

Minutes
Watertown Board of Education
Curriculum and Instruction Sub Committee Meeting
Monday January 9th, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
Watertown High School
Lecture Hall

Members Present: Cathie Rinaldi, Chairman of Policy & Labor Committee
Janelle Wilk, Committee Member
Jim Gambardella, Committee Member

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Leslie Crotty, Chairman, Board of Education
Vic Vincenzi, Board of Education
Rob Makowski, Board of Education
Tom Lambert, Board of Education
Cheryl Albino, Board of Education
Dr. Bridget Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Paul Jones, Principle, Watertown High School

1. Convene Meeting

Ms. Rinaldi, Chairman of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and then immediately turned the meeting over to Dr. Carnemolla to discuss the update to the 2017-2018 program of studies at Watertown High School.

2. Review of the Meeting

Dr. Carnemolla – As you know, we have been discussing the program of studies over the past two years and every year, we bring it to Curriculum and Instruction in its draft form, pending Board of Education approval. I have asked Mr. Jones to hit the highlights for you tonight with the program of studies and the credits and so forth, and hopefully we will be able to approve it at the next board meeting.

Mr. Jones – Thank you. While the changes are small, I think the process of doing this is important with the Board of Education. Our credit requirements have stayed the same, it is here for you to review. The credits required are 23 (2016-2018), 24.5 (2019), and 26 (2020). This gets us to the state regulations, including one that I am very proud of, our senior Capstone project. The personal finance addition is with incoming freshmen, which they are required to take as

either a math course or an elective CTE course. Also reminding you of the counselor workshop, where the junior class this year will be the first class to have the freshmen workshop and will now begin it again. If you recall, when we added the workshop, it restructured the way they received their PE credit. In the past it was a half credit and they had to take a half credit, and now they take a quarter of PE in their freshman year, half in 10th grade, and a quarter in their junior class. The other open quarters (gr 9 & 11), they are taking the workshops and meeting with their counselors. In grade 9, they are meeting about high school and talking about many things including cyber bullying, extracurricular activities, joining sports, clubs, theatre and other things we may offer or do in high school. In their junior year, they are discussing college essays, applying for scholarships, resumes, looking at whatever options they want to go to. Research shows that if you wait until you are a senior you are behind, no matter what type of education they are looking to move on to.

For new courses, most are not really new. We currently offer Art 1 as a full year course. All other courses are a half year course with the exception of AP Art. What we have done is split the ART 1 class into two half year courses. From a scheduling perspective, it opens up scheduling for the teachers to see more students to introduce them into the arts. Realistically, that is 50 more students they may see in a year.

We currently offer CP Physics and AP Physics. When you look at the CP course, there is a wide gap between that and AP. We are adding honors physics to the curriculum to help with students who don't want to take AP physics, but want more than the CP course can provide. They want to do more hands on things that honors physics can provide.

With our added requirements a few years ago, we went to 3.5 credits for science for each student. We had added three half year courses at that point, and now we are adding one or two more. Oceanography is one of these, along with forensics. Forensics is a course our students have fallen in love with and we have a high registration rate. One of the things that we have found with Marine Biology is that the students really are interested in the ocean and those types of things, but they are really more interested in the physical nature of it and not the actual biology of it. While they may sound like similar courses, they are truly very different. One is more focused on the biology and the life cycles of the ocean and one is more focused on the more physical nature of the ocean and nautical things. That would give students another half credit. We do offer a lot of biological sciences and life sciences, but not physical sciences and this course would add to that.

Lastly, AP French has us looking ahead to offer more opportunities to our world language students. Spanish is a great language, but we want to broaden the options we give our students and French is a great place to start. We are increasing our numbers and we have enough students to support offering this. We have French V now, and our teacher has received AP training and will allow us to move from a five level to AP level, take the exam, and possibly earn college credits.

Prerequisites are probably the biggest things that have changed this year. We took the three years in order to update this and make it something that really makes sense. We made sure that every prerequisite made sense and sets students up to be successful. With PowerSchool, we have the ability to sign students up online, which allows parents to see more of what is going on.

We will stagger that this year to make sure it all goes smoothly. This will also set up students for success so it registers them for the right course with the right prerequisites.

Finally, we have a partnership with Naugatuck Valley that allows our students to take classes for credit there. They do not receive any money from us, nor do we receive from them, it is just a free way to get a course from NVCC. They do not receive HS credit, but they can potentially receive college credit that they can use at NVCC or transfer it to any school that is accepting of it. Let's say that a senior that has study hall at the end of the day, they can drive over (supply their own transportation) and take a course during that time. As long as they have met the requirements that NVCC has, this gives them the opportunity to earn real college credits at a real time rate.

3. Adjournment

Mr. Nardella adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

He then called for a motion to adjourn.

Subject: Motion to Adjourn

Motion Presented by: Ms. Crotty

Motion Seconded by: Ms. Wilk

Motion Passed

Respectfully submitted by,

Mindi Davidson

Recording Secretary