

*NORTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT*

*FEBRUARY 18, 2009 –WORK SESSION*

*MINUTES*

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Board in Attendance: Mrs. Grosheider, Mr. Hubert, Mrs. Bishop,  
Mrs. Boujoukos, Mr. Cunningham, Mrs. Ludwig,  
Mr. Schwartzmier, Mr. Shuckrow

Board Absent: Mr. Pagone

Student in Attendance: Mr. Hamm

Also in Attendance: Dr. Green, Mr. Maiello (Solicitor), Mr. Botti,  
Mr. Devlin, Mrs. Ed, Mr. Gaertner, Ms. Gaetano,  
Mr. Hopkins, Dr. Miller, Dr. Steinhauer, Dr. Stropkaj,  
Dr. Wheat, Mrs. Ryan (Secretary)

MST in Attendance: Mrs. Tammy Andreyko – Principal, Ingomar Middle School  
Mr. Craig Slaubaugh – Principal, Hosack Elementary School  
Mr. Bill Young – Assistant Principal, NASH

The Board of School Directors of the North Allegheny School District convened for a **Work Session** on **Wednesday, February 18, 2009** in the **Board Room** of the **Central Administrative Offices**.

**DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

The following students were honored for their achievements:

**Fall 2008 Knowledge Master Open**

*Submitted by:* Ms. Janet Serdy and Ms. Dana Boyd

**First Place in Pennsylvania and Third Place in the Nation**

Brian Boehmke	Dominic LaBella
Griffin Caruso	Martin Majewski
Anne Erickson	Jacob Plichta
Elizabeth Hartigan	Ford Smith
Richard Kotermanski	Joey Zou

**Second Place in Pennsylvania**

Catherine Baird	Leqi Huang	Victoria Robertson
Harishwer Balasubramani	Skanda Koppula	Christine Scherer
Cole Benson	Daniel Lambert	Max Steimer
Geoffrey Bland	Cathy Li	Nathanael Stock
Amy Cheng	Jessica Lin	Lena Walton
Caroline Cwalina	Mia Luo	Carol Wang
Daniel Ficarri	Joel Mabey	Derek Wang
Alanna Foran	Joseph Mancini	Matthew Wild
Ross Giglio	Eric Meyer	Andrew Wu
Samantha Gohh	Kevin Mo	Dennis Zhang
Megan Grzyb	Davie Moore	Bozhang Zhao
Luke Gwaltney	Duncan Riding	Kevin Zhu
John Hopkins		

**MENC**

*Submitted by:* Mr. Todd Stefan, Ms. Sarah Lavelle and Mr. Ernie Pontiere

**MENC All-Eastern Honors Mixed Choir**

Maria DeIuliis  
Morgan Mihelic

**MENC All-Eastern Honors Orchestra**

Brett Freithaler  
Andrew Ho  
Jeffrey Lin  
Sean Radermacher

**Montgomery Bell Academy Extemporaneous Speaking Round Robin XI**

*Submitted by:* Ms. Sharon Volpe

**Third Place**

Stacey Chen

***Teen Ink's Monthly Magazine***

**Submitted by:** Ms. Patricia Kramer

**Published**

Erica Mann

**56th Presidential Inaugural Parade**

**Selected to Represent Pennsylvania**

**North Allegheny High School Marching Band**

(Mr. Todd Stefan and Mr. Steve Baldanzi have been invited to accept this award on behalf of the Band.)

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## WORK SESSION

Mrs. Grosheider called the meeting to order at **7:35 p.m.** and all stood and recited *The Pledge of Allegiance*. Mrs. Grosheider announced that the Board presented Distinguished Achievement Awards prior to the meeting honoring approximately 56 students. She thanked the staff members who were present for the work that they do every day to help our students to achieve.

## CALENDAR AND AGENDA

Mrs. Grosheider announced that the Board met in Executive Session at the conclusion of the last meeting to discuss a matter of litigation. The Board will not meet in Executive Session at the conclusion of this meeting. Mrs. Grosheider reviewed the Calendar for February and March 2009. Tonight the Board will be presented with the Social Studies Curriculum Review and at the February 25, 2009 meeting, they will be presented with the Strategic Plan Update. At the March 18, 2009 meeting, the Board will hear the Diversity Report and no reports are scheduled for March 25, 2009.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

There were no speakers.

## SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM REVIEW

Mrs. Grosheider introduced this report by noting that this particular report has been a long time coming and is very important to the Board. The last Social Studies Curriculum Review was completed 12 years ago. She noted that, while the Board spends quite a bit of time devoted to budget and facilities issues, curriculum issues are the heart of what the School Board must be concerned about to ensure that the North Allegheny School District is able to offer outstanding educational experiences for children.

