



**Syracuse City School District
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Curriculum Committee Meeting
February 26, 2008 – 5:00 p.m.**



Committee Members Attending:

Present: Commissioner Kim Rohadfox-Ceaser
Commissioner Laurie Menkin

Also Present: Commissioner Ned Deuel

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

There are no action items to come before the Board of Education Curriculum Committee.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

Impacts of the Budget on Curriculum and Instruction

The general impacts divisionally were discussed:

- Pre-k – There will be no expansion and no conversion of half day classes to full day programming. The Program will continue to need District support to sustain existing classrooms.
- Elementary – Enrollment was used to determine next year's staffing. A target was set at 23 students for primary classes and 26 at the intermediate level. There was a discussion that any increase in class size at the elementary level will effect achievement.
- Secondary (Middle & High School) – All initiatives are being reviewed to make sure there is remaining support for identified effective programs. The target for classroom size when determining cuts was 28 students per class/section. The middle schools have identified their cuts based on enrollment and some schools will lose a whole team. The high schools designed a metric with the assistance of Anita Murphy to ensure equity in reductions based on student/teacher ratios. The high schools will then identify specific cuts based on the needs and initiatives of their buildings.

Mike Schmidt spoke on the impact the cuts would make at the high school level, including a reduced number of AP and higher level classes offered to students. Chris Vogelsang stated that although some of the cuts would be made as a result of lower enrollment in some schools, the resulting increase in class size across the District would affect all students K-12.

Commissioners present stated that they would like to be kept abreast of the reductions, especially if any proposed reductions impact on a specific program.

Alternative Middle Schools

There was an in-depth discussion of the proposed new alternative middle school and its instructional program. Steve Gramet provided information and explained the Expeditionary Learning School program which is the proposed instructional program for the new school. Mr. Gramet also explained that the program could become a model instructional program for the other middle schools in the District. There was also a discussion on what instructional and mental health support components could be added to Beard and Carnegie Schools to improve student achievement.

The next Curriculum Committee meeting will again focus on redesigning our alternative programs with Steve Gramet reporting out on specific recommendations and costs of the new alternative middle school as well as any recommendations for September 2008 for Beard and Carnegie Schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Vogelsang