

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Monday, August 13, 2007
7:00 PM**

SAU Office

Attendees: Beverly Bacon, Bart Goodeve, Ray Cote, Arthur Knight, Stewart Brock, Gail Cromwell, Tom Welden, Mary Loftis, Dick Bergeron, Marian Alese, Linda Potter, Sue Dell, MaryEllen Stanley, Jeanie West, Gib West, Deb Lesure, Dick Dunning, Sue Copley

Beverly Bacon called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

- **Meeting of June 18, 2007**

Ray Cote moved to accept the minutes of the June 18, 2007 meeting, Arthur Knight second. Unanimous.

2. Presentations – Dick Bergeron

- **Organizational Planning Tool**

Dick Bergeron introduced two planning models. One was a five year model that was color coded. It differentiates by annual district actions and resources. Dick said that the documents can go a long way. (See Attachment #1 – Cycles of Curriculum) Dick said when looking at the five year annual plan the colors reflect a different domain. The tracking of renewal plans for core areas is the desire. The burden of costs is allocated across a number of years as well as allocations of time and energy. Mr. Johnson will work with curriculum committees. This document is a planning tool. Bart Goodeve asked if modifications to this template would be anticipated. Dick confirmed that they could and said that the ConVal aspect of where we are presently and where we want to be will be reviewed. Priorities will be set. Bart asked by whom. Dick said that the Administrators will work with the central office and then presented from there. Dick cited an example in his template where a pilot program was proposed but financial restrictions prevented it from happening therefore the pilot program was conducted the following year. This allowed the public to “buy in” to the financial burden necessary to fund the pilot program. Dick added that after a five year cycle a program might not require revamping but rather may continue on with minimal adjustments. Districts that wait beyond the five years wind up using outdated materials. Bart asked if the technical programs should be included in this proposal. Dick said that he is careful not to bite off to large a piece.

- **Curriculum Renewal**

Dick referenced the booklet titled “Curriculum Development, An Organizational Tool”. Dick said that most of the material is taken from the fine works from material available to educators. Buy in is necessary. Dick said that we are standards driven. High stakes tests for districts for attaining AYP are looked at. Curriculum work being assessed is looking at how students progress when looking at a framework of information. A state or national curriculum is not the goal.

Massachusetts and New Hampshire examples are cited in Mr. Bergeron’s booklet. Dick said that without establishing a ConVal curriculum, teachers will take on more than necessary to teach. New Hampshire has developed a curriculum framework. Dick referenced a book titled “Curriculum Focal Points”. Dick said that “Understanding by Design” asks educators to identify desired results. Acceptable levels are determined. Unit plans and lesson plans are the final strategy. Each district is charged with creating their own curriculum work with common standards.

The following would exist:

- ❖ A fluid process
- ❖ Curriculum development changes over time and is never done
- ❖ Curriculum development done by teams is more effective. Greater articulation is achieved when done together.
- ❖ The three basket approach includes that the standards be prioritized. Every child should master the focal standards. Dick suggested that 80% of the students will show 80% mastery in the focal standards.

Gail Cromwell said that she is intrigued by the 80% rule and asked why 80%. Dick said that when 80% of the population of a class achieves mastery then it is alright for the teacher to move on. Objectives that are taught creatively can be mastered by 80% of the population. Intervention is necessary for those that cannot achieve.

Dick said that the Level 2 category includes information that is “important to know”. It represents the largest time commitment.

The third basket contains opportunity for spontaneous learning. Examples would include a current event or teacher’s passion as well as a student’s experience.

Dick said that three prioritization efforts are arrived at.

Dick continued to review his booklet.

Differentiated learning opportunities were discussed next.

Assessment was discussed thereafter. Teachers need to be masters of informative and summative assessment.

Explicit vocabulary instruction was one of the few means that would bring about change when assessing the knowledge of students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Dick said that a positive statistical result was “note taking”. Current practice suggests that note taking is not adequately discussed in classrooms. Performance will increase with better note taking skills.

