

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
July 14, 2021
VIA Zoom
7:00 P.M.
Minutes**

- I. **The Chairperson**, Dr. Damary Bonilla, called the Education Programs & Resources Committee meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Jessica Newberry called the roll.
- II. **Board Committee Members Present:** Dr. Damary Bonilla, Rebecca Bear, Jason Gullstrand, Debbie Kulick
- III. **School Personnel Present:** Stacie Ammerman, George Andrews, Brian Baddick, Brian Borosh, Tabitha Bradley, Marialena Casciotta, Carol Deane-Gardner, Erin Dreisbach, Heather Gress, Sue Hagerty, Patricia Heeter, Karin Hogan, Shahida Jones, Nicole Kresge Gail Kulick, Jacilyn Leonard, Trene Lurry, Barbara Miller, Laura Munch, Jessica Newberry, Rebecca O'Donnell, Heather Piperato, Debbie Osborne, Brenda Perini, William Riker, Maria Rogers, Matthew Sadowsky, Fabiola Souffrant, Jacqueline Tosh, Sam Varkanis, and William Vitulli
- IV. **Community Members Present:** Linda Doering, Jennifer Floyd, Maria Hopkins, and Keleisha Phillip-Stringer
- V. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the agenda for July 14, 2021 and with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action in the best interest of the District. Motion was seconded by Jason Gullstrand and carried unanimously, 4-0.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Jason Gullstrand to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2021 meeting. Motion was seconded by Debbie Kulick and carried unanimously, 4-0.

VI. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a. Elementary ELA

Dr. Bradley begins with thanking the Board members and the committee for the opportunity to share the journey of choosing the new ELA Elementary Curriculum. This began in the 2019-2020 school year but was halted due to COVID-19. We were able to finish the review process in the spring of 2021. Dr. Bradley begins the presentation with the four non-negotiables that were determined and prioritized by our East Stroudsburg Area Elementary Teachers. These new resources or continued use of resources must instill the love of reading, have opportunities for differentiation, be aligned with reading research and also be standards aligned. These points were part of every decision as we went through the process. What do 897.5 hours or 38 solid 24 hour days have in common with our ELA review? That is how much time, clock hours, were invested by the people listed. We had a need, our current program was not meeting the

non-negotiables and didn't lead to individual growth over the past 8 years and we were coming to an end with our digital licenses. The parameters we used were several rubrics along the way. One was shared with us from the Institute of Educational Sciences from the Department of Education and it includes a list of criteria for evidence based practice that aligns with best practices on how we know children learn to read. We also incorporated our Board of Education rubric throughout the process, and finally, a curriculum evaluation tool from The Reading League, they are a nonprofit and their mission is to advance awareness, understanding and use of evidence aligned reading instruction. The resource search began with 10 resources that were collated from research within ED reports research that other states had conducted on looking for other ELA resources that aligned to the things that we were looking for. We pulled together 10 the first round of that process to take a blind review by members of the committee, who were randomized and placed to review each of the 10 rubrics through the lens from the US Department of Education. From there, we met as a committee and took the scores into consideration. We then narrowed that list down to 4. We took a closer look at each remaining resource through each one of the lenses and we're providing feedback from each of those sub committees to review with the full committee. After that we had the entire ELA committee come in for 2 days after school got out, we had 2 presentations each day, in person, by the vendors. There was also a presentation for our families who agreed to participate. On the third day, we requested every committee member share comments about each resource. The committee based its selection on our adherence to the non-negotiables, feedback from all the groups of stakeholders, the level of support from the companies and the professional development they were willing to offer us and the rubric criteria. The final two selections were vetted by Mr. Borosh and his technology team as well. Mr. Sadowsky, Principal at Bushkill, agrees with Dr. Bradley's sentiments to the committee. Mr. Sadowsky continues with an example of a teacher asking his or her students to take out their social studies book and asking them to read a certain number of pages for a discussion. This isn't appropriate for all grade levels. In kindergarten through second grade the focus of an ELA program is learning how to read. We looked for a program where we were going to be able to teach our kids in the best way possible how to read, that had explicit phonics anemic awareness instruction and gave them the love for reading. For K-2 we picked Superkids. This program follows 10 children through stories, they're relatable characters and it's going to give kids that love of reading. It's also going to give them the explicit instruction that they need so when they get into third and fourth grade that teacher can have them take out that book and say read these pages and then we're going to have a discussion. We felt that splitting the programs was going to be appropriate for this situation because we wanted to get our kids to learn to read and come to third grade we can start shifting into reading to learn. We felt that HMH Into Reading, the program we chose for 3rd-5th grade, is going to give our kids authentic rich text that they have the know how to read. This is why we chose to split the programs. We feel confident in these two programs and that it's going to give our kids what they need best. Dr. Kulick begins with thanking the committee for their diligence and collaborative input. In addition to looking at what we need to do to teach children to read we wanted to make sure we looked at our district's strategic objectives and how we are going to provide and ensure that what we are presenting and utilizing as one of our main tools for teaching reading as a resource would align with those objectives. We took a look at each of those areas, the physical safety, emotional support, relevant pathways, academic solutions and learning experiences. We sat down and pulled out both Superkids and HMH and said do each of these resources help to support what our objectives were. When we think about physical safety you think how can a resource for academics provide physical safety, we want to look at increased academic engagement we're going to decrease any negative behavioral disruptions. Thus instilling the love of reading. Too often we have children, particularly those having difficulties with reading wanting to escape for that particular time period in a day. We want kids to want to stay in the classroom. That's why as a committee we felt Superkids does a phenomenal job engaging the students in stories that are relatable. It also has a nonfiction component that has highly diverse types of nonfiction that they will be exposed to starting in kindergarten. They also do a nice job with that nonfiction from K-2 grade ensuring that they have a range of eight Lexile levels so that we are addressing the diverse learning abilities of all our students. The HMH aligns with the collaborative for academic social emotional learning which is one of our hallmark blue ribbon resources that you look

