

**CURRICULUM SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
MAY 19, 2010**

PRESENT: Mrs. Ussach (chair), Dr. Fletcher, Ms. Pollock (arr. 6:35 P.M.), Mr. Winn (advisor)

ABSENT: None

Mrs. Ussach called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Mrs. Ussach called on Sue Anne Marks, NBPS Director of Pupil Personnel, to address the first agenda item, a presentation of proposed College Readiness work.

Mrs. Marks began by stating that a number of solid initiatives are currently in place at New Bedford High School, but that these efforts often take place in isolation.

Dr. Fletcher agreed that communication is a problem, noting that the excellent work done by students in recent Robotics and R.O.T.C. competitions has gone largely unnoticed. Mrs. Marks agreed and stated that this is more evidence of the need for an effective communications plan.

Ms. Pollock and Mrs. Ussach both noted that a great opportunity exists for NBHS students to study at Bristol Community College, but both noted that students are often unsuccessful due to lack of appropriate support.

As Mrs. Marks continued with her presentation outlining College Readiness work proposed for the next several years, conversation ensued in which sub-committee members regarding possible action steps that may be effective in assistance students in college readiness areas such as introductions to higher education, support for parents, and accessing assistance for applications and financial aid among others.

Mrs. Marks appreciated the sub-committee's input, and mentioned using the current NBHS freshman seminar as one strong option for working on college readiness tasks with students.

Dr. Fletcher then made a motion to take a presentation on a suicide prevention program proposed by Brian and Sharon Fernandes out of order. The subcommittee voted unanimously to do so.

Mr. Fernandes provided the sub-committee with information on the extent of the suicide crisis among teenagers. He then presented slides on a program available through the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) designed to provide professional development to staff as well as an in-class component for students on recognizing the symptoms exhibited by students considering suicide and providing appropriate support and interventions for these children. Mr. Fernandes identified the personal experience of tragedy within his family as the driving force behind his passion to ensure prevention.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to approve the AFSP program, and Mrs. Marks indicated that she would work with Mr. and Mrs. Fernandes in ensuring that NBPS guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, and other appropriate personnel would receive the training and assist in implementation. The subcommittee approved the program unanimously, and asked Mr. and Mrs. Fernandes if they would be willing to present the AFSP program to the school committee as a whole during the meeting scheduled for June 14, 2010. They indicated that they would.

The final agenda item was a request to approve two new courses for the science department at New Bedford High School: A.P. Environmental Science and Principles of Aviation. Mrs. Anne Oliveira, N.B.P.S. Director of Science, informed the committee that the A.P. Environmental Science course was the next step in rigor for the series of environmental science courses; following the honors-level course already in existence at the high school. In responding to questions from the sub-committee, Mrs. Oliveira indicated that enrollment in the course is presently quite low, and she will be following up with high school staff to ensure that students take advantage of the opportunity.

Mrs. Oliveira then informed the committee about the Principles of Aviation course, designed in cooperation with Bridgewater State College and offered as an Honors course for the coming year. Mrs. Pollock expressed concern that these courses did not seem to address the needs of disadvantaged children, and Mrs. Ussach asked if a similar course for students in the alternative high school settings had not been begun last year. Mr. Winn informed her that such classes had been started, but ended due to the loss of the instructor. Mrs. Oliveira informed the sub-committee that Bridgewater had decided that they would prefer developing the course as it is now presented. Enrollment for the coming semester is currently low, and Mrs. Oliveira stated current student selection has taken place through the guidance department, but that she will take the lead in ensuring that more students become aware of this opportunity.

Mrs. Pollock asked that the needs of disadvantaged students be considered as this and other courses are developed.

There being no further business, Mrs. Ussach called for a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 8:23 P.M.