

# Curriculum Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 3:00 PM

Remote Session

## I. Call to order

## II. Approval of October, November and December meeting minutes

## III. Curriculum & Instruction Updates:

- WHS course request timeline and process
- Instructional coaching monthly highlights
  - Math pilot program at WIS guided by the Tri-State report from 2022-23
- Winter assessment schedule K-9 reminders

## IV. Next meeting topics:

- Presentation and information on digital literacy & technology goals grade 6-8 lens

## V. Adjournment

## **Curriculum Committee Meeting**

October 10, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Via Google Meet

### Present Committee Members:

Dr. Bernadette Kingsley (Chairperson), Chad Hoepfner

### Present Administration:

Tina Henckel, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent; Meghan Conetta, WHS Principal; Laura Kaddis, HES Principal; Beth Lancaster, CIL 6-12 Science & Technology; Elizabeth Morris, CIL, K-12 Performing Arts

## **1. Call to Order**

The meeting called to order at 3:03 p.m.

### Discussion:

Dr. Henckel reviewed the general purpose of the Curriculum Committee meetings and reviewed the virtual meeting norms.

## **2. Approval of September 2023 minutes**

Motion Passed: Move that the Curriculum Committee approve the September 2023 meeting minutes. This motion made by Chad Hoepfner and seconded by Bernadette Kingsley.

**2 Yeas – 0 Nays**

## **3. Overnight field trip approval**

### Discussion:

- Performing Arts CIL Liz Morris presented on the four-day, three-night field trip to Nashville, Tennessee proposed for February 29 to March 3, 2024. She outlined the itinerary and gave highlights of the proposed activities.
- The trip is an opportunity for students to work in a recording studio, to work with other students outside the school setting, as well as get a glimpse of music careers other than just performing.
- The trip is open to any student in a performing ensemble at Weston High School for up to 100 students. Currently there are 13 committed chaperones.
- Dr. Kingsley suggested sharing some of the highlights of the trip at the March Board of Education meeting.

## **4. Presentation from Weston High School on their updates to the Program of Studies for the 2024-2025 school year**

### Discussion:

- WHS Principal Conetta presented on three new course proposals:

- AP Physics II, an algebra-based physics, to replace AP Physics I-C, a calculus-based physics. She explained that WHS will continue to offer an AP Calculus course, and students will still have access to taking the AP Physics I-C exam.
- Digital Electronics, a PLTW course, to replace Computer Integrated Manufacturing course. The proposed course is more of a hands-on course and more relevant to the interests of the WHS students.
- Lastly, an addition of a course that is based on dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) tenets called Wellness Seminar that delves deeper into DBT skills.

## **5. Overview of the Teacher Leader Fellowship Academy (TLFA) sponsored by Weston Education Foundation (WEF)**

Discussion:

- Dr. Henckel reported that a cohort of 16 teachers and administrators are engaging in professional development through Sacred Heart University that focuses on creating connections and a stronger sense of belonging for students, staff and community. Specifically, on creating more joyful and impactful places for teaching and learning. The first meeting focused on leveraging opportunities to redesign the school space, leveraging curriculum design, and ways to integrate the portrait of the graduate K-12 at the elementary school level.

## **6. Update regarding the District’s shift to digital assessment distribution**

Discussion:

- Dr. Henckel reviewed with the committee the shift from physical mailing to digital distribution of NWEA assessments. She explained that the results will be delivered in a secure email with the results in an attachment as well as a cover letter that explains the data points.

## **7. Review and communication of the new kindergarten school year start law**

Discussion:

- Principal Kaddis spoke on the shift in age requirement to start kindergarten. The new law states that a child must be the age of five on or before September 1 of the kindergarten school year.
- She explained that parents will have the opportunity to have an early entrance option for next year. Dr. Henckel also added that the BOE Policy Subcommittee will discuss changes to policy and regulations on appeals for early/late entry to kindergarten.

## **8. Link to Pupil Personnel Services website**

Discussion:

- Dr. Henckel reviewed with the committee that a link is provided on the Pupil Services and Special Education area on the district website that contains the recorded Parent DBT presentation on October 4, 2023.
- Those who missed the meeting but would like to view the recording should navigate to the Pupil Personnel Services & Special Education tab on the right side of the Weston School District website and then scroll down to the “Recordings/Presentations of PPS/Special Education

Meetings” area. Links to recorded meetings/workshops are linked there.

## **9. Next meeting topics**

Discussion:

Dr. Henckel stated that information on the district’s literacy and technology goals would be a topic of discussion for the next meeting.

## **10. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Curiano

DRAFT

## **Curriculum Committee Meeting**

November 8, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Via Google Meet

### Present Committee Members:

David Felton, Chad Hoepfner

### Present Administration:

Tina Henckel, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent; Dan DiVito, Director of Digital Learning and Technology; Pattie Falber, WIS Principal; Laura Kaddis, HES Principal; Sharon Rodko, HES Librarian; Shelly Rinas, WIS Librarian

## **1. Call to Order**

The meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

### Discussion:

Dr. Henckel reviewed the general purpose of the Curriculum Committee meetings and reviewed the virtual meeting norms.

## **2. Approval of October 2023 minutes**

The approval was tabled until the December meeting.

## **3. Information on Digital Literacy & Technology Goals**

### Discussion:

- Ms. Rodko presented on integrating technology in the K-2 curriculum. She reviewed four different sets of standards that the schools must integrate into curriculum and the differences between digital literacy and computer science.
- In her presentation, Ms. Rodko gave examples of how the integration of skills support the Portrait of a Graduate and gave examples of how curriculum is enhanced through technology integration.
- She also reviewed how technology integration aligns with the District Improvement Plan as well as the School Improvement Plan.
- Committee members inquired about parameters for video and technology use as well as safety concerns. Mr. DiVito reviewed how the district responds to different situations concerning safety.

## **4. Next meeting topics**

### Discussion:

Topics for the December meeting will include;

- Information on digital literacy and technology goals through a grade 3-5 lens.
- The pilot math program at WIS guided by the 2023 Tri-State report.

## **5. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Curiano

DRAFT

## **Curriculum Committee Meeting**

December 12, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Via Google Meet

### Present Committee Members:

Bernadette Kingsley (Chairperson), David Felton, Chad Hoepner

### Present Administration:

Tina Henckel, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent; Dan DiVito, Director of Digital Learning and Technology; Meghan Conetta, WHS Principal; Pattie Falber, WIS Principal; Laura Kaddis, HES Principal; Sharon Rodko, HES Librarian; Shelly Rinas, WIS Librarian; Helen Knudsen, WMS Librarian; Andrea Noble, CIL K-2 ELA and Social Studies; Alex Bluestein, CIL 3-5 ELA and Social Studies; Nick Torres, CIL 6-12 Social Studies; Elizabeth Morris, CIL K-12 Performing Arts; Daniel Passarelli, WHS Teacher

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

#### Discussion:

Dr. Henckel reviewed the general purpose of the Curriculum Committee meetings and reviewed the virtual meeting norms.

### **2. Approval of October and November 2023 meeting minutes**

Approval of the October and November minutes will be addressed at the next meeting scheduled for January 9, 2024.

### **3. Review of UConn Early College Experience Course**

#### Discussion:

- CIL Liz Morris gave an overview of the proposed course entitled Popular Music and Diversity in American Society (ECE). The course explores the role of popular music in American society as part of our culture and American experience.
- She explained that the course allows students who are not in performing ensembles a point of access to the WHS music program. Principal Conetta commented further on opportunities for students to access the program, and how it could lead to interest in a musical career.
- Dr. Kingsley asked if there might be a cross-credit component of the course that would provide humanities credit.

### **4. International Trip to Greece and Italy April Break 2025**

#### Discussion:

- Social studies teacher, Mr. Passarelli presented on the proposed trip to Italy and Greece in April of 2025. He has teamed up with Latin teacher Amanda Telford to put together a trip that focuses on history and Latin.

- He spoke on the merits of the tour company, the historical sites to be visited, and the cultural experiences planned.
- Mr. Passarelli brought the trip to the Board this year for approval, as there are obvious planning benefits but also scholarship incentives for students who commit early.

## **5. Presentation and Information on Digital Literacy & Technology Goals**

### Discussion:

- Shelly Rinas, Library Media Specialist at Weston Intermediate School, presented on how the library integrates information, digital literacy and technology at the third through fifth grade levels.
- Ms. Rinas spoke on the skills that employers are looking for and how those skills are the focus for development in our students and woven into the curriculum.
- She spoke on the ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) standards and AASL (American Association of School Librarians) standards and gave examples of how the five main areas of focus for digital and technology learning in Weston align with these standards.
- Ms. Rinas played some of the WIS morning show videos and a public service announcement video that demonstrated students' communication with purpose skills.
- She spoke on the makerspace and gave an example of a reverse engineering project as a problem-solving skill using the 3D printer. She emphasized the role that technology integration plays in student creativity and also gave examples of "unplugged" collaborative problem solving.
- Mr. Hoepfner had questions around the use of personal devices at school. Ms. Falber discussed the school policy on personal devices in grades 3-5. Mr. Hoepfner also asked about generative AI. Ms. Rinas explained that currently the district is not integrating that technology due to data privacy laws but feels that could change in the future and librarians will need to look for ways to use it in meaningful ways for students.
- Mr. Felton asked about continuity from fifth grade to middle school. This will be address in the grades 6-8 presentation at the next meeting.

## **6. Overview of the Social Studies Framework, K-12**

### Discussion:

- Alex Bluestein began the discussion by reviewing the content themes in the newly adopted Connecticut State Standards for K-12 social studies. She explained that these themes help orient both those who develop the standards and those who shape the standards into grade-level curriculum.
- The approach to teaching the standards is inquiry driven where the teacher acts more as the facilitator to guide the students in acquiring knowledge.
- Andrea Noble spoke on the vertical alignment of the four disciplines of social studies--history, civics, geography, and economics--starting in grade K and progressing through grade 12. She spoke on the inquiry learning progression that begins in elementary school and continues through grade 12.
- Nick Torres reviewed the social studies course progression and gave examples of vertical articulation of standards in grades 6-12. He gave some examples of how our current curriculum meets the new standards. He expressed that the department hopes to elevate their instruction to

an even higher level with the new standards.

- The Weston social studies curriculum teaches source evaluation strategies starting in grade three and continues through grade 12. The Weston curriculum encourages multiple perspectives by using multiple sources.
- Dr. Henckel spoke on the next steps for executing curriculum revisions around the new State Standards over the next few months and during the summer.
- Mr. Felton inquired about Holocaust education in Hurlbutt and WIS. Ms. Bluestein said that it is not taught as a history unit per se and spoke on age appropriateness of the subject. She spoke of a fifth grade historical fiction unit that introduces the subject as well as a read aloud text on the subject in fourth grade. Mr. Torres spoke about grade level assemblies at the middle school for Holocaust Remembrance Day and examples of Holocaust education at the high school.

## **7. Next Meeting Topics**

Discussion:

- The next meeting will have a discussion on the Tri-State report with emphasis on the WIS math program.
- The next meeting will also include and a presentation and information on digital literacy and technology in grades 6-8.

## **8. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Curiano