

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

-- 520 Fifth Avenue, Curriculum Library --
Thursday, March 5, 2020 -- 5:30 p.m.

A G E N D A

A. PRELIMINARIES

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Christian Bolton
Michael Campbell
Maxine Dibert
Patrick Frymark
Aimee Hart
Sharon Hildebrand
Earnest Kincade

Allyson Nicholson
Earl Peterson
Deborah Rinio
Christina Sinclair
Graham Storey
Sue Wilken

Nonvoting Members

Chrya Sanderson
Melanie Hadaway

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Recommend approval of the meeting agenda for March 5, 2020

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Recommend approval of the meeting minutes for January 9, 2020

D. K-12 SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM REVISION

- Recommend approval of draft three
- Recommendation Memo to the School Board

E. 7-8 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM REVISION

- Recommend approval of draft three
- Recommendation Memo to the School Board

F. CURRICULUM UPDATE

- 9-12 English/Language Arts
- CTE Information Technology
- Curriculum Materials Process

G. SPECIAL MEETING

H. GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

I. ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Curriculum Advisory Committee Meetings

April 2, 2020

April 16, 2020 (tentative)

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

Minutes of January 9, 2020

Ms. Hadaway called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m. in the Administrative Center, Curriculum Library, 520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Members Present:

Maxine Dibert
Patrick Frymark
Earnest Kincade
Allyson Nicholson

Earl Peterson
Deborah Rinio
Christina Sinclair
Sue Wilken

Nonvoting Members:

Melanie Hadaway

Members Excused:

Michael Campbell
Aime Hart
Sharon Hildebrand
Chrya Sanderson

Members Absent:

Christian Bolton
Graham Storey

Staff Present:

Kate LaPlaut
Jennifer Morgan
Kristina Roehrig

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Sinclair moved to accept the January 9, 2020, agenda; Mr. Kincade seconded. Hearing no objection or comment, the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Nicholson moved to accept the November 7, 2019, minutes; Ms. Dibert seconded. Members reviewed the minutes. Hearing no objection or comment, the motion was approved.

CURRICULUM UPDATE

K-12 Social Studies, Draft Two

Ms. Hadaway informed the committee that draft two of K-8 Social Studies curriculum had been available for several weeks, but the 9-12 Social Studies and 7-12 English/Language Arts curricula were released two days prior. Because the committee did not have adequate time to look over all of documents, during the meeting they focused on the questions listed in the cover letters. Ms. Hadaway asked the committee for input on the following:

- Is the format easy to follow, is the curriculum clear, and can it be accomplished within the allotted time?
- Input received from the community calls for inclusion of civics education, practical financial literacy and awareness, and representation of diverse perspectives. Does the curriculum meet these goals?
- There was also a request for an African American history course. Draft two has *Civil Rights Experience*, which includes African American civil rights history. Should the curriculum include a separate African American history course?

In terms of viability, Ms. Rinio thinks more focus on an interdisciplinary approach would help to cover everything within the allotted time. Ms. Hadaway stated adopted materials for elementary English, *Journeys*, has tie-ins to science and social studies. Schools are also coming up with creative ideas; for example, Randy Smith Middle is looking into double-blocking two periods for 8th grade history and English, to bring these together in an integrated way. Mr. Frymark remarked, in defense of keeping things compartmentalized, those who use the curriculum guide the most are new teachers. He thinks the guide should keep a structure that parents and new teachers can easily follow and understand. However, he would love to see supplemental materials that show how to do an interdisciplinary approach. Ms. Hadaway pointed out there needs to be multiple entry points; for veteran teachers, the curriculum guide should list topics that must be covered, while balancing this with providing the structure and information needed for new teachers.

Ms. Dibert likes the lists of suggested activities. There are diverse topics, community topics, field trip options, and it even has *Molly of Denali*. Ms. Hadaway stated the elementary writers did a nice job of starting with having Kindergarten students looking at themselves, and then have the curriculum move out from there to what it looks like to be a part of the classroom community, a Fairbanks community, and then a part of Alaska.

