

EDUCATION/TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, March 8, 2016

8:30 a.m.

Agenda

Attendance: A. Shinn, B. Sargent, C. Allen, S. Pauch, S. Moffat, K. McGann, K. Tucker, J. Belske

1. Novels for approval (Kari McGann)

- o The White Darkness by Geraldine McCaughrean (Fiction unit of study/6th Grade)
 - o The Finest Hours by Michael J. Tougias and Casey Sherman (Non-fiction unit of study/7th Grade)
 - o Abraham Lincoln A Photographic Story of a Life by Tanya Lee Stone (Non-fiction unit of study/6th Grade)
 - o The Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World by E.L. Konigsburg (Fiction unit of study/7th Grade)
 - o Seekers The Quest Begins by Erin Hunter (Fiction unit of Study/3rd Grade)
1. Some of these books were recommended by Raise the Bar (a group that promotes positive parent involvement in their children's education).
 2. The Mysterious Edge of the Heroic World is not ready for Board review since it has not been reviewed by staff yet.
 3. Seekers The Quest Begins will introduce 3rd and 4th Grade students to a new series.

2. Comprehensive Equity Plan - Karen Tucker

1. To comply with State and Federal Laws concerning equity in educational programs, a Comprehensive Equity Plan is required to inform a district's practices and programs. "This plan is used to identify and correct all discriminatory and inequitable policies, programs, practices and conditions within or affecting our schools." (Karen Tucker)
2. The CEP is broken into 4 Main Parts: Board Responsibility, Staff Development and Training, School and Classroom Practices and Employment/Contract Practices.
3. 3 areas of improvement were noted:
 - a. Board Responsibility: D-3 Provide students, staff and the community with contact information for the AAO and publicize the location and availability of the CEP, policy(ies), grievance procedure and annual reports. The suggestion for improvements would be to post on the district website this information as well as put a statement in the staff manuals.
 - b. School and Classroom Practices: A-h Reduction and /or prevention of under representation of minority, female and make students in all classes and programs. After reviewing rosters from all classes and electives offered in the district, the Team noticed a larger number of female students in Chorus than male students. The improvement suggestion is to encourage our male population to try Chorus and to connect their vocal abilities to their instrumental abilities for future aspirations.
 - c. School and Classroom Practices: B-4-b Ensure that minority and male students are not disproportionately represented in detentions, suspensions, expulsions, dropouts, or special needs classifications. Based on Discipline Records and CST Records the Team noticed a higher number of male students are being referred. The Team is investigating the reasons for these recommendation closer and will report back on their findings.

3. Technology Survey - Student Results - Jim Belske

1. Majority students have computers at home available for homework 98% have access.

2. Faster computers were requested by students. Jim noted that the Windows program seemed to be where the lag is. They are working to rectify this problem and feel that chrome books will help eliminate this.
3. Student did a presentation on a program that will change a windows book into a chromebook (a program we are looking at)
4. Device availability is now allocated by classroom in lieu of laptop cart. This means there are about 10 laptops per class. Mr. Belske would like more available and is looking into it for next year.
5. Tewksbury is piloting 1to1 program where the students go to homeroom, take a device for the whole day and return them at the end of day. The batteries are holding up and not an issue. Mr. Belske suggested piloting this program next year in 6th grade.
6. Staff technology use survey is in the works may be completed next week.
7. A parent at the last Technology Meeting asked students: How do you feel technology is impacting your learning and grades? The students at the meeting responded that it makes them more efficient with their work and they are more engaged when technology is associated with work. The students were very aware where technology is not used a lot in certain rooms and they felt the instruction was good no matter how much technology was used. They understood when technology was needed and appropriate in their classes.

4. Proposed RMS Electives for 2016-17 - Sharon Moffat

One of our District Goals was to increase student choice in electives

1. Mrs. Moffat looked at the schedules for open times and availability of staff to offer new electives as well as more for the 2016-2017 school year.
2. During the weekly staff meetings and team meetings, Mrs. Moffat spoke to staff about some courses they would be interested in offering as well as availability for these courses in the teachers' schedules.
3. Mrs. Moffat also spoke to the Student Counsel and asked the students to reach out their peers about courses of interest to compile the list of offerings.
4. It was determined through these meetings that the electives would be offered to 7th and 8th grades only. The overall feeling is that 6th graders are faced with numerous changes when they enter RMS and allowing them a year to adjust would better prepare the students to make the best choices on their electives.
5. Please see attached.

5. Proposal for instrumental lessons in 4th grade – Kari McGann and Barb Sargent

1. With the continuing decline in enrollment, the ability to utilize staff to help grow programs such as music has become a more reasonable option.
2. There will be some availability in the music schedule to begin to offer an instrumental program at HBS for the 4th grade. This will be the first time for many student to have the ability to choose their own instrument to learn.
3. The HBS Instrumental schedule will follow the RMS schedule, which will be on a rotating schedule throughout the semester so children are not missing the same core classes each week.

New Business:

1. Chris Allen reported that NJ DOE has announced Future Ready Schools, a program designed to promote digital learning throughout NJ elementary and secondary public schools and to engage students in developing 21st Century skills by encouraging the best use of digital learning tools by educators. It is modeled after the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program, and aligned to the national "Future Ready Schools" program. FRS-NJ is anticipated to launch in October 2016 at the annual conference workshop.
2. Chris also reported on the iSchools initiative. He shared that Hunterdon Central won the "technology bus" valued at approx \$4,000 per session to come and visit the school. This is a mini tech set up. It contains all cutting edge technology that may one day be implemented in classrooms.