

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

March 18, 2021

Curriculum Committee Chairperson, Meredith Sauer, called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Curriculum Committee Members, Kathy Willis and Kerry Trask were present along with Board of Education Member, Lisa Johnston and Superintendent Mark Holzman. In addition, Jason Bull, Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, Pam Lensmire, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Lori Williams, K-12 Math Specialist were also present. Cory Erlandson, Principal of Wilson Middle School, and Sonja Bolchen, Wilson Middle School Teacher, were present for a portion of the meeting, as well.

**Student Travel - Washington D.C.**

Sonja Bolchen, social studies teacher at Wilson Middle School, presented a request for approval for Wilson staff to take approximately 50 to 100 Wilson Middle School students to Washington, D.C. in June of 2022. She explained that the trip provides students with an opportunity to explore historical sites and attend a Kennedy Center performance and visit museums to strengthen their cultural appreciation. Students prepare for the trip by engaging in units of study. The World Strides organization, through whom the trip is coordinated, has a fundraising system that allows friends and family to contribute donations towards students' trips and works directly with families seeking needs-based scholarships. Meredith Sauer asked Superintendent Holzman if there is a way community members can make donations to the school to support students wanting to participate in the trip. Superintendent Holzman indicated that he will work with the Director of Business Services to identify ways in which people can make donations to support students. Kathy Willis asked if Washington Middle School would be offering a similar trip. Jason Bull shared that Lance Master, Principal of Washington Middle School, has reached out several times to see if any staff members are interested and able to facilitate a trip for Washington Middle School students and has not had anyone express interest. There is a plan to explore the possibility of parents chaperoning a trip in the future. The approximate cost of the Washington D.C. trip to the district would be \$5000 for the staff chaperones. Kathy Willis made a motion to move the proposal to the full Board for consideration and Meredith Sauer seconded. All members were in favor, so the proposal will move to the full Board.

**K-12 Math Update**

Lori Williams, K-12 Math Specialist, provided an update on math across the district. She solicited feedback from a variety of staff members across different grade levels and buildings related to two questions: (1) What two things are you most excited about in math within our district? and (2) If you could change one thing about math education within our district, what would you change and why? The responses were collected in the form of quotes and videos. Lori shared that the responses reflect a celebration of the hard work MPSD teachers have put in to ensure students have opportunities to learn at high levels, even in the midst of a pandemic. She also shared some of the systemic supports that have been offered to teachers this year. At the elementary level, teachers were provided with time and support to unpack and ready Bridges resources, Math Learning Center professionals provided training on the implementation of Bridges, math coaches and Lori facilitated monthly grade band sessions to support teachers in

the implementation of Bridges, and math coaches have engaged in weekly collaborative time with teachers to support data analysis and planning. At the secondary level, new teachers and teachers changing grade levels or courses were compensated to participate in College Preparatory Math training over the summer and teachers have received coaching on complex instruction and equity in access with a focus on building students' math agency and identity.

Kathy Willis asked for an update on compacted 7th and 8th grade math. Jason Bull indicated that he, Lori, and the middle school administrators worked with the teachers of the compacted math courses to plan for what the courses would look like this year and then had monthly follow-up meetings with the teachers to support their implementation of the established plan. He indicated that the team will meet next week to start planning for the courses for next year. Kathy asked about how the courses are being offered this year and Jason explained that compacted and non-compacted students participate in the same math section together and then the compacted students are provided an additional 25 to 30 minutes of instruction at another time in their day.

### **Equity Update**

Pam Lensmire provided an update on the work that a team of administrators and teacher leaders within the district are doing around equity with the Derute Consulting team. In August, the group worked through a process to generate two key inquiry questions to guide the work throughout the rest of the year. In October, the group learned strategies for interrupting deficit language and for reframing conversations using race specific talk. In January, the group began to take a deeper look at how policies and practices built from the lens of white culture impact students and families of color. The group will gather for the final session of the year on March 19, 2021. Following this, the Student Learning Office team will meet with the Derute Consulting team to plan next steps for the 2021-22 school year. Another key aspect of the work with the Derute team is a championing process they established that entails every member of the team championing another member of the team around equity goals in the areas of wellness, relationships, learning, and leading and then also being championed by another member of the team. Jason Bull explained that, through his championing process, he set a goal to explore community partnerships around equity. He indicated that the Student Learning Office collaborates monthly with the Manitowoc Public Library and one of the topics discussed during those meetings is equity. Our MPSD General Education Culturally Responsive Behavior Specialist and a school counselor participate in an LTC multicultural group focused on equity work. Recently, the Student Learning Office team and a few other leaders connected with the UWGB Sheboygan Campus CEO and the UWGB Inclusivity Champion to learn about their efforts related to equity and begin discussions around how they can support our district's continued work around equity. Superintendent Holzman expressed the importance of the district's efforts to focus on equity and address the inequities that exist including those that have resulted in our disproportionality identification.

Kathy Willis requested that one of the Student Learning Office Directors provide an explanation of the Student Learning Liaison group. Jason Bull explained that the group is composed of 37 teacher leaders representing core, elective, and specialist areas across elementary, middle, and high school levels. They serve as a conduit of communication between teachers and the Student

Learning Office team and their feedback is often sought on initiatives and action plans. The Student Learning Liaisons have been provided with professional development from internationally recognized experts during an annual summer institute and come together monthly to continue learning related to shepherding the Professional Learning Community model. They also facilitate collaborative learning opportunities on staff development days for their content area or specialist area teams.

Kerry Trask made a motion to adjourn the Curriculum Committee; Meredith Sauer seconded the motion. The Curriculum Committee meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.