

**Manitowoc Public School District**  
**Minutes of Curriculum Committee Meeting**

November 12, 2019

Curriculum Committee Chairperson, Elizabeth Williams, called the meeting to order at 6:01p.m. Curriculum Committee Members, Meredith Sauer and Dave Nickels were present along with Jason Bull, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and Pam Lensmire, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Also present were Superintendent Holzman and Lisa Johnston.

**Student Support Leaders/Dean of Students Update**

Lee Thennes, Lincoln High School Principal, indicated that he is facilitating a collaborative team with the Student Support Leaders from Franklin Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, and Washington Middle School and the Dean of Students from Lincoln High School. He indicated that the team's focus has been around sharing the individual supports each member is providing in her own building and collaborating around practices or ideas that may be beneficial to the district as a whole. The team meets monthly, engaging in a collaborative discussion one month and making site visits to each other's schools the next month. Each member of the team provided an update on the focus of her work during the first quarter of the school year. Some themes within the work of the team members are building connections between students, staff, families, and the community; monitoring attendance and addressing concerns; coaching staff on effective behavior intervention strategies; character education lessons; and safety. The team will measure their success through positive connections with students and families, anecdotal records, increased student self-regulation and resilience, attendance, behavior tracking, referrals, and a reduction in the amount of time students are out of class.

**LHS ELA Update and New Course Proposals**

Lee Thennes, Lincoln High School Principal, and members of the Lincoln High School English-Language Arts department provided an overview of a new ELA course pathway proposal. They indicated that the work began with an exploration of how the team can get students more engaged and excited about ELA. The team has seen a decline in statewide assessment performance in ELA and widening gaps between subgroups. They researched best practices in student engagement and looked at several other schools' ELA curriculum models. A key finding of their research is that student choice is paramount to building student engagement. The team generated a list of potential new course titles and descriptions and surveyed students in grades 9 through 12 to identify those courses of most interest to students. The team used the data from the 897 respondents to create a new ELA course pathway in which students in grades 9 and 10 would participate in foundational courses to build and strengthen literacy skills and students in grades 11 and 12 could choose from traditional course offerings or a variety of literature and language course offerings aligned to the feedback from the survey. Each student would be required to earn 2 credits in ELA between their 11th and 12th grade years, one full literature credit and one full language credit. All courses align to focus standards derived from the Common Core State Standards and a workshop approach to instruction, similar to the model used in K - 8 ELA instruction, will be used to ensure students develop a rigorous understanding of skills and concepts.

The new courses proposed as part of the ELA pathway include:

- The Graphic Novel
- Film Studies/IB Film
- Sports Literature

- Mythology
- Music as Literature
- Spoken Word: The Power of Poetry
- Journalism

The Lincoln High School and Student Learning Office budgets will support the anticipated start-up costs of these courses.

Meredith Sauer made a motion to move the ELA course proposals forward to the full Board for approval. Dave Nickels seconded the motion. The motion carried and will move forward to the full Board.

### **Other High School Course Proposals**

Lee Thennes, Principal of Lincoln High School, shared the following new course proposals:

- Macro Zoology - an elective for students with interest in agricultural or veterinary science
- Capstone in Engineering and Design - an independent project-based course offering for students who have taken three or more engineering credits
- Web Page and Mobile App Design - an elective for students who have completed Video Game Design and Computer Science Principles and Programming and still want additional related learning opportunities
- Advanced Graphic Design/Illustration - an advanced course elective in digital/visual arts

Meredith Sauer made a motion to move the four additional high school course proposals forward to the full Board for approval. Dave Nickels seconded the motion. The motion carried and will move forward to the full Board.

### **Transition Incentive Grant**

Joanne Metzen, Director of Pupil Services, indicated that, due to the large number of respondents the district had for a post-school outcomes survey, the district is eligible to receive \$22, 703 to support special education programming. The committee members requested more specific details about how the district would spend the funds. Mrs. Metzen will bring a team together to create a plan for utilizing the funds and bring it to the committee for approval.

### **State Accountability Report Card Review**

Jason Bull, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, worked with the team to schedule an opportunity for the Curriculum Committee to receive an overview of the district's state accountability report card data on Friday, November 22, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Meredith Sauer asked for clarification on when an update on the middle school model will be provided to the committee. Jason Bull indicated that an update is scheduled for the December Curriculum Committee meeting.

Dave Nickels made a motion to adjourn the Curriculum Committee; Meredith Sauer seconded the motion. The Curriculum Committee meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.