In response to the *Civil Rights Experience* course versus an additional African American history course, Ms. Rinio stated civil rights is a very specific topic, which is important and should be covered, but is not representative of the diversity across the entire historic spectrum. However, having one class that focuses on a specific ethnic group opens it up to why there are not courses that focus on other groups. She also pointed out it is important to focus attention on diversity throughout the entire curriculum. Ms. Hadaway encouraged the committee to look at the *Civil Rights Experience* course. She reminded them that in the past the School Board has heard testimony about the need for representing diverse viewpoints on history.

Mr. Peterson asked if creating courses for other minority groups has been explored? Ms. Hadaway responded it has been a recurring discussion, both with the curriculum writers as well as at School Board meetings she has attended. The writers decided that if several classes were created, then it was less likely any one specific course would be taught. The writers' approach to this was to create an umbrella class that covers several perspectives. However, an African American studies course is one that has been brought up multiple times at Board meetings and Ms. Hadaway has been asked specifically to make sure we have this representation. The NAACP also asked that this be considered. The writers discussed this and feel the viewpoint is adequately represented within the *Civil Rights Experience* and other social studies courses. But, for due diligence, Ms. Hadaway has put the question out for public comment.

Ms. Nicholson stated high school scheduling is hard when a small number of students want to take different courses. There are just not enough hours in the day to offer courses to please everyone. Also, she stated we need to consider students transferring to other districts, especially those who have taken a specialized course and might have difficulty transferring credits in the subject area it was intended.

Ms. Kincade stated that history is history, and it is not African American history or Native American history, it all happens at the same time. Ms. Hadaway asked if he liked the idea of an umbrella course, and Ms. Kincade confirmed that he does. He supports one course that offers different perspectives on the same historical events.

Ms. Hadaway stated that the public comments on one draft of the elementary curriculum are pretty consistent. It is possible elementary might be ready to move forward and look at materials before secondary is ready to proceed to this step.

7-12 English/Language Arts, Draft Two

Ms. Hadaway stated the district is seeing input on the following topics regarding the English/Language Arts curriculum:

- How is the overall structure of the curriculum, is it viable, and can it be taught within the allotted time?
- There has been a lot of discussion around honors and advanced coursework. Is it appropriate at different levels, and what might it look like?
- Two options were proposed – option one is to provide an umbrella course titled *Social Themes in Literature* which would encompass diverse perspectives, and option two is for the district to offer separate courses for Asian American, Latinx American, LGBTQ+, and women's literature.
- The draft reading lists have not yet been vetted, but will be reviewed and revised before adoption. Any suggestions for titles that should be added to or removed from the lists?

Mr. Frymark inquired if consideration has been given for students to earn high school credit for *Advanced English 8*.

Ms. Hadaway stated the writers did not discuss this option.

Ms. Sinclair's opinion is an umbrella literature course might be the better option to ensure all of these perspectives are included. Ms. Wilken and Ms. Rinio agreed with this, and Ms. Rinio reiterated that an effort should be made to include diverse perspectives throughout the entire curriculum, including the reading lists. She also stated the reading list for *Theatre Performance* is not diverse and should include more recent plays. Ms. Sinclair reminded the committee that when considering an umbrella course versus multiple courses, funding is a concern.

Ms. Dibert asked if there is concern from the community about *English 9* and *English 9 Honors*. Ms. Hadaway stated one of the questions that is often asked is why we have honors courses and what is the difference. The writers came up with a great description of an honors course, which is it requires more work and class discussion, has a higher level of commitment and preparation in and out of class, and has an increased level of accountability. The reality is that in many situations the student diversity of a school is not necessarily reflected in the diversity of honors or AP classes.

Ms. Sinclair sees an honors literature or writing course as students going more in depth. Ms. Rinio wondered if we continue to have honors courses, are we tracking students? She asked if there is research that addresses differentiation in the classroom and the advantages or disadvantages therein for a diverse group of students. Ms. Hadaway responded that in terms of tracking, depending on the population of the school, sometimes courses are only offered a couple periods. This especially pertains to middle schools where the school is smaller, and students find themselves in courses with the same students. In response to the research question, Ms. Hadaway stated that in general, students tend to do better when they are engaged, take ownership, and have choices. Students also need to be met at their readiness level.

