

DISTRICT PARENTS' COUNCIL MINUTES OCTOBER 16, 2003

Present: Karp, Hill, Savino, Carpenter, Fletcher, Tengi, Ahmad, Weeks, Kley, Seitz, Krisulewicz, Phelan, Bruno, Stevens, Sheidler

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM by Judy Karp

INTERIM REPORT ON LANGUAGE ARTS REVIEW

- A K-12 Language Arts Program Review Interim Report, dated June 2003, was distributed. Parents may request copies of this report directly from the district office.
- The recommendations made in this report are not final and have only been shared with the Curriculum Committee of the School Board for purposes of monitoring the committee's work to date.
- This committee is a two-year committee. This interim report was prepared after one year's time. The basic skills portion may require further review, over and above the 2-year timeframe.
- At the K-5 level, the essential question being asked is, "How can we assure that *all* students are gaining the necessary foundation skills to become lifetime readers and learners? The phrase, "One size fits all" doesn't work for all children.
- At the K-5 level, the effectiveness of the Signatures Literature Anthologies is being evaluated. Teachers have been given permission to explore additional supplements to the anthologies.
- Differentiated Instruction is being taught and implemented throughout our district. Administrators and staff will be held accountable for ensuring that this type of instruction is occurring at all schools. The basic premise being – you start teaching a child from the point that *they* are at and consistently move them along throughout the school year.

UPDATE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

Monitoring:

- The state came in to monitor our district in September, which was the next step after our district went through a self-assessment last year. The state selected and copied random files for their review.
- The primary recommendation made by the state was for the district to develop a "more comprehensive, long range plan for transition." How do we plan for life after school? This will be a 5 year integrated plan.
- The district has purchased a COIN system. The students can do a personal inventory of their interests using this software. The software program will then provide the student with a list of suggested job titles based on their interests. It will give the student information on how to best obtain the job skills required for a given profession. It is recommended that this be a part of our high school course offerings.
- A recommendation for a course at the high school on "Independent Living" was discussed.
- A recommendation for College fairs to include special education and other job specialties was made.

- The district has hired a company to help some special education students get jobs and will provide them with on-the-job work support.

Special Education Advisory Committee

- There are four parent advisory committee meetings scheduled throughout the year. They are open to all regular and special education parents. The meeting for October is scheduled for October 29th at 7:00 PM in the Boardroom at the Administration building.
- From 7:00 PM – 7:30PM there will be a brief business meeting. Three sub-committees are being formed. Parents will be asked to chair and sit on these committees. The committees are: By-Laws; Transition and Speakers Bureau.
- From 7:30 – 9:00 PM Mercer County Community College will be the guest speaker. They will explain their programs and course offerings.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

The federal NCLB Act requires all states to establish standards for accountability for all schools and districts in all the states. Information was handed out regarding “Understanding Accountability in New Jersey” and the “New Jersey Education Association’s comments” regarding the NCLB Act. The New Jersey Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers was briefly discussed. This report is available from the district office.

ROUND TABLE ITEMS:

A test of the CAN system will be completed before the end of October. It will occur during the school day. The district is pulling the Win School information into the CAN system for all students who are currently unassigned on CAN. Parents will be given the instructions on how to change their pertinent contact information if they were not reached during the test.

New Cafeteria Service Program - Nick Lorenzetti will look into the issue of follow-up letters not being sent out if students’ lunch funds are running low. He will also investigate how a parent logs onto the system to see what items his/her child is buying, etc.