

Bemidji Area Schools

District Curriculum Advisory Committee



7:00-8:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 12, 2019
District Board Room, Downtown Education Center

Committee Members Present: Ami Aalgaard, Erin Curran, Colleen Cardenuto, Christine Christiansen, Mary Fairbanks, Priscilla Fairbanks, John Gonzalez, Donna Hickerson, Carol L. Johnson, Ann Long Voelkner, Tim Lutz, Amanda Mix, Jacque Pearce, Ken Schreiber, Jason Stanoch, Brian Stefanich, Sonia Wadena, Dana Woods

Minutes

1. Call to order at 7:00 am.
2. Review and approval of minutes from December 4, 2018.
3. Sonia Wadena, Director of Bemidji Area Schools Indian Education, provided information about the program. Bemidji has 1,057 federally recognized American Indian students enrolled and 1,149 that claim American Indian descent. With RtI in place, we are seeing nice improvements over the year. RtI provides promotion on materials and ensures teaching staff are familiar.
4. American Indian Culture and Curriculum Specialist, Priscilla Fairbanks, spoke about the primary goal of increasing the graduation rate. Fairbanks purposes to make the school experience for Native children more positive and successful. She implements District Staff Development opportunities, provides links to credible educational resources for teachers and district staff, reviews educational resources for authenticity and format, develops and presents lessons to classes as requested by classroom teachers, develops and shares videos about Ojibwe culture, and participates in school Family Nights. Fairbanks recently received a cash award from the Bemidji Jaycees "Adopt-a-Classroom" program. Funds are for a traveling teaching display of Ojibwe cultural artifacts and information.
5. Other culturally relevant happenings across the district include:
 - Bemidji High School Library adding at least 20 novels.
 - The District Technology Integration Specialist, Dana Woods, shared about the participation of students in a media project. They created voiceover in the Ojibwe language. Students performed voiceover for small clips from a variety of different cartoons. Clips were from popular cartoons like Family Guy, the Simpsons, and The Wonder Pets.
 - Gene Dillon Elementary features a *Culture Trunk* with items relative to what classroom teaching is.
 - A suggestion is to have an exit interview and/or feedback from classroom teachers and from students as to their cultural understanding.

6. The 2018-19 Curriculum Review features Elementary Language Arts and Media. Science will be reviewed in 2019-20, with preliminary preparations this year.

Overview of the Elementary Language Arts Curriculum Review. The team is looking for a balanced curriculum featuring the five components of reading: 1) Phonemic Awareness, 2) Phonics, 3) Vocabulary, 4) Fluency, and 5) Reading Comprehension. In addition to these five components, writing is a key ingredient.

The district has been using the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt "Journeys" curriculum. This, however, is not keeping pace with common core rigor; vocabulary and writing are major weaknesses.

In 2017-18 the Elementary Language Arts Review Team was unable to find what this district needs. Comprehensive Classroom was piloted in 2018-19 and requires finding supplements and assessments.

The elementary levels will pilot Pearson's MyView, which proposes a gradual release of rigor and meets standards. There are also two very good tech pieces.

We need a base that compliments the transition from the elementary to the middle school level. Additionally, culturally relevant pedagogy is a priority within considerations. At the Middle School, technology is a very important piece.

For the second year of review on Science, Amanda Mix requested comments from the committee.

7. The District Curriculum Advisory Committee meets at 7:00 a.m. the second Tuesday of every other month and additional times as needed. The following schedule is set for 2018-2019 at the District Board Room, Downtown Education Center:
 - Tuesday, October 9, 2018, 7:00 a.m.
 - Tuesday, December 11, 2018, 7:00 a.m.
 - Tuesday, February 12, 2019, 7:00 a.m.
 - Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 7:00 a.m.
8. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 a.m.