

**Boyertown Area School District**  
**Curriculum Committee**  
**April 16, 2013**  
**Minutes**

Mrs. Semmens, Curriculum Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm in the Education Center Board Room.

Board members in attendance: Mrs. Dierolf, Mr. Nichols, Mrs. Hartford, Mr. Crossley, Mrs. Usavage 5:36

Administration in attendance: Mr. Scoboria, Dr. Amuso, Mr. Szabloski, Mrs. Woodard, Mr. Miller, Dr. Cooper and Mrs. Petri

Members of the Public: 8

Everyone recited the pledge of allegiance to the flag and observed a moment of silence.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Presentation and Discussion**

Mrs. Semmens opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introduced Mrs. Woodard.

Mrs. Woodard welcomed everyone to the first curriculum committee meeting. She shared the three goals from the BASD Comprehension Plan.

- All students will meet or exceed individual, annual growth goals, including the demonstration of grade level proficiency in all core subject areas.
- Boyertown graduates will be prepared for future education, career, responsible citizenship and competition in a global economy by effectively applying these 21st Century Skills: Innovation, Creativity and Curiosity, Collaboration, Communication Skills, Adaptability, Problem Solving, Critical Thinking and Entrepreneurship.
- All students will be college and career ready.

Following the review of these goals, Mrs. Woodard introduced Dr. Cooper, BASH Principal. The primary focus of the evening's presentation was to share their experiences from recent visits to Central York School District and Johnson and Johnson.

Dr. Cooper introduced the members of his team including Miss Jessica Donovan and Miss Sara Diaz who shared highlights from their visit to Central York. They shared the make-up of the group from BASH who accompanied them on the visit which included a cross section of high school teachers, building administration, central office administration and a student. The two went on to share the physical layout and the climate they experienced in the building as well as the structure of the academies which were based on a common interest, not ability. They also shared that it is important to note that academies are flexible and that students can change

academies if they so choose and can also take courses from other academies without being enrolled in the academy. The group explained the main idea of the academy model is that there are four areas of interest that students may choose from. This process can help the students to begin thinking about their future and what they may want to do after graduation. They also shared that at Central York, similar to BASH, there are core classes and elective classes. The core classes are the same in each of the academies and it is the elective areas where certain courses were suggested based on their area of interest. A student received a Seal of Distinction for taking three courses in their specific academy. A positive attribute of this academy structure is that students have enough flexibility in their schedule to explore other options while still satisfying the requirement for the seal. Finally, the group explained that here at BASH we are already counseling students on courses that will support individual areas of interest which would support what is being done at Central York.

Dr. Cooper next described the 9<sup>th</sup> grade transitional group and that the broader idea of an academy is to take the idea of teaming from the junior high setting and build off of it to develop the academy structure.

Dr. Cooper next spoke about the proposed 9<sup>th</sup> grade transitional group, Link Crew, which is a research-based transition program that they would like to implement at the high school. With assistance of staff, this program utilizes 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to mentor entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to help ease the transition to the high school setting.

Mrs. Petri next discussed the internship that students at Central York had the opportunity to experience.

Next, Dr. Cooper shared a draft of a sample document that would be used to help introduce students to the requirements in a Visual, Performing, and Fine Arts Academy as well as the STEM Academy. Although only a draft document, it provided Board members with the minimal requirements of a course schedule for a 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grader within the given specific academies. Dr. Cooper went on to show how flexible the structure actually can be to allow students to change academies.

Finally, the group asked if there are any questions.

- Mrs. Semmens asked about the ability or opportunities for students to change academies? Dr. Cooper explained that, through the use of the electives, students would be able to make changes and still have enough time to still satisfy the requirements for the seal. Mrs. Woodard also shared that not all students at Central York graduated with a seal and that this was seen as acceptable due to some students possibly making changes and decisions later in their scholastic career.
- Mrs. Semmens also asked about collaboration time and specifically asked where the time will come from to allow for department meeting time as well as academy meeting times. The committee shared that Central York had weekly academy meetings that lasted about one hour per week. They were not sure how this was scheduled but they did share the importance of this time.

- Mrs. Hartford asked how Central York began the process of developing their academies. The presenters shared that in looking at Central York course offerings, the courses needed are not that different than what we are currently offering. They shared there would be some additions and changes needed but not a complete rework of our existing courses. The staff members suggested that, instead, smaller changes could be made over time to enhance each program. In this new process, we would be more formal in our approach to help students chose paths for their future.
- Mr. Nichols asked how class size limits would be handled. Central York found that numbers of students in each academy were reasonably equal and allowed for students' preferences. Dr. Cooper briefly shared about how we currently schedule students and how that system can be used to do the same with an academy structure.
- Mrs. Usavage asked if someone can chose to not choose an academy. Dr. Cooper shared that Central York does require students to select an academy. He went on to share that he is not sure that this is the best choice for our students and went on to share that the system is designed to be flexible.
- Mrs. Usavage also asked if there is a risk that students would be forced into an academy that they don't want to be in. Dr. Cooper felt that this did not happen in Central York and didn't anticipate this problem here. They also shared that there was no cap within the academy.
- Mrs. Usavage shared that she wanted to commend them for their presentation.
- Finally, Mrs. Usavage asked how long they have had the building open and what the data is showing. Dr. Cooper shared that Central York administration shared the SAT scores have increased and they have seen a positive change to the culture within the building.
- Mrs. Hartford asked if the students would be able to get a double seal? Dr. Cooper shared that he is not sure but thinks it may be a possibility.
- Mr. Crossley asked if the staff would be adjusted if the academies are different. Dr. Cooper shared that because the core content is required by all students they can take core courses in other academies to meet the requirements of the student interest.
- Mr. Crossley also asked how we would blend the STEM academies with the BCTC students. The presenters shared that these students would benefit from the interrelatedness of the hands -on learning with the book study.

- Mr. Crossley finally asked if we knew how many students change academies. Dr. Cooper shared we don't have any numbers related to this but that the flexibility of the system helps to allow for this concern.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Announcements**

- April 23, 2013 – 7:00 pm – Board Meeting – Pine Forge Elementary
- May 28, 2013 – 5:30 pm – Curriculum Committee – Boyertown Elementary

Mrs. Semmens adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.