

**FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

-- 520 FIFTH AVENUE, CURRICULUM LIBRARY --

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2019

5:30 P.M.

A G E N D A

A. PRELIMINARIES

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**

Paula Addis
Tara DeVaughn
Jessica Eid
Grant Guy
Aimee Hart
Sharon Hildebrand

Earnest Kincade
Earl Peterson
Deborah Rinio
Fé Seymour
Christina Sinclair
Heather Stewart

Nonvoting Members
Chrya Sanderson
Melanie Hadaway

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Recommend approval of the meeting agenda for February 7, 2019

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Recommend approval of the meeting minutes for January 10, 2019

D. CURRICULUM REVISION

- CTE Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
 - Automotive
 - Aviation

E. CURRICULUM UPDATE

- January 30 Community Forum
- 7-12 English Language Arts
- K-12 Social Studies

F. PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE – TOP THREE ACTIVITY

G. GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

H. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

Curriculum Advisory Committee Meetings

March 7, 2019 – Curriculum Library

April 4, 2019 – Curriculum Library

April 18, 2019 (tentative) – Curriculum Library

**Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Curriculum Advisory Committee**

Minutes of January 10, 2019

Ms. Hadaway called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. in the Administrative Center, Curriculum Library, 520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Members Present:

Tara DeVaughn
Grant Guy
Aimee Hart
Sharon Hildebrand
Earnest Kincade

Earl Peterson
Deborah Rinio
Fé Seymour
Christina Sinclair
Heather Stewart

Nonvoting Members

Chrya Sanderson
Melanie Hadaway

Members Excused:

Paula Addis
Jessica Eid

Staff Present:

Jennifer Morgan

Guest Present:

Kate LaPlaunt

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Kincade moved to accept the January 10, 2019, agenda; Ms. Sinclair seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Peterson moved to accept the December 6, 2018, minutes; Ms. Sinclair seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the motion was approved.

CURRICULUM PROCESS

How should curriculum address nonacademic or cross-content skills and expectations?

Mrs. Hadaway reminded the committee that the district is reviewing its curriculum processes. As part of a continuing discussion, members were asked to focus on the following questions and break into small groups to discuss:

1. Should there be expectations that students gain non-content skills during their public education?
2. Should those expectations/skills be assessed and/or graded? Reported to parents and/or students?
3. If yes to question one, then should expectations/skills go through same processes as academic curriculum?

After several minutes, the groups were asked to share some key ideas. Ms. Hadaway started by sharing that as she walked around the room she heard each group mention expectations and the importance of critical thinking.

Ms. DeVaughn's group agreed there needs to be something to address non-content skills. Some examples discussed: what happens to money after it is put in the bank, what is a state sales tax, how to do your taxes, applying for a credit card, how to do laundry, etc. She stated that while seniors take *Economics*, which covers broad topics such as gross national product and supply and demand, there is not a class to address nonacademic skills such as personal finance. Some kids learn these soft skills at home, but others do not. Her group thinks this is a two-fold issue with students learning nonacademic skills such as those listed above, and also learning soft skills such as how to be on time, working together, conflict resolution, perseverance, etc. Ms. DeVaughn stated her group also thinks these would need to be reported to students and parents, and that it needs to be assessed but not necessarily graded.

Ms. Rinio's group also discussed the topic of assessment versus grades, and how assessment is part of an ongoing improvement process. She suggested the assessment process for this could be self-assessed, teacher assessed, or a combination of both, and that it should be reported but not graded. Her group also talked about the need for a continuum of these nonacademic skills throughout K-12. The skills might look different in elementary than in high school, but a continuum needs to be laid out. She suggested the process could be similar to how the district implements CHAMPS, which is school communities laying out explicit, age-appropriate behavior expectations that help students be successful in a number of situations. Schools would make decisions about which soft skills to focus on, within a set of norms that the district agrees on, periodically reviews, and oversees.

Mr. Guy's group discussed several different ideas, focusing a little on examples of soft skills, but also questioning whether it is really the job of the school to teach these skills. They recognized that some of these (e.g. collaboration)

are already taught in other content areas. If this is already being done, how much more time do we want to spend on it? This group also talked about different cultures and how this might influence what soft skills are taught. For example, a specific set of soft skills are important to one culture, but may not be representative of another culture. They discussed how personality differences can play a huge part (e.g. a student does not want to collaborate, because they already know the content, are shy, and do not want to talk to others). His group understands the importance of soft skills, but had difficulty answering the question of how to measure it. He stated there are so many things to consider when looking at a system as large as this district.

Discussion ensued.

What knowledge, understandings, and skills should a graduate of Fairbanks schools have, and how do we build a series of requirements to deliver that graduate?

Ms. Hadaway introduced an activity where committee members were given four sticky notes, asked to “look through the lens” of various community groups, and based on that perspective come up what three things each group would want a high school graduate to know or have.

- If you are the parent of a kid graduating from high school, what are three things you want your kid to know?
- If you are an employer in Fairbanks, what are three things you want graduates to know before you hire them?
- If you are a college professor, what are three things you want kids coming to your university to know?
- If you are a Fairbanks city council member, what are three things you hope our citizens have?

After writing their responses, members then posted their sticky notes at designated spots around the room. They took several minutes to review the other responses, which are listed below.

Parent

- Ability to navigate a system
- Adaptability
- Consistency
- Critical thinking
- Empathy, compassion, and kindness
- Health
- Independent but knows when and how to ask for help
- Knows how to deal with everyday life (e.g. budget, taxes, college, groceries, insurance, laundry, etc.)
- Knows how to learn anything they want
- Knows how to maintain a network
- Listening skills and articulation
- Money management
- Passion
- People skills and how to play with others without being a doormat
- Relationship success and a strong sense of self/ standards
- Resilience, perseverance, and grit
- Responsible
- Sets goals and plans for the future with the understanding it may change
- Stand for what they believe
- Strong work ethic and shows up on time
- To have choices and do their best
- Well-rounded education (math, history, etc.)

Employer

- Ability to focus – not distracted by technology
- Able to think for themselves and follow directions
- Basic math skills
- Diligence, perseverance, and grit
- Integrity
- Knows how to maximize their potential
- Makes money for the company
- Passionate about what they do
- People skills
- Problem solver, critical thinking skills, and asks clarifying questions
- Reads and communicates well
- Self-responsibility
- Shares ideas in meetings and give presentations
- Shows up on time, ready to learn and work
- Strong work ethic
- Works well with others, knows when to collaborate, when to work independently, and how to handle disagreements

College Professor

- Academic skills
- Advocacy and reflective skills
- Consistency
- Creativity
- Critical thinking
- Curiosity, inquisitiveness, and ask questions
- Does homework without debating or complaining
- English proficiency
- Reads directions, pays attention, and takes notes
- Knows how to give presentations
- Knows how to network
- Library and research skills
- Loves learning and has a willingness to learn
- Motivated
- Participates
- Perseverance

- Reads, writes, and communicates well
- Self-expression
- Strong work ethic and shows up on time
- Where there is a will, there is an A
- Works independently – prioritizes, set goals, time management, etc.
- Works well with others and able to collaborate

City Council Member

- Civic mindedness and actively participates in the community
- Communicates well
- Compassionate
- Critical thinking
- Empathy
- Gets along with their neighbors
- Has the skills to find a job
- Knowledge of and respect for government and laws
- Knows how to vote
- Pays taxes
- Perseverance and grit
- Problem solving skills
- Responsible
- Strong work ethic
- Team player and thinks of the greater good
- Understands differences in others and can compromise
- Works well with others and able to handle disagreements
- Works towards making changes

Ms. Hadaway asked members to discuss what they noticed as they viewed all the sticky notes. Discussion ensued.

When wrapping up the discussion for this agenda item, Ms. Hadaway stated that as we move forward with the next curriculum, she thinks the perspectives from this activity should be kept in mind. She reminded the committee that some of these are currently being addressed in the classroom, although they may not be explicitly written down.

Ms. DeVaughn inquired as to whether the Social Studies curriculum group has been selected, and if the process of selection has changed. Ms. Hadaway confirmed that the process has changed, and that the review and research stage has been separated from the revision stage. Starting in January, K-12 Social Studies teachers and 7-12 Language Arts teachers will start to look at community feedback, national trends, and input from employers. Then, curriculum groups will start revision in the fall. Ms. Hadaway also stated that any teacher interested in participating in the research may do so.

GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

Ms. Hadaway announced there is an open invitation for the community to provide input on the K-12 Social Studies and 7-12 Language Arts curricula. The community forum is January 30, 2019, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. and 5:30-7:00 p.m. She also mentioned the district is starting the CTE Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics curriculum revision at the end of the month, which will include a new aviation piece.

Ms. Sanderson informed the group she has reviewed the PowerPoint presentations from previous meetings, and was frightened by the information regarding the jobs projected to disappear over the next few decades.

In regards to an idea Ms. Hadaway mentioned earlier about listing the “needs to know” versus the “nice to know” items in the curriculum, Ms. Rinio expressed that she would like to see this happen. She thinks it should be more explicit within the curriculum so teachers do not feel overwhelmed with having so much information to cover. She also stated she is glad the committee did the activity, and it is important to have stakeholder engagement. She stated it is important to think about these types of skills in addition to content, and to have broader curricular and external conversations about this.

Ms. Hart suggested Alaskans should consider how they fit into the bigger global picture, especially when talking about history and social studies. She stated that as a military family they have been all over, and her kids have benefited from this because they have become well-rounded. One of the things she has learned is that Alaskans are very proud of Alaska, and she thinks they need to value the rest of the world and see their place as not separate from it. She thinks there needs to be some adjustment with the curriculum.

Ms. DeVaughn addressed Ms. Rinio’s comment about the “needs to know” list versus what would be nice for students to learn. She stated that right now every teacher makes their own determination about what needs to happen in a set amount of time, and uses their professional judgement to determine what they will not have time to do. She also inquired as to whether the district has considered more ways to obtain community input, other than surveys and meetings at the administrative building. She asked if the district has considered opening up the curriculum research groups to the public and allowing community members to be a part of the groups. Ms.

Hadaway thinks this is a great question, but that there has already been a lot of change to the curriculum process and people can only handle so much before they become overwhelmed. Ms. DeVaughn acknowledged that change is hard, but sometimes people need to be pushed and have that systemic change.

Ms. Seymour thinks it is a good idea to target students at the youngest possible age and begin to work on some of these skills, such as collaboration. She thinks that soft skills should be emphasized.

Ms. LaPlaunt thanked the committee for allowing her to participate in the meeting.

Ms. Hildebrand thanked Ms. Hadaway for doing a great job facilitating the discussion and ensuring there was collaboration. She is excited about the CTE curriculum revision and that the district is thinking about incorporating aviation. She stated there are great examples of aviation programs, such as Galena or the Galena Interior Learning Academy (GILA), where students are graduating with their certifications. She also noted that a lot of young people entering the workforce use technology to stay “plugged in,” and thinks this needs to be addressed. Ms. Hadaway commented that it is a hot topic, and while attending a recent CTE committee meeting several employers stated they had to let people go because the employees would not put their phones away.

Mr. Peterson mentioned that when he first started on this committee, the curriculum used to be all about knowledge, facts, and formulas, and the committee would go over it all. However, what he heard during this meeting gave him pause. He stated it is not exclusively the process of what we want for kids and then turning them into community citizens, but it seems to also be about who is doing the teaching. It is a very particular person that can teach collaboration, civic mindedness, or empathy. He questioned at what point the curriculum committee bleeds over into the personnel committee. At what point does the committee start outlining the best employee for the district, as opposed to the content that is to be taught? He commented that this is way out of their field and there are other stakeholders who need to be a part of that conversation. He cautioned the committee to think about where this conversation is going. Mrs. Hadaway thinks this is a good point, and clarified that she has no intention of this becoming a personnel committee. Rather, her goal for this meeting was to wrap up ongoing discussions the committee has had over the last few months, because at the next meeting they will begin to look at curriculum. As we go into the next curriculum revision, she would like the committee to look at some of the bigger pieces that were not necessarily considered before.

Mr. Guy agreed that this was a good point. He also stated that when he approaches curriculum as a whole, he uses the following questions as guides: What do we want kids to know? How do we know they know it or are learning it? What do we do when they are not learning it? As he considers all the things discussed during this meeting, he can see where it might get into the area of discussing the right person for the job, but it also comes back to “what do we want kids to know?”. The curriculum is what we want kids to know, which is a set of standards the state develops and the district might add to. When teachers are deciding what to teach next, they should use the standards to determine what has already been covered and what they should move onto next. He commented that the tricky part is all the other things that we want kids to know that are not listed in the standards, and how to assess these. He thinks these conversations are worth having, and as the committee goes forward with curriculum they should keep in mind the following questions: How would they do it if they were a teacher? How would they like their child to be able to learn it? How can they link it to other standards? Mr. Guy stated that as a teacher he is not just teaching a particular standard, but he is looking at how that standard is going to flow into others that may relate to it, and that soft skills are definitely part of the equation. He then thanked the committee for letting him be a part of this.

Ms. Sinclair thanked Ms. Morgan for bringing cupcakes. She also stated she thinks the committee made progress at this meeting, and it was a good idea to meet. She is looking forward to getting into the curriculum at the next meeting.

Ms. Hadaway reminded the committee that the next meeting is February 7, and that Ms. Morgan would send them an invitation to the January 30 community forum. She stated she enjoys this committee’s meetings and appreciated all the members.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. DeVaughn moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Stewart seconded. Hearing no objection or further comment, the meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.