

EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
November 4, 2020 -- 7:00 P.M.
VIDEO CONFERENCE (ZOOM)
MINUTES

- I. The Chairperson**, Dr. Damary Bonilla, called the Education Programs & Resources Committee Meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance, Secretary Jessica Barlotta called for the roll.
- II. Board Committee Members Present:** George Andrews, Rebecca Bear, Dr. Damary Bonilla and Debbie Kulick.
- III. Other Board Members Present:** Richard Schlameuss
- IV. School Personnel Present:** Brian Borosh, Brian Baddick, Heather Piperato, William Vitulli, William Riker, Jessica Barlotta, Tabitha Bradley, Trenee Lurry, Gillian Turner, and Phillip Kerzner.
- V. Members of the Public Present:** Keleisha Phillip-Stringer
- VI. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by George Andrews to approve the agenda for November 4, 2020. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously 4-0.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2020 meeting (pages 1-8). Motion was seconded by George Andrews and carried unanimously 4-0.

VIII. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- a. Curriculum Audit- Dr. Vitulli was handed this topic by Dr. Damary Bonilla. He mentioned that he was uncertain if it had been discussed previously and asked Heather Piperato if it has been. She took over and discussed how this item merges with number 2 as it falls under the auspices of DEI Committee, which we started the work on the ground and very organic. We took a quick breath to lean back to organize the work around some areas to be sure we are holding everyone accountable to the work they are doing and accountable for the results that they get. For the DEI update, she turned it over to Trenee. Upon the discussion being handed back to Mrs. Piperato after the DEI Committee update, she thanked the committee as it is an honor to be a member. She explained that they looked at the grass roots efforts from the summer and before. Much of the work was started, even the thinking, last year. The committee developed five focus teams that members are signing up for. They are as follows:
- Helping to create a more inclusive school climate through training with the faculty and staff – the team will be determining some baseline climate data to see if they have improved it as a result of the training. These are large, complex, uncomfortable issues and one-time training is not going to do it right. One meeting is not enough to change long term but fertilizes the soil for the seeds we hope to plant.
 - Help develop hiring processes to diversify faculty and staff – focus team will be helping to weave these things into our hiring process.
 - Help develop learning experiences that allow students to make personal connections with class content such as: Development of elective curricular courses. Development of tools for adoption into curriculum cycle. This is where the Curriculum Audit comes in as the

development of those tools will be an ongoing thing and will be incorporated into curriculum cycle so the Curriculum Audit will be an ongoing thing happening routinely and not just a one-time thing. It will be developed so that we are looking at the best practices in the field through the DEI lens. It will be developed so we are not just looking at the curriculum through the DEI lens, but teaching and learning. It is not just what is in the textbook, but how it is being taught and how it is being presented to students. There will also be a curriculum mapping rubric which will assess the efforts of DEI as we develop the curriculum and curriculum mapping. That is update on Curriculum Audit as it falls under this focus team number three.

- Develop Learning experiences to allow our students competitively pursue post high school goals – This goes back to our vision and mission statement as a district: “We want all students to competitively pursue post high school goals.” How are we helping our historically underrepresented students to reach their post high school goals? They have already started. Mr. Bomar reported on the HBCU panel presenting on October 14th. This team will help develop even more to help our students to know what possibilities they have after high school.
- Those four areas hit a number of our mission objectives, but not all of them. We can get that work done this year, but how do we decide what work there is to do in the coming years? Those who shared qualitative experiences within the East Burg school district shared that we have work to do. How do we make decisions about which efforts to start and which efforts to prioritize? Focus team number 5’s task is to conduct a strategic audit of all our mission objectives and our strategic strands to inform the overall DEI health of East Stroudsburg. They will be doing data collections around our different processes in East Stroudsburg and by the end of the year, recommending to the committee, what parts of our district that can use the most help in moving forward in our DEI processes. So it will be a continual look at making sure we have the right data, we are looking at it, and strategically focusing our efforts because we have partnerships with East Stroudsburg, with other school districts, and with businesses. How do we leverage all of that to make the most impact in our DEI efforts in East Stroudsburg?

No questions were asked in regards to this item of discussion.