for social emotional learning. Each of them also engages family support. Superkids and HMH have a solid resource as well as willing to provide resources to our families to help better support their learners at home. HMH comes in multiple languages and Superkids has English as well as Spanish. We also looked at the DEI and both resources went through extreme measures to ensure that all characters in Superkids were culturally relatable to all different types of students, whether it's their backgrounds, culture, ethnicity or their gender. HMH has a report card that showed the different areas they broke down the DEI to ensure that it was providing the best representation for all students. Relevant Pathways, each of them do a great job with the career connections. Each of them provides for differentiation, they each provide for tier one. Core interventions, which is where we want to start more intensive in our interventions and our depth of knowledge. There is also a Technology component. If we had to go back to a virtual situation, we could easily continue that instruction through technology. Mr. Sadowsky explains the process that they are taking to Pioneer these new programs. There is a dedicated team of Pioneers made up of our Department Chairs and ELA Committee members. They will be the group to use or apply our new programs. The Pioneer process will be 20-25 teachers that are going to be working together and lead the way for our district. The first piece of this is Professional Development. There are going to be coaches for each teacher that will come out and work with them once in the classroom. We are going to develop PLC's, Professional Learning Communities, that allow the teachers to debrief with each other. We will have a group of Teacher Leaders that will be a year ahead of the rest of their staff and will be leaders within their buildings. They will also give updates at the monthly grade level meetings. We are going to give a perception survey to students at the beginning and end of the school year. We're going to look and see the growth on how kids sort and judge themselves as readers and their love of reading. Ms. Bear thanks the committee for their hard work. Mr. Gullstrand adds that he loves the idea of the program and the enthusiasm behind it. He also appreciates that the program is over a long period of time. Ms. Kulick adds that she would like to compliment everyone because every single item in the entire list seems to be checked off. Dr. Bonilla states that she agrees with her colleagues, the energy was wonderful. I appreciate that every committee member was able to provide feedback. I think when you have a committee and the amount of people you have, there are different lenses presented. I know that all aspects were looked at. Also, I think it was brilliant to be able to make the connection with the physical safety piece. The DEI lens is critical to where we are right now as a district. The piece about getting students thinking in terms of the learning experiences stood out to me. The pre and post I think is critical to be able to measure that progress and monitor what's going on. Dr. Bonilla continues with of course students first, but then most importantly is that peer to peer support that you have built into this ongoing process. Having the teachers support one another, having teachers as coaches, empowering not just administrators but empowering our teachers so that we continue to create this leadership pipeline. Considering the challenge that we have faced in the last two school years, it is going to be critical for us to have this reading focus and really get our kids to a place where they can say they love reading. Sometimes that's challenging because the words in front of them just don't seem to catch their attention. The work we're putting into the investment that we're making here I think is going to pay off. Thank you Dr. Bradley for leading the charge and for the presentation; not just to the committee but the others from the community. Dr. Vitulli said he was impressed with Dr. Bradley's process and the committee members. It's very important because we're going to come back to the Board and ask you for a financial commitment to purchase a large number of these books for next year and want to make sure you have a full understanding of what and how we went about those decisions. I am impressed with their selection and their reasoning.

b. Check-In & Check-Out

Shahida Jones begins with thanking all the staff members that actually do the check in and check out with our students. They meet with these students before they go into their classrooms and before dismissal. Check In Check Out is part of our MTSS framework. On the MTSS pyramid we have our three tiers of interventions. Tier one is our core intervention, all students receive this. Tier two is our targeted intervention and we typically see that as our small groups and our Tier three is our intensive interventions.

