

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 13
SCHOOL BOARD
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
June 23, 2011

Committee Members Present : S. Carleton, L. Andrews, G. Emery
Other Board Members Present : none
Staff Members Present : K. Hollicker, M. Slocum, N. Guyer
Others Present : M. Curtis – Station Maine
Location : Superintendent's Office – McLain Building

I. Call to order:

This meeting was called to order by Sally Carleton, Curriculum Committee Chair, at 5:35 PM.

II. Review of special 8th grade programming initiative conducted at Rockland District Middle School 2010/2011:

Principal Kathy Hollicker was joined by teacher Melanie Slocum, and Station Maine Captain Muriel Curtis to share the results of a "place-based" learning project that was conducted at RDMS over the past school year. This initiative focused on providing a group of 'high need' 8th grade students with more individualized instruction, additional support in strengthening independent habits of work, and intensified emotional support to build teamwork skills and self confidence. In addition to a more highly structured educational approach for these forty students, this cohort was also organized into crews of seven students for weekly rowing sessions in collaboration with Station Maine on the waterfront in Rockland. Data, both anecdotal and empirical, are being utilized to evaluate the outcomes of this initial project and to plan for this projects continuation in 2011/2012. Positive measurable student outcomes noted in this presentation included:

- Greater than anticipated fall to spring improvements via standardized testing in both reading and mathematics*
- A decrease in office referrals for disruptive behavioral incidences from the previous year's baseline for this same cohort*
- Improved school attendance*
- An increase in positive parental contacts and involvement*
- Over-all improved grades and a reduction of the failure rate*

More anecdotal perceptions and samples of students' writing shared in this presentation highlighted noted improvements in; the quality and timeliness of homework completion, social interactions, communication and leadership skills, physical fitness, and displays of personal responsibility and strengthened self-confidence. This experience also provided students with a unique opportunity to deepen their understanding of, and connections to their coastal cultural heritage.

RDMS faculty is currently working to design a similar opportunity for 7th grade students for the 2011/2012 school year. This continuing collaboration with Station Maine will focus on making these types of learning experiences open to a broader group of students wishing to participate.

Committee members expressed their sincere appreciation to Principal Hollicker, Melanie Slocum, Bruce Gamage (absent), and Muriel Curtis on behalf of the students who have obviously benefited greatly from these good efforts, and look forward to this programs continuation.

III. Informational overview and discussion of Common Core Standards:

N. Guyer shared documents related to the Common Core standards and updated committee members as to how these standards, now officially adopted by the State of Maine, are being utilized for curriculum planning purposes by RSU 13 within the areas of mathematics and literacy. In this discussion it was emphasized that while Common Core Standards will replace Maine Learning Results and become foundational planning documents, these standards should always be referenced in tandem with other credible standards documents and sources. As an example of this, it was noted that while Common Core Standards are central to the work within mathematics curriculum planning, the Curriculum Focal Points (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics – 2006) is also an important reference that is being utilized.

Committee members were directed to the Midcoast Regional Professional Development Center website (via google search) as a continuing source to reference as the Common Core Standards continue to be developed and released. Math and literacy standards are available electronically via this site and it is anticipated that draft science standards will be available for review later this summer or in early fall.

IV. Review of RSU 13 district-wide writing assessment results.

A first draft of this report was distributed and briefly discussed. Partial school-based results have been included in this first draft, but the full report is awaiting completion due to delayed reporting from the Gilford Butler and St. George Schools. District-wide results will be tabulated and graphed along with the pre/post analysis of specific skill development and gender-based performance when all data is received. Committee members will be notified by email when this report is completed and posted on the district's assessment website.

V. Other/Adjourn:

The Curriculum Committee confirmed its next meeting will occur in August, 2011. At that time the committee will review premier curriculum initiatives planned for the 2011/2012 school year.

This meeting was adjourned by Sally Carlton at 7:40 PM.