

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

The February 15, 2024, Curriculum Committee meeting was called to order by Mrs. Acree at 4:59 PM.

Present: Jean Acree, Janet Cushman & Gerald Calnen (Alternate)
Absent: Amanda Pickett
Also Present: Chairwoman Charlotte Riley, Debra Gaskell, Sarah Brown, Elana Beebe & Michelle Middleton
Audience: None

English Program of Studies Changes:

Ms. Gaskell presented proposed changes to English courses at the high school level that support expanded opportunities for students. There is an increasing interest for underclassmen to take what have historically been the “senior” English courses. These courses are semester courses. Some are literature focused and some are writing focused. Seniors need to take one literature course and one writing course their senior year for one English credit to complete that graduation requirement. The English department identified five of these semester courses that were appropriate in both content and rigor for underclassmen and propose that they now be open to students in Grades 9-12. Students who take these courses in Grades 9-11 will receive elective credit for them. These courses include Creative Writing, Searching & Writing, Honors British Literature, Honors American Literature, and World Literature. The remainder of these “senior” courses, except for Honors Advanced Composition II, will be open to both Grades 11 and 12, with Grade 11 students receiving elective credit. Honors Advanced Composition II will remain solely a Grade 12 course.

Ms. Gaskell also explained that this is because Honors Advanced Composition I and II are scheduled into the same section and the students in Honors Advanced Composition II serve as mentors to the other students. The last change of grade level offering is to open AP Language and Composition to Grade 12. Traditionally, AP Language and Composition has been open to Grade 11 only, with AP Literature and Composition being open to Grade 12. We recognize that some students may not think about an AP course until Grade 12, so we want to give them a choice. AP Literature and Composition will remain only Grade 12 due to the rigor of the course and the connection to UCONN as it is an ECE course as well as AP.

Committee members asked how scheduling happens for these courses and are they offered both semesters or only one. Ms. Gaskell explained that we try to offer them both semesters, but it depends on demand.

Committee members approved these changes.

Ms. Gaskell proposed a revision to the course description for English 11 and Honors English 11. They both contain wording that identifies the focus of the course as being American Literature. With the addition of Honors American Literature as an elective and the addition of book club units to the English 11 curriculum, this is no longer true. The proposed description more accurately describes the course as it looks now.

Committee members also approved the change.

Unified STEAM at JFK:

Ms. Brown discussed the benefits of the addition of such a course from the scheduling standpoint. It would even out the elective offerings for the students in the Adaptive Learning Program at JFK to four instead of three . It would allow Social Theater Arts to be split into two sections, each being a semester, and be offered opposite the new STEAM course. This would allow the students to be split into two sections as well. Students would be grouped so students of similar skill levels would be taught at the same time. Ms. Beebe suggested calling the course Integrated STEAM instead of Unified. Committee members agreed with that suggestion.

Both Ms. Brown and Ms. Beebe discussed the Best Buddies program and how many students want to be involved in the Unified/Integrated courses. By adding Integrated STEAM and making Social Theater Arts a semester instead of a year-long course, it allows more opportunities for students to participate.

Committee members asked if the time and space is available. Yes, the time, space, and staff are available. The only item they would need is to develop a curriculum. They have different activities and lessons they have done that they would simply put into a sequential document. She gave an example of a project they had previously done which taught the engineering design process and involved a boy stranded on an island. Students build a shelter, then a bridge to access food, and then a raft to leave the island.

Committee members asked for an explanation of Social Theater Arts. It was explained that it is taught by music teacher. Students work on social skills and write scripts and role play social scenarios. Some of the students in this class are now making announcements for the building.

Committee members asked if the friendships between these students continue outside of the classroom. Ms. Beebe and Ms. Brown gave examples of students interacting outside of the classroom. They also noted that the high school students nominated for the Best Buddies award met in the middle school program.

Items from the Table:

Ms. Acree and Dr. Calnen asked about the progress of looking at the TAG program. Ms. Middleton will get some items clarified for next steps and bring the information to the committee.

Chairwoman Riley asked about the process for families requesting a kindergarten waiver. Ms. Middleton explained where we are in the process.

The next curriculum meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 5:00 PM.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Middleton
Chief Academic Officer