Ms. Rinio then asked if there is research on having a diverse group of skill levels within a single class, versus homogenous grouping. Ms. Hadaway stated the research is very clear that long-term, homogeneous grouping is not good for kids. Ms. LaPlaunt responded that a lot of courses are heavily focused on reading in terms of how the information is imparted to students, and heavily reliant on writing as a mode of students expressing what they have learned. There are a lot of students who have the capacity to understand complex literature, social, and historical topics, but some may not have the reading skills to fully grasp the information if it is only relayed through reading. More kids will have access to high level classes if the district broadens the access points to not only be reading-centric for obtaining the information and writing-centric for demonstrating that students have learned the content.

Ms. Peterson opinion is that without honors courses, instead having a class with all skill levels, the teacher will teach to the base, which is the middle of the bell curve. These students will get the most attention, will drive the curriculum, and determine what is taught. Students who are gifted will become bored and those who find the material a challenge will struggle. He is strong advocate for having special classes, whether it is honors, AP, or special needs.

Ms. Rinio inquired if it is possible to add support or enrichment opportunities to an English class if the district no longer offered honors English courses. Ms. Hadaway stated some schools have an Extended Learning Program with sessions for gifted students, and some middle schools are doing interesting and creating things with grouping of students. Mr. Frymark stated North Pole Middle's Advisory period was once used to offer English and math enrichment opportunities, and students could choose which to attend.

Ms. Hadaway recognized there is a lot of information to review in the curriculum, and she encouraged the committee to submit feedback using the online form or by sending their comments to Ms. Morgan.

GENERAL COMMENTS/ QUESTIONS

Ms. Sinclair requested a document with just the reading lists organized by course. Ms. Hadaway and Ms. Roehrig will put this together and send it to the committee.

Ms. Dibert stated there is a lot of information to digest. She suggested the high school overview include readiness skills that might help to explain honors and AP levels.

Mr. Frymark suggested awarding high school credit for *Advanced English 8*, stating this frees up time in students' high school schedules.

Ms. LaPlaunt thanked the committee for including her in the discussion.

Mr. Peterson stated that, on the topic of the *Civil Rights Experience* versus a separate African American studies course, if you try to put ethnic studies perspectives only in the context of civil rights, then the discussion is always in the context of this framework. There is value in exploring stand-alone ethnic studies courses that are not placed in the context of the struggle for civil rights, which, while extremely important, limits exploring the richness within any single ethnic study. However, this raises the issue if there is one specific ethnic studies courses, why are there not others. Then, this becomes a resource question. He stated he is also in favor of honors and AP courses, and is glad he made the meeting.

Ms. Wilken commented that when she was a student at Lathrop High School they did not have AP courses and she received a marvelous education. Her children, on the other hand, went through the district and saw the benefits of

AP and honors courses. It does bother her that students are placed in a track, often because of scheduling issues. She also mentioned she loves the new format and is excited about the expansion of the polar region sections. She has been gathering materials, and has asked retired teachers to look at and comment on the draft.

Ms. Hadaway is impressed with the expertise in the district. She thanked the committee for being at the meeting and grappling with the topics. She also announced that later in the month the district will unveil a middle college model with UAF. Next year some seniors will have the opportunity to spend part of their day at UAF, take some cohort classes, and get dual high school and university credit. She encouraged the committee to keep an eye out for this, which will be publicized January 21-30.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Sinclair moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Kincade seconded. Hearing no objection or further comment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 2020
TO: FNSBSD Board of Education
FROM: FNSBSD Curriculum Advisory Committee
SUBJECT: K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Recommendation

The Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) supports the proposed K-12 Social Studies Curriculum and recommends its adoption by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education.

The proposed Social Studies curriculum revision has followed the establish curriculum revision process outlined in [AR 910](#) (Curriculum Development). The process began in December 2018/January 2019 with community input conducted through online surveys, public meetings, and the review of testimony at previous School Board meetings. Throughout the spring of 2019, a group of teachers met to review community responses, examine best practices in curriculum and instruction, research national trends, and begin to develop competencies.

Starting in August 2019 a content area team reviewed the work completed in the spring and began revising the K-12 Social Studies curriculum. The first draft of the curriculum was made available for public comment in October, after which the team reviewed all comments, discussed what changes were needed, and drafted a second document. This process was repeated after draft two, resulted in the proposed final draft.

