

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ellington, Connecticut

Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes

The Curriculum Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, in the School Administration Building, 47 Main Street, Ellington, CT.

Attendees:

Board of Education Members: Mr. Gary Blanchette, Mr. Michael Young, Ms. Marcia Kupferschmid, Ms. Miriam Underwood, Ms Angela Moser.

Administrative Team Members: Mr. Oliver Barton, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Ms. Krista Brogle Gifted and Talented Teacher grades 5-8 , Ms. Melissa Scarbrough, World Language (WL) Teacher, Ellington High School, Ms. Tara Kelly ESL (English as a Second Language) Teacher, Ms. Jordan Patten, World Language (WL) Teacher.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mr. Young at 4:59 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1) Gifted and Talented Program Update

Mr. Young asked Mr. Barton to update the committee on efforts to establish and strengthen the Gifted and Talented program. Mr. Barton introduced his team. He reported that programs for identified Gifted & Talented (G&T) students are somewhat new to the district. Mr. Young asked if historically there had been any gifted education programs previously in Ellington Public Schools, and with help from Ms. Underwood and Ms. Kupferschmid, the committee did get some information concerning Gifted and Talented programs from several decades ago. Ms. Brogle shared slides on how she had visited nearby schools with existing Gifted and Talented programs. She reported a range of background information on her comparison of local Gifted and Talented program designs. Ms. Brogle described the planned eligibility criteria to be used in December in the nomination process for Spring 2022 in grades 5-8. These include scaled scores from SBAC, informal rating scales, report cards, teacher recommendations and other artifacts. Current projects launched for gifted groups include Connecticut History Day, National History Day, (Try your) Hardest Math Problem

Contest, and the Stock Market Game. There are also enrichment choices for all students to be involved in supplemental activities and projects.

Ms. Moser asked what, from Ms. Brogle's survey of nearby schools, were the number of students participating in Gifted and Talented programs. Ms. Vogel reported about 5-8 % of a grade were identified as Gifted and Talented. Melissa Haberern has assisted in developing and overseeing the nomination process.

Mr. Young asked if a process of referral similar to the current Infinite Campus system for tiered supports might enable any teacher to nominate students for Gifted and Talented? Mr. Barton suggested that would be a possibility as the program moves forward.

The committee would anticipate continued reports as the results of the Spring 2022 efforts become available.

2) Seal of Biliteracy Language Skills Recognition

Mr. Young introduced Mr. Barton to discuss the Seal of Biliteracy Language Skills program. Ellington has piloted the use of the Seal program to encourage participation in World language learning beyond the introductory courses at the high school. The Ellington schools community has 102 students with a primary language at home other than English. The high school has experienced an expansion of availability of languages and discussion of languages and the Seal program would support the ongoing initiatives. The Seal program involves proficiency testing in reading, writing and speaking fluency in a second language and might be appropriate for our students completing level three and four courses as well as those with language exposure at home. High school teachers explored the Seal as a way to recognize language skills and to promote persisting in obtaining advanced skills beyond introductory courses.

Ms. Kelly reported on the English as a Second Language program for students across all 5 schools, and that English as a Second Language students can be included in the Seal of Biliteracy. Although the test for most languages cost about \$20, Seal Tests for some low-instance languages can cost up to \$160 per student. Ms. Underwood spoke in favor of offering this opportunity to all our students with second language skills, emphasizing the value of culture and language literacy in a global economy.

It was discussed that it would be nice for the Seal program to be open to all students. Justification would include that the testing would add a national assessment not currently available in our district, which could provide important additional formative assessment data to the world language department. The committee agreed that exploration of the program should be supported and looked to updates after the initial pilot effort proceeded.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:08 pm.

1st. Ms. Moser

2nd. M. Kupferschmid

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Michael Young

Curriculum Committee, Chair