Dick continued to say that six indicators of *understanding* help build the base of assessment. The goal of teaching is to establish understanding that can be applied in novel experiences.

Curriculum mapping was reviewed next. Gaps and overlaps can be identified. Communication is necessary for this to take place. What constitutes effective instruction should be defined when determining curriculum. Assessments that challenge students to transfer their knowledge must be developed. Teachers ask between three and four hundred questions a day. Anything that is done with that frequency should be done well. Speech and language specialists can help in this area.

Dick suggested that his objective be that administrators acknowledge that this plan is built upon successful research. Dick said that it is his belief that a lot of this is currently taking place in the district. It sets a program of understanding for the district.

Gail asked if a common goal for what the elementary schools should learn but that instruction is differentiated would it mean that the material is presented differently from one school to the next or could it mean that a different text was used.

Dick said that common curriculum would be determined. All of the schools should be looking at the same standards and assessments.

Dick cited the example that he does not agree that the kindergarten students in the district should be provided with different report cards. In a standards based environment, he did not see the value.

Gail said that she is puzzled as to who will decide what. Dick said that he will ask many questions that will provoke thought and discussion. Data will be collected and decisions will be made from there.

Mary Loftis asked about implementing curriculum mapping. She assumes it would require district teachers in a certain grade to come together. Dick said that it can only be done once a certain scope and sequence is determined.

Dick said that the opportunity for teachers to do this must be considered.

Bart asked if in Dick's experience there was a way to build this into staff evaluations.

Dick said that there was but that it is difficult to implement in a Pathways approach.

Stewart Brock asked that assuming that this is the right direction, when progress would be seen in pulling this together. Dick said that he would require one year. He needs staff to buy in.

Tom Welden said that in terms of the first level basket and the desire for 80% to have mastered the material before moving on. He said that by the time 80% master the information, 20% could be further on. He asked how work would take place with the 20%. Dick Dunning said that when we talk about students prior knowledge, he will not waste a students time who already has the knowledge of the subject being learned by asking them to share that knowledge which helps the students better relate to the information. Dick said that the majority of time spent teaching is not on whole group instruction.

Marian Alese said that the NWEA testing determines where kids are. Gail asked if it makes sense to keep the designations of classroom grades in place. She asked if this was the direction we are moving. Dick said that we are not. Our community could not buy into the long term structure of that style of learning. Dick said that we are asking teachers to become better at assessing individual needs. Today's classroom is such a challenging complex place that it would be impossible.

Bart asked if after one year that consistency among the schools be looked at as well as vocabulary assessment. Bart said that this should be incorporated into staff evaluations.

Dick said that curriculum development is one of his stated goals.

Stewart said that new teachers are mentioned and he asked if this method of curriculum development would be new to them. Dick said that he met with Emily Hartnett and provided her with information for review. He is meeting with area colleges soon and will further discuss this information.

Beverly Bacon asked if Dick was looking for some sort of straw poll. Dick confirmed that he would like to know if it makes organizational sense to the Board. He said that he knows that it works.

Bart said that this is the single most interesting presentation given since he has been on the Board. Stewart said that he likes the way that it is broken down and laid out and that he was very pleased. Ray Cote said that he has heard a concentration of formalizing an approach that will allow teachers to better do their job and that he was in favor. Arthur said that it takes a lot of the back to basics approach and that it incorporates new approaches as well. He too was in favor. Mary Loftis said that she suspects that there is a lot of differentiated learning currently taking place in the district and she was in favor. Gail Cromwell said that she worries that the elementary schools do not do as well in mathematics as the State does. She is in favor because this might bring about concrete change. Tom Welden said that he finds this very complex. He asked how what we are already doing will compliment this approach without turning around one hundred eighty degrees. We need to make sure that we have the staff development time.

Beverly said that she is pleased. This will only help the teachers by helping them from grade to grade.

Beverly Bacon adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok