster Care, and Kathy explained that as of December 10, 2016, we can no longer support students awaiting foster care with homeless funds. We are required to coordinate with the county, appoint a Point of Contact, and provide transportation for students awaiting foster care to their school of origin. The school district and county need to agree to a procedure for providing transportation. So far, the county has not been informed of this law other than the two meetings with the district, so we have not agreed to a procedure yet. Angie Lauderbaugh, Homeless Liaison, will be the district Point of Contact for students awaiting foster care, and we have changed the funding sources, so she can do this without using homeless funds. Last year we served 287 homeless students, and of that number 48 were awaiting foster care.
6. The 2016-2017 Curriculum Review will include: Business, Family & Consumer Science, Industrial Technology, Medical Careers, and STEM. In May, representatives from these subject areas will present for the District Curriculum Advisory Committee about their progress in aligning their classes to the standards and their materials selection.
7. The next District Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting will be at 7:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 14, 2017, at the District Board Room, Downtown Education Center.
8. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 a.m.