

Cheshire Public Schools



Board of Education Curriculum Committee

Monday, January 13, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Humiston Board Room

Minutes

Committee Members Present: Ms. Anne Marie Cullinan (Chair) and Mr. Tony Perugini

Cheshire Public Schools Staff Present: Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator; Dr. Mary Gadd, Principal - CHS; Dr. Maureen Reed, Assistant Principal - CHS; Mike Devine, PE/Health Department Chair; Kelly Grillo, Principal - Dodd; Kristen Shanley, Library Media Specialist - Dodd; Kristin Castellano, Literacy Support Teacher - Dodd

Public: None

1. Public Comment

No public comment in person or via email.

2. Review Minutes of December 9, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Perugini made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2024 Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting. Ms. Cullinan seconded the motion. Ms. Cullinan and Mr. Perugini voted to approve the December 9, 2024 minutes. The motion passed.

3. New Business

a. CHS - PE/Health - Program of Study Changes

Mike Devine shared the recommended Wellness courses at the high school for the 2025-26 school year. The essence of the change is to move from traditional Health/PE classes to integrated Wellness courses. Building resilience, living a healthy lifestyle, and building and maintaining social connections will be key components of the course content. The design of the courses will allow the department to be responsive to the needs of high school students each year. Each Wellness course will meet on a semester schedule for a half credit.

b. Draft Safe School Climate Surveys

Marlene Silano shared draft versions of this year's Safe School Climate survey. This survey is administered biannually and includes student, staff, and parent versions at each grade level

band (K-3, 4-6, middle, and high school grades). The survey questions have remained consistent since 2018. The information is reviewed by representatives in each building (eg. principal, school counselor, nurse, teachers) to make plans to address any areas of need in the safe school climate school and district plans. The district, in accordance with state guidelines, will communicate the administration of the survey to parents. In the district communication, a PDF version of the student survey will be attached as a preview for parents.

4. Informational Items

a. Assistant Superintendent Update

The official groundbreaking of the new elementary schools began last week (January 10, 2025). During that week, Marlene Silano and Dr. Jeff Solan began to meet with union leadership at each elementary school building to collaborate on a communication plan regarding redistricting and teacher re-assignments to follow the enrollment study and redistricting plan. The district has existing systems and structures in place to support teacher reassignments, including a staff planning survey, which is administered annually, and the EAC Teacher Contract. In addition, information on the process will be shared with the faculty at each school. There will also be individual teacher meetings on the topic.

There has been a strong showing of applicants for the CHS principal position. As of Monday, January 13, 2025, there are 45 applicants. Dr. Jeff Solan and Marlene Silano conducted a listening tour to hear from teachers about what CHS needs in its next principal. Each assistant principal at CHS was also met individually. The posting for the CHS principal position closes on January 24, 2025.

In anticipation of the transition from Dr. Gadd to a new hire, Cheshire High School is fortunate to have Kevin Hanlon as the interim principal. To further support the bridge to new leadership, there will be a group of teacher leaders and assistant principals who will be attending a two-day workshop on next-level instruction leadership with Marlene Silano, led by Isobel Stevenson from Partners for Educational Leadership.

Kindergarten registration will begin on February 5, 2025. Parents can register online or in person if they prefer to come into the school and ask questions. April 28, 2025, has been set as the date to conduct assessments for families who are seeking early admission to kindergarten.

The district science coaches have wrapped up the robotics unit and are moving on to deliver an agriscience unit. They will be presenting at the BOE Elementary Showcase in March.

b. Acadience Universal Screener for Reading

Kelly Grillo, Kristen Shanley, and Kristin Castellano gave an overview of the Acadience Reading assessment for grades 7-8. Since the sunset of Reading Inventory, the district has been looking for a replacement for a universal screen for reading. Dodd is going to trial Acadience Reading for grades 7-8. All of the measures include one science, one social

studies, and one prose passage. The initial screening measure that all students will take is a Maze assessment which includes 3, three-minute passages. Other measures, including a silent reading assessment and an oral reading assessment, are given as necessary based on the performance of the initial Maze.

c. Master Schedule at CHS

Mary Gadd shared an update on the 2025-26 school year draft schedule. The CHS team is in the final stages of vetting a schedule where students will meet five sessions per day for 68 minutes per session. The 68-minute schedule falls between the previous 55-minute schedule and the current 84-minute schedule. Students will meet for five sessions per eight-day cycle. The primary gain of this version of the schedule is finding an appropriate balance between session frequency and time per session. Both students and teachers have provided feedback on the schedule and plans are to make the final minor adjustments to the rotation by the end of the month.

d. Out-of-State Overnight Field Trips

- [Chapman School - Nature's Classroom, Deep River, CT - May 27-30, 2025](#)
- [Doolittle School - Nature's Classroom, Charlton, MA - May 13-16, 2025](#)
- [Norton School - Nature's Classroom, Charlton, MA - May 27-30, 2025](#)

Marlene shared the details of Chapman, Norton, and Doolittle's annual grade 6 trip to Nature's Classroom. Chapman will go to the Deep River, CT location, and Doolittle and Norton will go to the Charlton, MA location. Each of the trips is around the same price. As in the past few years, Highland grade 6 will engage in local options including team building and hands-on science related activities.

5. **Adjourn**

Mr. Perugini made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cullinan seconded the motion. Ms. Cullinan and Mr. Perugini voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 10, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Hanlon

Kevin J. Hanlon
K-8 Curriculum Coordinator