Tier three is usually less than 5% of our students, and they are receiving more individualized interventions. Check In Check Out is a tier two intervention and it's designed, especially for students whose behaviors are unresponsive to tier one practices and systems or do not meet or require more immediate individualized interventions. Check In Check Out is designed as a short-term intervention and it's typically less than 6 months; however, we can make it longer if we are seeing positive outcomes. Students will have a point sheet that is used throughout the day that once they meet their mentoring and learning, they'll receive that point sheet and it reflects off of our School Positive Behavior Support Program. Each of the students' teachers will fill it out. Mrs. Dreisbach explains that check in check out is not for students that are at high risk of failure or high risk of engaging in behaviors. It is for students who really need that extra help or connection and some of that is the adult contact with the teacher. Its embedding social skills within its feedback, as well as positive reinforcement and meeting behavioral expectations and goals. There is communication daily from home to school and from school to home. Throughout the day they will receive feedback from the teacher at each class from zero, that they didn't meet expectations to two that they have met expectations. At the end of the day they meet with their Check In Check Out Coordinator and they review their goals. Then that point card goes home for the parents to review and sign. Dr. Bonilla asks if the level of family engagement in terms of signing off on the card is assessed? Ms. Jones answers that they do not have that direct data currently but could find out. It's something that our school counselors or MTSS staff members will collect. If we find that it isn't an appropriate intervention when we meet for SAP, we talk about what the next step is. Prior to the pandemic, we did get training for our buildings on Check In Check Out through the IU. Some buildings had been using it already or had training in it. Others didn't have the appropriate training yet. We wanted to make sure we had consistent training that we provided to all of our staff. Dr. Bonilla adds that she would like to ensure that we have a DEI lens on the family engagement piece, when we look at who may or may not be responding. What are some of those cultural implications in that reaction? Dr. Bonilla states that Ms. Lurry, in her DEI coach capacity, can partner with this team. Ms. Kulick asked what the success rate is each day with the children meeting their goals and do we find that we have ripple effects for those who don't achieve their goals like depression and negativity? Ms. Jones replies that the data for who meets their goals each day is in every building. Some of our buildings have upwards of 20 students that they are tracking and they collect that information. Then we see that they're not meeting goals and what other possible interventions they may need. We also take the Ripple Effects into consideration. Some, not all, carry a point sheet because that can be a point of anxiety and stress for some kids. We do look at that piece as well. Ms. Kulick asks if they don't have a point sheet do you follow up with teachers each day? Ms. Jones replies as needed they do follow up with teachers. Teachers are great about communicating to the Check In Check Out teams about how a child is doing and finding success within our interventions. If we're finding that the intervention is unsuccessful or if the child is non-responsive, we have to evaluate what is another appropriate intervention for that child. Ms. Kulick asks when a child is identified, what is the 0-60 implementation time? Ms. Jones responds that we typically get a referral through our Students' Assistance Program and we will have a conversation as to what the appropriate interventions are. We also get a referral to our Child Study Team. Usually this takes no more than 2 weeks. Ms. Kulick asked if we have a child that's tier three and identified what's the speed at which we implement a program or help? Ms. Jones replies they make contact with the parent immediately and have a SAP meeting. The parent has to then follow through with signing permissions and getting that information back. There are continuous follow up and phone calls, emails, and the use of dojo messages to make sure that they receive the information. The parent has to provide permission. Ms. Kulick asks if they do home or site visits? Ms. Dreisbach replies that the district SRO's do home visits depending on the situation. For tier three where you know there is a high risk we try to get services in as soon as possible. For tier two it's more of Check In Check Out. Check In Check Out is not for students that are at significantly high risk. Check In Check Out is a great program and intervention for a student who without it could become high risk. Dr. Bonilla adds that this is an intervention program not necessarily the emergency response that Ms. Kulick is referring to, in terms of some of these critical dire issues. Ms. Dreisbach continues that tier three is for those students who are at high risk. There might be

drugs and alcohol or risky behaviors. Ms. Kulick asks if they interact with the police or Children and Youth to reach those tier three kids? Ms. Dreisbach replies that they do along with the buildings. They do talk to juvenile probation, Children and Youth and Police Officers when necessary. We do have those community connections that we reach out to. Dr. Bonilla states that she was in an Advisory Board Meeting for Monroe County Children and Youth and we did start a new committee that's going to be focusing on these educational partnerships, I anticipate there is going to be more support coming. Ms. Bear states that when we present this to families, it should be presented in a positive manner. Families that are newer to the district whose students are involved in this to them it has a negative connotation not a positive. We want to make sure they know it's not anything their child did wrong or the parent or caregivers, it's more a resource not a stigma that we are placing on them. Ms. Jones states they will look into how it's being presented at the buildings. Dr. Bonilla replies that it relates directly to the communication work that we are doing. Mr. Gullstrand says he thinks it's a wonderful program and with the collaboration between the mentors, the staff and the students, sometimes on a daily basis, that the program does work. Dr. