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SUPERINTENDENT

CURRICULUM COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020

Present: Ann Berry, Ethan Castillo, Darlynn Childress, Vivian Ding, Fran Doucedame, Bella Echols, Sara Exner, Clara Finneran, Nicky Goldstein, Lisa Hatfield, Craig Hochhaus, Eli Kashman, Kiyomi Kowalski, Tina Johnson, Kristen Lapiner, Tyler Lee, Amy Levy, Susan Levy, Thomas Liu, Linda Menges, Douglas Morrison, Amy Murray, Dee Pollard, Mike Roberts, Jason Rosenthal, Mathy Wasserman

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm by Mr. Scifres.

Mr. Scifres welcomed the Curriculum Council and expressed his appreciation to the Council for joining the first virtual Curriculum Council meeting. Additionally, he thanked the staff and the community for their efforts to work with our students. He introduced Mr. Ryan Gleason who will be taking over Curriculum Council in May.

Middle School Intervention and Remediation

Mr. Gleason is excited to be back working with the Curriculum Council. The Curriculum Council By-Laws state that information items may be presented to the Council. They are not to be voted upon but are for information purposes.

The Center and the Shop offer a flexible day option for high school students who are struggling with social/emotional issues, need a flexible schedule because of an acting/modeling job, or other reasons. These programs replaced Indian Hills and the Las Virgenes Academy. The administrators and staff at the high schools have increased attendance and reduced D/F grades, bringing students on track towards graduation. Creative funding was used to make these programs possible.

We are seeing that the need for support begins in seventh grade. Some students are struggling with social-emotional issues. These students often feel lost with the transition from one teacher and class to six classes.

Mr. Gleason said we are looking to take the successful high school model and use it in the middle schools. In the 2020-2021 school year, AC Stelle and Lindero Canyon Middle School will qualify for Title 1 Funding. AE Wright has already been receiving these funds. These national funds need to be used to close achievement gaps. The high school model will be used to help those middle school students who need the additional support these programs can offer. The intervention model can be taken to the middle schools with federal funding. These programs will be tested next year. After the trial period, the Curriculum Council will be reviewing and voting on the program.

Mr. Rosenthal said that early intervention is key. Ms. Hatfield asked if this would replace intervention classes. Mr. Gleason said the support would take place through this program with their subject-specific needs. There would be teachers who provide content-specific support. Mr. Gleason said the curriculum that is used for these programs is Apex. It grows with the student and can assess student level and gives level-appropriate content. It closes the gap and shows growth. Ms. Menges asked if a full-day in the intervention program would be a possibility for middle school students. Mr. Gleason said the SST team would determine the most flexible and supportive type of day for the students.

Mr. Gleason thanked the Board of Education for their support of the important work that has been taking place at the high school and supporting at-risk students.

Center and Shop Update

Nicki Goldstein, Amy Murray, Eli Kashman, and Brian Edelman joined the meeting as guests to give an update on The Center at Agoura Hills and The Shop at Calabasas High School.

Mr. Scifres gave the historical background of the Las Virgenes Academy and Indian Hills High School which previously supported at-risk students. There was then limited enrollment in the FUEL Education program. Our current programs are The Center and The Shop.

Mr. Edelman presented “The Why” of The Shop and The Center:

- To reduce D and F rates
- Provide alternative learning opportunities
- Adaptive schools to “be out of the box” -- including quiet spaces and communal spaces that are inviting and flexible for different students and different student needs
- Safe, comfortable learning environments

Mr. Kashman explained the purpose of the programs:

- Help students recover credit and meet graduation requirements.
- Specific social-emotional needs - adaptive space
- Facilitate Independent Study
- Accommodate for IEP/504
- Role in Distance Learning

Because of the current school closures, Distance Learning has been an easier transition for students in the Shop/Center because they are more familiar with this type of learning. He stated that some students were completing their courses earlier because of the format of the Apex curriculum.

Ms. Wasserman asked if the successes of Distance Learning through the Shop/Center could be shared with traditional classroom teachers. Mr. Scifres shared that sharing and collaboration have begun and will continue amongst the teachers.

Ms. Murray shared that the learning space is meant to be welcoming to the students. The students were very excited to get to be in the spaces. The students are greeted by highly-qualified teachers and may use loaner Acer computers. They have the flexibility to do their Apex curriculum on their own time -- also outside of school. It is empowering for them to have control over their schedule. Tools such as Google Classroom are currently being used to check in with students.

Ms. Goldstein shared that as of 4/20/20 248 classes have been completed (the majority of which are credit recovery). There are currently 408 classes being taken by 208 students which should be completed by June.

Mr. Kashman shared that D/F rates had fallen:

- From 5-week to final Fall semester grade: -9%
 - EL: -18.8%
 - Low income: -12%
 - First Gen -4.7%
- Year to year comparison Fall 2018 to Fall 2019
 - EL -9.35%
 - Low Income -.29
 - First Gen: 0.6%

Ms. Wasserman requested that this data be overlaid with the data of the schools at large as she thinks it would be valuable to show how impactful the programs are. Mr. Edelman added that the content and work habit support of the teachers (individualized attention) coupled with the Apex curriculum has been beneficial.

Ms. Murray shared the personal anecdote of a student at Agoura High School. This student was able to achieve great success. Mr. Edelman gave the anecdote of a student at Calabasas High School. The students felt welcome in the space. She said it was a huge improvement over the classroom that was available last year.

Ms. Goldstein stated that these programs have helped at-risk students become adaptable. In the future, there will be a partnership with the College and Career Counselors to help these students explore options beyond high school.

Mr. Scifres thanked the Shop/Center teams for their support of our students and their presentation.

High School Science Adoption Materials

Mr. Scifres reminded the Curriculum Council of the new Physics in the Universe course and the update to the existing biology course. He added that at the January Curriculum Council meeting, it was shared that after the courses were adopted our science pilot teachers would return to Curriculum Council with a curriculum proposal. Nancy Jobsz and Jonathan Oakman joined today's meeting to present the materials the high schools would like to adopt for the courses.

Over the last three years, we have had several curriculum adoptions. In 2021 and 2022 we will be having a curriculum budget freeze. We have solidified adoptions in math and ELA, history-social science, and science. The primary goals of the Curriculum Council will be to support existing adoptions and continue to strengthen instructional practices.

The recommendation for the Biology: The Living Earth course is Pearson's *California: The Living Earth*. For the Physics in the Universe course, the Pilot Team recommends the *Stile online platform*. At this time, no materials were selected for chemistry as neither program tested

met the threshold.

Mr. Scifres explained the many steps that take place as teachers pilot curricula and thanked the teachers for the time and effort they put into each course. Mr. Scifres said that there must be a unanimous consensus among pilot teachers and department chairs to move forward to Curriculum Council. Ms. Wasserman was concerned that the chemistry teachers would need to review additional pilot materials. Mr. Scifres explained that this does sometimes happen. The teachers are exploring further materials and options for chemistry. Ms. Jobsz explained that there were gaps in the materials they'd reviewed for chemistry and that they weren't fully NGSS-aligned.

The biology and physics adoption cost will be \$101,300. At this point, the cost of chemistry is TBD. The budget was initially set at \$300,000. These proposed materials are below budget.

Ms. Wasserman asked if there would be a budget for lab materials. Mr. Scifres said we would consider taking it in that direction. We have allocated \$5/student/year for six years for middle school students.

Ms. Jobsz shared that teachers had positive experiences with Pearson *California: The Living Earth* text. Teachers were pleased the text aligned with NGSS standards. Students enjoyed working with interactive lessons. They were quite interested in the animations and videos correlating with the phenomena and curriculum. Additional instructional supports helped to make the materials more accessible for students through visual tools and audio supports.

Ms. Menges asked if there are paper materials in the event there is a bandwidth or electricity issue. Ms. Jobsz said in a traditional school setting, materials could be printed out. Mr. Scifres said teachers will receive a set of classroom books. At home, students will have digital access. Mr. Liu asked for the outcome of the teacher voting on the pilot materials. Mr. Scifres said the votes for the recommendations were all 100%. The chemistry books were a unanimous no. At this time, a third book will be piloted for chemistry. Based on timing, it may not happen during this school year. Mr. Scifres added that a curriculum may not be adopted (this has happened with English Language and with the 4/5 Science curriculum).

Kristen Lapiner moved to adopt the Pearson text. Ann Berry seconded the motion. The motion was passed to adopt *California: The Living Earth*.

Mr. Oakman shared feedback on the Stile Online Platform for physics. The program requires online access at home and school. The teachers said interactive assignments for both in-class and distance learning were strong. They were pleased to have instant remediation for students struggling with specific standards and data feedback for teachers to help drive instructions. The alignment with NGSS and ease of use were strong positive aspects. Students liked the interactive lessons and online progress check questions in the lessons. Teachers would have liked to have seen an increased depth of content areas and more options of assignments per unit. There were several instructional supports including text that can be read aloud to students and a variety of delivery and response methods.

Ms. Menges asked why this curriculum is significantly less expensive than the biology curriculum. Mr. Scifres stated that this company is located in Australia and is interested in establishing themselves in the United States. We would be one of the first to adopt this product. The subscriptions are typically \$40/license but they are offering us a reduced rate of \$5/license.

Sara Exner made a motion to adopt the Stiles curriculum. Mike Roberts seconded the motion. The motion passed and the Stiles curriculum was adopted.

Mr. Scifres thanked the Curriculum Council for their dedication to our students. He stated he has enjoyed working with them and thanked them for their time.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm