

CRANBURY SCHOOL TQM STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2009 – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

TQM Members Present: Kat Alfonso, John Bond, Toni Coleman, Angie Cook, Jennifer Cooke, Cheryl Coyle, Sharron Fass, John Haney, Zach Izzo, Gerry Kearney, Cheryl McCormick, Kate McGarvey, Joyce Picariello, Tom Stinson, Donna Tarantino, Judy Ulinsky, Michele Waldron

Absent: Jim Cardinale
Lynne Fox
Mia Lindberg

Scribe: Gerry Kearney

The Minutes of the TQM Meeting of January 27, 2009 were reviewed and approved.

TEAM REPORTS:

Curriculum - John Haney

Mr. Haney reported that summer curriculum writing was deferred in anticipation of the release of the 2009 Core Curriculum Content Standards later in the year.

The new math textbook will be presented to the curriculum committee at its meeting on May 29, 2009. He remarked that teachers were unanimous in their approval of the new math curriculum.

Mr. Haney also reported that Columbia Writing training was ongoing and will continue over the summer. The program, which promotes the writing process, has exceeded all expectations.

Mr. Haney reported that the district's application for the National Blue Ribbon Award has been reviewed and is currently awaiting our AYP from the state offices. The selected schools will be announced in September.

Mr. Haney thanked the PTO for helping to get the voters out to pass the budget. He also thanked the PTO for their donation of \$20,000 toward the purchase of Smartboards and to the Cranbury Education Foundation for their \$35,000 donation for technology. In addition to Smartboards, the donation also funded new laptop carts.

Mr. Haney also generally thanked the staff for all of the new initiatives that were implemented this year including DRA, Columbia, benchmark assessments, etc. He reported that the buddy classes have worked out extremely well for both the lower and upper grade students.

Special Areas - Tom Stinson

Art - Mr. Stinson reported that Ms. Woronczuk continues to enjoy her sabbatical as she is currently studying in Chianti, Italy. After her recent trip to New Mexico and now Italy, Ms. Woronczuk is eager to return in September to share her stories and new art techniques.

Music - Mr. Stinson reported that the chorus and bands recently participated in the Kutztown Bands in the Park competition. Zach Izzo stated that the advanced choir placed third and the Jazz Orchestra and Concert Band each placed first in their categories. Mrs. Tarantino remarked that there should be more coverage in the Cranbury Press for these accomplishments.

Physical Education - Mr. Stinson reported that the girl's track team recently placed third out of eleven larger districts with more depth. The boys also shone in their individual events. In addition, there are high expectations for next year's cross-country team. The school-wide field day is scheduled for next week, barring rain.

Technology – Kate McGarvey

Ms. McGarvey reported that in addition to Mr. Haney's remarks on technology, the new student-friendly laptops have been well-received as they provide a longer battery life, a feature that was most useful during the Learnia assessments. The larger battery also provides for an easier typing angle. Mrs. Coyle asked if there was keyboarding instruction, to which Ms. McGarvey replied that students practice for speed and accuracy in between projects. The small laptops will be ready to roll in mid-May and, in the fall, the multi-media cart will be available.

Mrs. Ulinksy also thanked the PTO for funding technology and commented on how efficient it is to have a cart with 25 laptops. Mrs. Coyle thanked Ms. McGarvey for the students' involvement in the *Doodle for Google* contest.

Professional Development - Kate McGarvey

Ms. McGarvey stated that the survey on professional development resulted in staff interest in Differentiated Instruction - a method that addresses various student needs and learning styles.

Facilities –Joyce Picariello

- The roofing project is ongoing. The district has applied for grant money, which pushed the project back to late summer, but the cost factor will be worth the wait
- The pole barn project is in progress. The board is working with the township Planning Board to acquire the necessary permits and must work within the constraints of the township committee calendar. The plan is to get the pole barn completed by late summer, which will free up space in the school that is currently used to house seasonal/nonessential items.
- Interviews for the facilities manager position are in the process and the plan is to have the new person in place by this summer. Mr. Cardinale's retirement will commence the first week in June.

PREVIOUS ISSUES:

The only previous issue discussed was the use of Styrofoam trays. Sodexo is researching other materials that will not be too costly.

REVIEW OF SUGGESTIONS DOCUMENTS:

DOCUMENT #1 - Baseball players get to use the new field while softball players have to use the old baseball field. - submitted by Claire Stout

Discussion: Mrs. Picariello reported that the new municipal baseball field is in litigation, so the boys will continue to use their old field. She shared that the township has deeded a two-acre strip to the Board of Education and that, in the future, athletic fields will be reconfigured which will provide for a new backstop and layout for the softball field. She indicated that this will most likely take approximately two years to implement.

DOCUMENT #2 - Need for track field - Submitted by Nicole Metzheiser

Discussion: The Board has recently approved an Eagle Scout project by which a proposed 2-lane, 100 meter track will be installed. Mrs. Picariello reiterated the long-range goal of reconfiguring the athletic fields which impacts on the feasibility of constructing the track in the near future. Mr. Stinson stated that most middle schools currently run on high school tracks.

DOCUMENT #3 - Tennis courts need to be redone - Submitted by Paige McGuire

Discussion: Zack Izzo stated that one of the biggest issues with the tennis courts is the nesting of wasps in the netting. Another issue is the nets themselves, which are sagging and frayed. He also stated that there are “dead spots” on the court that cause the balls to lose momentum. Mrs. Picariello mentioned that she had observed that the door is missing from the courts, which could provide a hazard for students chasing after errant balls in the parking lot. The door will be re-hung within a few weeks. The wasp issue will be addressed immediately so as to avoid a health threat to players. New nets will be ordered and stored during the winter season. The resurfacing issue will be explored and possibly budgeted for in the 2010-2011 budget.

DOCUMENTS #4 & #5- Food offerings in the cafeteria are not appealing or nutritious.

Discussion: Mrs. Picariello reiterated the scheduled taste-testing scheduled for June and November. She reported that all foods meet state-mandated wellness policies for low fat, low sugar products and a balanced, structured food pyramid. For example, French fries, as well as tater tots, are not fried but baked.

Sodexo representatives will be available at the Back-to-School nights to provide information on the school lunch program.

**DOCUMENT #6 - 1) Should not charge full price for second slice of pizza.
2) Why is “Behavioral Assessment” not noted on report cards for grades 3 and up and why are numerical grades given? - Submitted by Patricia Thomsson**

Discussion 1) Mrs. Picariello reported that a full price is not charged for a second slice of pizza. The parent was provided with a print-out of expenditures with an explanation.

Discussion 2) Behavioral assessments are not noted on report cards for grades 3 and up as the focus is shifted from the social aspect of grades K-2 to a more academic assessment. The process was changed from letter grades to percentages during the 2006-2007 school year, as parents wanted a clearer indication of what their child earned rather than a broader letter range.

OTHER ISSUES:

Mrs. Kearney reminded the committee of its previous discussion of student council representatives providing information to parents of upcoming sixth graders in order for them to gauge the time commitments of extra curricular activities so that their child can make an informed decision when joining clubs/sports. Zack Izzo stated that he thought a current sixth grade student council member could provide more recent experience; therefore, it was decided to invite volunteer students to address the parents at the meeting scheduled for the evening of June 1.

John Bond and Zack Izzo were thanked for their insights while serving this year on the TQM committee and wished much success in their next school.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:15 PM

Next Meeting: 2009-2010 School Year