Dr. Green made mention that the individuals presenting tonight invested two and a half years of commitment to this project as a labor of love, holding up a mirror to what they do and thoroughly investigating what is being done in the world of education around them so that they could bring forward the very best thinking in regard to what our Social Studies curriculum should be. She also recognized that Dr. Alice Hirsch, who was in attendance, was responsible for redesigning the District's Curriculum Review Process six years ago when she was named the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum. This review is one of several that have resulted from the establishment of this new process. Dr. Green commended Dr. Hirsch for choosing to be here tonight and for the work she did on this project prior to her retirement. She also acknowledged Dr. Brian Miller for stepping into the position of Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and leading this review into its final stages.

**Dr. Brian Miller** said the team was excited and they were looking forward to this presentation. He introduced the Curriculum Management Team of **Mr. Gregory Funka, Mrs. Joelle Keats, Mr. David Forsyth, Mr. Barbara Werner, Mr. Bill Young, and Mr. Craig Slaubaugh.** He also thanked **Dr. Alice Hirsch** for her contributions to the review and acknowledged his secretary, **Mrs. Sally Scherling,** for the tremendous amount of work she has done throughout the course of this review.

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The team described the process they utilized for their review and the philosophy and vision put forth in their report. They also made recommendations in the areas of:

- Elementary Progressions
- United States History
- Globalization
- Curriculum – Courses
- Interdisciplinary Approach
- Assessment
- Textbooks, Materials, and Resources
- Technology

On behalf of the Board, Mrs. Grosheider expressed sincere appreciation for the work, passion, and intensity of this group and the resulting report.

### **Questions from the Board**

**Mrs. Bishop** said it was a wonderful report and the School Board is very interested in history, government, politics and the like and this report was especially important. Mrs. Bishop thought it was a great idea to begin to bring skills to our middle school students with new AP courses. She asked how this will be incorporated into the middle school curriculum.

**Dr. Miller** said the intent with pre-AP courses will cross over into many of the disciplines, not just Social Studies. The activities for students will be in the delivery of that particular course and they will be asked to learn concepts and then to apply that content in meaningful, challenging ways.

**Mrs. Bishop** commented about the new AP courses that are proposed and not all of Social Studies is History. There are many students who would be interested in Psychology or Economics and they will draw in additional students as well as AP History, AP US or AP European courses.

**Mrs. Bishop** asked if we have considered any AP courses in Government and Politics, as other comparator districts offer.

**Mrs. Keats** said that they wanted to balance the two History courses with the Social Sciences. They looked at different districts and although some had courses in Government and Politics, it was unusual, but it not something we would discount for the future.

**Mrs. Bishop** said she is supportive of the idea of the new elective offerings at NAI, especially in Economics, and we needed to expand the offerings in Social Studies at NAI. She asked if the Economics course, which is going to be offered for grades 9-12, would be the same course at NAI and NASH, or would it be a progression.

**Mrs. Keats** said it would be the same course.

**Mrs. Bishop** commented about the technology and feels strongly that we need to move forward in this area. Other districts are doing more. She agreed with **Mrs. Grosheider's** suggestion earlier that

the Board be permitted to go into the classrooms to see how the technology that we do have is working and **Dr. Green** agreed to arrange this.

**Mrs. Boujoukos** was excited by the recommendations, especially Economic Literacy. She feels if we do not develop more of this at North Allegheny, we will be doing our students a great disservice.

**Mrs. Boujoukos** asked if we have surveyed the students about the proposed AP classes.

**Dr. Miller** said one of the signs of interest is the existing courses. The AP offerings in these areas are popular with the students and have a high degree of interest. These courses will provide an opportunity to push the students to their highest level.

**Mr. Shuckrow** commented that what the team did well was back up their research because it shows where we need to improve.

**Mrs. Ludwig** said when her son was in school at NA, he took as much math and science as he could, but he loved Social Studies and she knows that we already do many things well. She wondered what the Board could do to improve things and she knows that improved technology would bring things to life. She thinks we need to approve the AP courses because they really will prepare the students for the real world. This is an area that we need to fund.

**Mr. Hubert** asked how publishers are coordinated from elementary to the middle to the high schools to meet our curriculum.

**Dr. Miller** said that the teachers consider the content in their course and they explore all textbook publishing companies to see which resource best matches that course.

**Mr. Hubert** thinks there should be an AP Asian History course and, considering our society, we should be the leader in offering that.

**Mrs. Keats** said that North Allegheny was at the forefront of the Asian History and Cultural Studies, but this is offered as an elective.

**Mr. Schwartzmier** said he is excited that they are trying to start the learning process of Social Studies at the very youngest ages and tie it all together. He asked if the PDE Guidelines were helpful or restrictive.

**Mrs. Keats** said the Standards hindered them at times. All the Social Studies curriculums are different across the state and no one has a perfect one, but North Allegheny works within the Standards and the content that they want to teach. .