Our support for the proposed K-12 Social Studies Curriculum evolved over the course of the year, as it was revised. We reviewed each draft, discussed as a group, and offered suggestions for improvement. The curriculum writers considered all comments from this committee and made adjustments to the proposed curriculum, such as the inclusion of the importance of the polar region. The proposed K-12 Social Studies Curriculum reflects a lengthy process of thought, discussion, and research.

As noted in the philosophy and mission statement of the curriculum, the study of Social Studies is a process that develops from Kindergarten through high school, and helps learners understand their place in the world and their roles and responsibilities as engage citizens. Students will have the opportunity for active exploration and critical evaluation of complex and diverse social studies issues. The curriculum is grounded in competencies that empower students to be engaged members of their community and to master the processes necessary to

function in an information-rich, global society. The curriculum writers also worked to identify where the curriculum is aligned to the following standards:

- Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools
- Alaska Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies
- Alaska Digital Literacy Standards
- Alaska English/Language Arts Standards
- American Association of School Librarians Standards Framework for Learners
- College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards
- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) - Curriculum Standards for Social Studies.

At the March 5, 2020, Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting, we voted to recommend the proposed K-12 Social Studies Curriculum to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education for adoption. The curriculum writers have done an outstanding job of developing a comprehensive document that address the needs of all students, represents the community input process, and allows creativity and flexibility for teachers. Meticulous attention has been made into the development of graduate-level competencies that express what all FNSBSD graduates are expected to know and be able to do, as well as the development of skills and knowledge through the progression of course/grade-level competencies.

The Curriculum Advisory Committee thanks the K-12 Social Studies curriculum writers for all their work. They have developed a document that is strong, clear, aligns to state and national standards, and reflects the input of district staff, parents, students, and the community.

Respectfully submitted by the FNSBSD Curriculum Advisory Committee.

DRAFT

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 2020
TO: FNSBSD Board of Education
FROM: FNSBSD Curriculum Advisory Committee
SUBJECT: 7-8 English/Language Arts Curriculum Recommendation

The Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) supports the proposed English/Language Arts Curriculum for grades 7-8, and recommends its adoption by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education.

The proposed English/Language Arts curriculum revision has followed the establish curriculum revision process outlined in [AR 910](#) (Curriculum Development). The process began in December 2018/January 2019 with community input conducted through online surveys, public meetings, and the review of testimony at previous School Board meetings. Throughout the spring of 2019, a group of teachers met to review community responses, examine best practices in curriculum and instruction, research national trends, and begin to develop competencies.

Starting in August 2019 a content area team reviewed the work completed in the spring and began revising the 7-8 English/Language Arts curriculum. The first draft of the curriculum was made available for public comment in October, after which the team reviewed all comments, discussed what changes were needed, and drafted a second document. This process was repeated after draft two, resulted in the proposed final draft.

Our support for the proposed 7-8 English/Language Arts Curriculum evolved over the course of the year, as it was revised. We reviewed each draft, discussed as a group, and offered suggestions for improvement. The curriculum writers considered all comments from this committee and made adjustments to the proposed curriculum, such as the inclusion of *Advanced English 7* and *8* courses. The proposed 7-8 English/Language Arts Curriculum reflects a lengthy process of thought, discussion, and research.

As noted in the philosophy and mission statement of the curriculum, instruction in language arts integrates listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy to promote critical thinking. The curriculum writers also worked to identify where the curriculum is aligned to the following standards:

- Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools
- Alaska Digital Literacy Standards
- Alaska English/Language Arts Standards

- American Association of School Librarians Standards Framework for Learners
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards

At the March 5, 2020, Curriculum Advisory Committee meeting, we voted to recommend the proposed 7-8 English/Language Arts Curriculum to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education for adoption. The curriculum writers have done an outstanding job of developing a comprehensive document that address the needs of all students, represents the community input process, and allows creativity and flexibility for teachers. Meticulous attention has been made into the development of graduate-level competencies that express what all FNSBSD graduates are expected to know and be able to do, as well as the development of skills and knowledge through the progression of course/grade-level competencies.

The Curriculum Advisory Committee thanks the 7-8 grade English/Language Arts curriculum writers for all their work. They have developed a document that is strong, clear, aligns to state and national standards, and reflects the input of district staff, parents, students, and the community.

Respectfully submitted by the FNSBSD Curriculum Advisory Committee.