- b. DEI Committee Update- Trenee thanked everyone for allowing her to speak. The DEI Committee was meeting monthly and is now moving to meet bimonthly because it requires more of their time and it is something they want to make sure they are doing consistently and fluently when they meet. They have increased the number of Members. Wednesday’s are the designated day for them to meet through January in different cohorts. They have received great feedback regarding the program, people are looking forward to other sessions coming up. It began as of today, November 7, 2020 and those who are participating signed up two weeks ago. We are on a great path to what we are doing. They are being consistent and deliberate. Heather will speak about the five objectives and those on the Committee can decide what category they wish to be on.
- c. Crisis Management Update- Dr. Vitulli spoke in regards to this matter. To date, there are 2,750 students in the cyber programs. Transitions are taking place weekly. There was a 2-week pause in the transitions due to the end of the marking period. There are, on a weekly average, 15-20 going in one direction or another. It appears as though we have a 2 to 1 average of those going to cyber versus those going back to brick and mortar. In the past week, about 80 to 100 new students have transitioned not even maybe half of that has been students returning to brick and mortar. More students are going to cyber than they are returning to brick and mortar. Overall, there have been minimal situations with issues. We have heard only good things about both programs to date. The schedule V progress, which is the after school program, consists of students that signed up late or came in late, or just enrolled in school. They are getting assistance from teachers after the school day. Still have a large number in there but as there are openings in day programs, they are filling the gaps and moving the kids to the day program. Just finished marking period 1 and there have been no issues. Dr. Vitulli asked Trenee Lurry about how it is going for her, as she is a schedule B teacher for

cyber. She loves her first grade kids. She has a caseload of 13, 8 of which are seen consistently every day. For the most part, everyone is on target. A few need to move back to brick and mortar, which she has expressed to the parents of those students. It is going well. She was worried in the beginning but it has been going well. She took on the program because she has a first grader and feels that every child deserves to see the face of a teacher to see every day. Dr. Vitulli thanked Trenee and went on to mention how he wants to recognize so many teachers that are working so hard, much harder than ever anticipated, even after school day at night and extend discussions with parents. So much effort to be recognized. No one had questions. Rebecca Bear went on to say it going well for her kids as well. They are adapting well to their off days. Dr. Vitulli commented that the learning curve was a little brutal but everyone seems to be getting over it. Dr. Bonilla said her kids adjusted well to the hybrid model, first few weeks were tough learning to juggle it all but they do want to acknowledge from all angles that the teachers are doing an amazing job with their students and really do appreciate the effort and time it takes to manage various group they are working with and all the dynamics.

d. Discuss BrainPop for Elementary – Dr. Vitulli started out by mentioning how last meeting we brought to you some secondary tools, well most were secondary oriented. This month there are a couple for the elementary. The elementary program needs science and social studies support for students learning in the classroom and at home. BrainPop has been used throughout the district off and on, even having been used by Dr. Vitulli in Smithfield with tremendous success to improve PSSA scores. Used consistently with science to score in the 90 percentile. Dr. Bonilla asked if he is going to want a recommendation from the Committee for this program. Dr. Vitulli is asking for that. He apologized if he is not following procedure. Dr. Bonilla said it was fine. Rebecca Bear asked how the subscription works. Dr. Vitulli explained that this program would go to all the elementary schools. It is prorated just for the rest of this year. Tabitha negotiated with the company to get a reduced price. It is \$8,000 and eventually, if the board approves, it will go through ESSERS grant or another pandemic related grant. Dr. Bonilla pointed out that is the question. What is the cost and where is it coming from? Dr. Bonilla asked if Dr. Bradley wanted to give an update, based on the negotiation. Rebecca Bear asked if it is per student, per teacher, and she wanted to know how it works. Dr. Bradley discussed that starting back in March, Dr. Bradley heard about Brain Pop consistently. There was a Design Team that established the instructional activities and processes for all students K-5 across the district for the Learn From Home program. A team of teachers who came together every week that designed all of the content for the choice boards, tested the links, could open from Chromebook, etc... This team struggled to find Science and Social Studies materials that included instructional videos, that allowed students to interact, view videos from home, formative assessments, make videos, concept maps, and different activities. They were able to pull from some free resources, one of which was Brain Pop, but logins were a bit of a struggle because they were using the free resources in the Spring. That was originally where the request for the program came from. One additional piece was when they used Brain Pop free version in the spring, they had a paper version that were able to be printed and sent home to the kids that did not have computer access, which was originally a major concern that if a digital version was provided, like activities had to be provided for those students that were non-digital. With this, they could print transcripts, print same activities, etc. and send them home with non-digital packets. During planning in August, the design team started exemplar lessons, with the goal to have 3 weeks of school already planned by grade level and ready to roll out. The cry for Brain Pop and the ability to have access to quality, aligned K-5 science and social studies resources in particular. Brain Pop also has the ability to be applied to ELA, Math, Science, SCL, including other activities, which now encompasses coding and some really great resources. We currently have a small group of students that need online-only instruction who are not ESACA students and we were looking to provide offline, asynchronous learning experiences, per what they needed. Dr. Bradley wanted to take a look at this resource, and in working with the company, they provided us the ability to use the product through mid to late January with this small group of students and with the good graces of Mr. Borosh, we set it into motion and provided the resource to about 12 regular education teachers and about 50 students that needed this service as a way to test it out with students and faculty. We did not make it mandatory, we made it optional