**Mr. Hamm**, as a student, said he appreciates all the work that goes into writing these reviews. He thinks it is a good idea that more electives have been made available at NAI and it gives students more time to fit the courses they want into their schedules. He also liked the proposed AP courses at NASH that are not heavy in History and are beneficial to more students.

**Mrs. Grosheider** agrees that the Honors East Asia course is a great course that we currently offer, but it is an elective and not part of our core curriculum. How many of our students in the core curriculum get enough exposure to Asian History?

**Mr. Funka** said that in 6<sup>th</sup> grade they will get the geography, and they hope to add an Asian Culture component there. In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade course, they study India, China, Japan and South Korea, and they receive a broad overview.

**Mrs. Grosheider** asked about US History and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade situation. She said there was a disconnect in US History between 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and it is now all spiraling. She asked if this situation were corrected.

**Dr. Miller** said that it is an issue that is being paid attention to but it has to go through the process and the recommendations have to be adopted by the Board.

**Mrs. Grosheider** asked what the next steps are.

**Dr. Green** said the importance of bringing this review forward was the next step. They will be taking the implementation pieces that they can do now and will move forward. All the pieces have gone through Executive Council so they are ready to move.

**Mrs. Grosheider** asked about implementation. There is a 5-year option and she wants to know if the years 4 and 5 can be compressed into years 1-3. It has been 12 years since the last curriculum review and she is concerned with stretching this out for 5 years, when it will be time to do another curriculum review.

**Dr. Green** said it was possible as long as the Board funds it.

**Mrs. Grosheider** said listening to the School Board's comments, they are in agreement that this is something that needs to be moved forward immediately.

**Mrs. Grosheider** thanked the team for a superb presentation and they have made the Board very aware of their concerns and issues. On behalf of the Board, she thanked them all for the work that has gone into this, and she thanked Dr. Hirsch for her work originally.

### **RECESS**

Mrs. Grosheider called for a recess at **9:18 p.m.**

### **RECONVENED**

The Board reconvened at **9:28 p.m.**

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**REVIEW BOARD FOLDER**

The Board reviewed all items as contained in the Board Folder for February 25, 2009. There was some discussion.

During review of the **Student Activities Report**, Andy Hamm presented an update of recent and upcoming student activities. These included the NAI play, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, the upcoming NASH musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, the successes for the NASH Debate Team, NA students who attended the DECA Regional Career Development Conference, the NATV trip to NYC, and the PASC District #3 Conference hosted by NASH Student Council on February 16.

Dr. Green mentioned that Andy was the co-chair of the Student Council event and the master of ceremonies. She commended him on his performance in both roles.

During review of the **Superintendent's Report**, Dr. Green mentioned that Board Policy #4000, which is a revised policy, will be requested for adoption next week. Board Policy #3890, which is also a revised policy, is appearing as a First Reading this month and will be requested for adoption at the March 25, 2009 meeting.

Dr. Green also reviewed her Good News Report, as follows:

**GOOD STAFF NEWS AROUND NA**

- ★ **Ms. Anne Funk, a music teacher at Carson Middle School and Hosack Elementary School**, will be honored with a Citation of Excellence in Teaching Award at the PMEA Annual State Conference in April. This award recognizes middle school music teachers whose programs are an excellent example of music education in action and that effectively reach students through an outstanding approach that can serve as an inspiration to other teachers of music. Ms. Funk was nominated by her colleague in the Music Department, Ms. Sarah Lavelle.
  
- ★ **Ms. Faye Junker, Ms. Tracey Cima, and Mr. Matt Hreha, teachers at Ingomar Middle School**, have been invited to present at the Pennsylvania Middle School Association's State Conference in March. Their session will be titled "Remediation Pie." They plan to share ideas that will help teachers assist low-achieving students improve their skills in English, social studies, and special education classes.
  
- ★ **Ms. Tammy Andreyko, Principal at Ingomar Middle School, and Ms. Katherine Jenkins, Principal at Carson Middle School**, have been invited to present at the Pennsylvania Middle School Association's State Conference in March. Their session will be titled "Running the Race: A Great Start and a Strong Finish." They plan to share ideas that will help Administrators plan creative and effective special activities to motivate students throughout the school year.

- ★ **Ms. Joy Ed, Director of Communications and Public Relations**, has been invited to present at the annual conference of the National School Public Relations Association in June. Her session will be titled “Low Risk/High Yield Employee Communications Plans are a Win-Win Deal!” She will share ways in which a school district can build a focused internal communications plan and establish procedures that will have far-reaching benefits.

### **SPEAKERS**

There were no speakers who came forward to address the Board.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Grosheider adjourned the meeting at **9:46 p.m.** The Board did not meet in Executive Session at the conclusion of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Mary Ryan, Secretary  
North Allegheny School Board