



Curriculum Council
September 10, 2009
GMTCC Community Education Center (CEC)

Present: Dave White, Curriculum Director; Debra Taylor, Superintendent; Sue Cano, Director of Student Support Services; Charleen McFarlane, Superintendent's Assistant; Mary Anderson, Cambridge Elementary Principal; Shelley Mathias, Hyde Park Elementary Principal; Chris Hindes, Lamoille Union Middle School Principal; Dana Jewett, Lamoille Union High School Assistant Principal; Peter Lavigne, Lamoille Union High School; Ellen Koier, Cambridge Elementary School; Dorothy Finlay, Eden Central School; Moire Coleman, Green Mountain Technology & Career Center; Cassandra Thomas, Hyde Park Elementary School; Catherine Gallagher, Johnson Elementary School; Sally Vargo, Waterville Elementary School; Dan Regan, Johnson State College.

Absent: Cori Rockwood, Lamoille Union Middle School

Curriculum Director Dave White welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time and interest in serving on the Curriculum Council.

Dave reviewed the contents of the packets he prepared, which includes the mileage reimbursement form. You may fill that in and give it to Dave at the last meeting to receive one check if that is easier.

The desired results for today's meeting include: establishing a collaborative working environment, understand the purpose of the Curriculum Council and the initial scope of work, and begin to build a shared understanding of what we mean by cross-disciplinary transfer goals and curriculum design principals.

We began with introductions. Peter Levigne is the social studies teacher at the high school, next year will be social studies department chair. He was on the curriculum committee back a while ago and his interest is common goals. Shelley Mathias is the Hyde Park principal. The curriculum is critical in maintaining student engagement. She is interested in learning from faculty what helped them change. Dan Regan is academic Dean and Johnson State. He sees connections with LNSU. Teachers from JSC teach in our schools and LNSU students come to JSC. There's the k-16 continuum in addition to being in the same community. Jeff Lindgren has tremendous experience in curriculum and developing standards. He feels we need to have shared curriculum and assessments, and we need to use proven strategies. Cassandra Thomas is the 6th grade teacher at Hyde Park Elementary. She came around 7 years ago and was handed "the big red binder" and told to go. She is interested in the transition piece from grade 6 to 7th. Debra Taylor is our superintendent and is excited to be here. She has background in curriculum. She believes that students should be successful. Having the right tools is important. Chris Hindes is the middle school principal. He also has interested in the 6/7 transition, as well as the curriculum continuum. Sally Vargo is the 5/6 teacher at Waterville. She's been here for 21 years and was also part of the former committee. She is here to be the liaison with her colleague but to see the work continue. Sue Cano is director of student support services. She feels this is an important step in the right direction. Her interest is for struggling learners to participate fully in the classroom. Ellen Koier is the gifted and talented instructor at Cambridge Elementary. She too is interested in the curriculum continuum. She feels curriculum will help from school to school. Catherine Gallagher is the special educator at Johnson Elementary. She is interested in the right tools for students. Dorothy Finlay is the 5/6 teacher at Eden Central. She too

served on the old curriculum committee. She would like to see collaboration among all the schools. Charleen is the superintendent's assistant and was witness to the teacher meeting back in the spring with Amy Cole and is excited to see the work continue. Dana Jewett is an administrator at Lamoille for over 10 years. He sees opportunity to bring schools together with common expectations, common assessments perhaps, support what schools are doing with technology and is glad about the effort. Mary Anderson is the Cambridge Elementary principal, a position she's had for 9 years. She is interested in collaboration and momentum.

Dave is here to help guide the process. The ideas would come from around the table. He'll be part observer and part participant. As many others shared, he too was on many many curriculum committees. He's always been excited about the process and the product, all of which was relevant at the time. He will help the Council in between meetings as best he can. He appreciates the commitment and is excited about the enthusiasm.

Dave then reviewed Norms of Collaboration for the Council. Be present: we will begin and end on time (3:00-5:00), meeting agendas and minutes will be posted and communicated, and practice the seven norms of collaboration: pausing, paraphrasing, probing for specificity, putting ideas on the table, paying attention to self and others, presuming positive intentions, pursuing a balance between advocacy and inquiry. Sue added that brainstorming be encouraged and well received. Ellen added the importance of doing the homework. So, be present and prepared.

Dave then moved onto the discussion of the purpose and responsibility of the Council. He explained that the Administrative Council participated in a study group on Schooling by Design by Wiggins and McTigue. He reviewed the LNSU mission and the three long range goals with the group. Goal 1 is on curriculum, assessment, and instruction, goal 2 on student achievement, and the final on resource management. The curriculum goal is to create a system of pk-12 curriculum, instruction, assessment combined with measurable ends or targets. Regarding Goal 1, Dave reviewed enduring understandings and essential questions. The purpose of the Council will be to guide the process and ensuring continuity as the supervisory union addresses the essential questions of Goal 1. The Council responsibility includes establishing clear cross-disciplinary transfer goals, habits of mind and big ideas, developing curriculum design principles, monitor, communication with staff, SU, boards, parents, etc, ensure alignment, and determine resources and professional development.

Chris reminded us that we need to keep the timeline in mind. The process takes time. 1 year, 2 years, etc. We will need to give the staff a time frame. It was agreed that however, it can't drag on and on.

Our goal is to determine the commonalities that students need to know. Power Standards, if you will.

Moire Colemaman arrived at 4:10 and introduced herself as the Tech Center's English teacher and curriculum coordinator.

Debra inserted that the Lamoille North board will be meeting later this month and may choose to appoint a board representative to the Council. It was noted that Dan is a board member...

Mary said others, such as Chittenden East, have done a great deal of work in this area and wondered about having them come to a meeting, and even using some of what they've developed. Dorothy added she's done that, used various parts of the work of others. Why reinvent the wheel?

Dave then directed our attention to a few pages from Schooling by Design that he had copied for us. He asked us to read it then asked us to answer how the article helped clarify our task and what questions does it raise?

Peter asked if anyone sees an issue with the transference of the principals in the article changes from middle, high, and elementary as elementary teachers teach all subject whereas secondary teachers teach a subject. Should high school be taught differently? Cassandra said there has been some push to departmentalize at the elementary level and she's been somewhat resistant as she sees value in integrating her teaching across subjects. What do we want students to learn and be able to use that learning? The habits of mind need to be developed. Some abilities and skills are learned in all subjects: the ability to investigate, to problem solve, etc. And, they need to be developed early on. Dave encouraged everyone to keep thinking.

Dave asked folks to review the exit card and turn those in either at the end or take home and get to Dave.

Dave purchased Lynn Erickson's Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom for each Council member. If you did not receive one, please be in touch with Dave directly. He does need to order a few more, so people from the same school will need to share in the meantime.

Dave directed us to results of the Picture the Graduate exercise the secondary level did in the packet. He also included the 21st Century Standards and Vital Results.

Dave asked for feedback. Mary, who is a visual learner, really wants to see examples. What are we trying to accomplish? Jeff suggested sending the visual graphic that Dave showed to administrators. Chris echoed Mary's comments and asked to see what others are doing. Jeff suggested seeing 21st century skills.

Dates of future meetings fall on the first Thursday of each month from 3-5PM, specifically:

October 1

November 5

December 3

January 7

February 4

March 4

April 1

May 6

Adjourned at 4:59 PM

Respectfully submitted by Charleen