which gave us the opportunity to look at the features up close and personal. The feedback so far, after telling them to only use it with this select group, they would like to use it right away with all the students. Which, if the committee agrees to take this to vote, we can use it with all teachers and all students through mid-January, but we did not want to allow it without bringing it to the committee. The company gave us the original price tag of \$15,000, but we have it prorated to around \$8,000 which would be from January and on, for all teachers and students as soon as we get approval, with 3 months free, as well as the reduced price. We understand that we are using this right now because we need the digital access and quality material for students to use at home. We know that this would not automatically come every year. I have heard that it is very user friendly, aligned to our standards, there are sections that you can sort by standard, and it is seamlessly integrated with Google Classroom for teachers. They can sort by subject and topic and it is very engaging and student user friendly. Dr. Bonilla proceeded to say she would open it up to the group to ask questions but first she asked what Dr. Bradley would recommend or see as the benefits for that select group versus all students? As a parent, she enjoyed the use of it at home when it worked, because of course some things they could not access but it was user-friendly and they did enjoy it. Dr. Bradley thanked Dr. Bonilla and proceeded to say she did not want to open it up to all students and then not be able to purchase it in January and then have to tell them they could not have it anymore. They did not put it into Clever initially because then all students would see it and they did not want anyone to see it and not be able to use it. They will open it up to all students and staff once Mr. Borosh says it is appropriate and they can do the upload and integration. She did not want to proceed until they talked to the committee and made sure it was something they were in support of. Dr. Bonilla asked once it is discussed and approved, it will be used for all students? Dr. Bradley said yes. Dr. Bonilla then asked if anyone has questions. George Andrews asked Rebecca if there is a form they have to fill out to get it through finance while Rebecca asked if it is paid per student and then Rebecca proceeded to explain that it has to go from the committee to finance to the Board. George asked again about the form and Rebecca said the committee just motions it through and then it goes to finance and they motion to pay for it. George thought there was a form required to be moved through finance. Dr. Vitulli pointed out that there is a 611 form that needs to be filled out for anything that require money, but that will be handed in to Tom Macintyre. Dr. Bonilla pointed out that is a question about process, not about the program and she would like the questions to be directed to Dr. Bradley regarding the program and then the committee will talk about what is next if they decide to make a motion for recommendation. Rebecca proceeded to ask if it is paid for by student or by teacher? Dr. Vitulli said it would be a sight license for the 6 different schools. Rebecca asked if it is different than the Google license for example where it is by students? So if, for instance, they had more students enroll in the district mid-year, they don't have to pay more to add more? Dr. Vitulli said that is correct. He also added that it comes in Spanish so children can utilize both Spanish and French. Dr. Bradley thanked Dr. Vitulli for that and it includes Brain Pop Jr. (K-3) as well as ELL are all included in the price. Dr. Bonilla asked if there are any plans to use those programs or would it just be additional resource for the families? Dr. Bradley said that she has not spoken to Miss. Keiper, the EL teacher, but she is sure she would be thrilled to have additional resources especially in the circumstances we are in and it is nice to have something for families to use at home. They were looking at it as a K-5 resource in general. They can reach out and the company were also very accommodating to throw in free Professional Development. The coaches from the small group were having a session in the morning the day after the committee meeting and she is sure they could get some support for the EL department or any groups interested. Dr. Bradley would be happy to ask the rep to throw that in, as the rep is a graduate from East Stroudsburg. Dr. Bradley asked about Professional Development. Will we have more access with the licensing or is it the same across the board? Dr. Bradley said the one the day after will just be for the small group just to get them up and running. They have committed to providing additional professional development to all staff once everyone is on board. They have only had the program briefly. They have already had 342 log ins with just the small group in a small amount of time. That is also before Professional Development and teachers were not obligated to use it. It was just a tool provided as an option for that group needing additional resources for those students. It is very impressive use for a short amount of time and shows the interest in the program. Rebecca Bear asked if they are using it just for Science or for all subjects. Dr. Bradley

explained they are just using it for Science and Social Studies. The group in particular that they are talking about is working with students that would be accessing a regular education teacher for science and social studies specifically. They are trying to bridge the gap for student being completely remote. Edgenuity is not an appropriate route for those students. Dr. Bonilla asked if George or Debbie had any more questions or questions about content. George Andrews said Tabitha did a great job explaining it. Debbie Kulick said she would follow up in writing because it is hard to hear her speak. Rebecca Bear asked if can be for all subjects but we are just using Science now but the teachers can play with it and develop more use for it so it will be good? Dr. Bradley agreed that this small group can look at it now, but the students they are assisting only needs these two subjects. It is open to all subjects now. Dr. Bonilla pointed out that is a good question because if we make the investment, we want to make sure it is used to the maximum potential. Dr. Bradley pointed out that we do have Reading Wonders online, they did learn during Learn from Home, that it is very interactive but there are no instruction videos. GoMath has interactive characters and there are areas they can go for review of a subject and instruction of the subjects. Reading Wonders lacked that. If we need to do more planning remotely, Brain Pop has a great resource in ELA that we did discover we are lacking in our current digital tool of Reading Wonders. We did not anticipate having a void to fill but Brain Pop does.

- e. ELL program - Middlebury Language-Dr. Vitulli explained that late last year/early this year, the secondary ESL specialists approached Dr. Vitulli due to the current curriculum no longer being in print. They found Middlebury Language which is actually a subsidiary of Edgenuity, that provides ELL Curriculum for secondary students. Dr. Vitulli was able to get them access to the entire program through demo accounts so they have had plenty of time to test it out. They requested to purchase as their new curriculum for the next year. Dr. Vitulli asked them to provide detail as to what they did and why they like it, as well as how many students are needed. The secondary ESL specialists are Laurie Berry, Evelyn Remeron, and Martina Matheis. They went through this program they found it to be very suitable for middle school and high school needs. It is extremely flexible and very adaptable. It can be used online or in person. Either synchronously or asynchronously. They have asked that it is looked into immediately because they are in urgent need to find a replacement for the previous product they were using which was the Keystone program. Dr. Vitulli asked they provide him with a list of pros and cons. The pros included: it aligns well with the Wethis Standards and access testing prep. They felt it was a very beneficial update to the curriculum to replace the Keystone program which is no longer available. There felt there were many prompts to guide students and it was very interactive and motivating for the students, as well as very age appropriate. Provided scaffolding opportunities. Offered vocab and writing support. Allowed for data collection and progress monitoring. Both in class and cyber instruction for English Language Learners. Very flexible for both large and small groups. Addressed the four domains: reading, writing, speaking, listening. Cohesive program for both North and South, secondary, and ESACA. Allowed easier transition from junior high to high school. Standardized curriculum between two campuses. Complimentary product to Edgenuity courses. The few cons consisted of: We do not know yet if the program has a translation feature to the text to toggle between the English and students home language. For ESACA, it does not have a screening placement test. But this is not necessary as we already have one in place. This is a program they found to be very good. The need is for just under 50 students as of now. The quote received for a year is listed per student at \$99.00 for 50 students. There is professional development to be scheduled at the cost of an additional \$850.00. The total cost listed is \$5800.00. Something they stumbled upon. Dr. Vitulli researched to get them access. They did extensive work to ensure it met their needs. Dr. Bonilla clarified asking if Dr. Vitulli will be asking for a recommendation for this as well? Dr. Vitulli confirmed this. Dr. Bonilla also asked for clarification is the \$5800 for the current 50 students and professional development? Dr. Vitulli confirmed this as well. He also mentioned that because this is not due to the pandemic, this would be coming out of the curriculum budget. Rebecca Bear asked if this is replacing something already in the curriculum budget that we will not pay for but will pay for this instead, as in a wash? Dr. Vitulli apologized, as he is not familiar with the Keystone series, and the specialist told him that the Keystone series they had been using is no longer available. He assumes it might have run out over

this past summer but he is not completely certain. His understanding is that there is not anything else to buy anymore. Dr. Bonilla asked what the timeline is? Are they already/actively using it or awaiting guidance? Dr. Vitulli explained they are awaiting approval. The only access they have is the demo accounts which provides some access but other than that, they do not have anything. Dr. Bonilla asked again, in response to Rebecca Bear's question, will be replacing something else that was originally in the budget? Dr. Vitulli responded that he cannot say with 100% confidence that it will be, as he was not sure when the Keystone Series ended. He does not believe it to be in his budget this year. It should be because it was no longer in use. Heather Piperato added in that she believes the Keystone series was a print resource was not on a subscription basis. You would not see a yearly recurring cost. It was a onetime cost and Ryan Moran had it in his budget for curriculum knowing it was going to expire this year. Dr. Bonilla reinforced that she heard Heather say it was included by Mr. Moran in the budget for this year. Rebecca Bear pointed out that once it is moved to the Finance Committee, it will be figured out if it is budgeted for. Dr. Vitulli mentioned he would do some research to determine. Dr. Bonilla cut out for a bit but returned to discuss that Mr. Moran had incorporated it into curriculum budget but the Education Committee has not recently discussed the budget as they have been focused on the programs and curriculum audit, so she agreed that it is a good strategy to move it forward to finance for the benefit of the students. They can revisit what needs to be looked at to plan well after the Board Reorganization Meeting which will decide who is on the Education Committee. She then asked Dr. Vitulli and team if there is anything else to be discussed? Dr. Vitulli said he has nothing at this time. She asked the rest of the members if anyone else has anything?

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Dr. Bonilla opened the meeting for Public participation for any comments of questions. She asked Rich Schlameuss if he had any comments of questions. Rich had nothing to say besides did a great job and a good review. Dr. Bonilla then thanked him for his compliment and his participation. She then asked Dr. Riker if he had anything to share. Dr. Riker came on and said no, the team has done a good job. He did add, for the committee updates, Central Administration is studying return options as we move closer towards second semester and they are looking to present some ideas to the committee in either December or January. Not that they are recommending they would change anything we are currently doing, as whatever current conditions in communities would be the determining factor. They are working diligently on that and looking at all potential options so they are prepared for whatever the board decides for the rest of the year. Dr. Bonilla thanked Dr. Riker, and went on to mention this is very timely, as there are lots of rumors going around regarding what is going to be happening. At this point, Heather Piperato returned and Dr. Bonilla asked her if she had anything additional to add. She thanked Dr. Bonilla and did not have anything to add. Dr. Bonilla thanked Heather for always contributing and then moved the Committee to the Advisory Recommendations.

IX. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Both motions were made by Rebecca Bear that the following Advisory Recommendations be forwarded on to the Finance Committee: 2 items were up for recommendation. The first was the purchase of Brain Pop for elementary school program at the prorated cost of \$8000.00 beginning in January to cover 6 schools, grades k-5, including 3 months free and will be funded by the ESSER Grant, with free professional development to help get staff up and running and includes additional resources for Spanish and French. The second item was the purchase of the ELL program Middlebury Language, at \$99.00 per student, currently under 50 students, for a total of \$5800 including professional development and is coming out of the education budget with the understanding that tonight's recommendation to move it to the finance committee would include more detail on the budgetary aspects by Dr. Vitulli and his team. Both motions were seconded by Debbie Kulick and carried unanimously 4-0.

Dr. Bonilla announced that the next meeting will be determined after the Board Reorganization happening during the first week of December. Depending on who is on the Committee, there will be a determination on what dates and times the group will meet. The public will be kept informed and she hopes that there is continued involvement by the community and educators and all the support that the Committee has had. It has been an amazing year and she hopes it

continues.

X. ADJOURNMENT: Dr. Damary Bonilla asked for a motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion to adjourn was made by George Andrews. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Barlotta

Committee Secretary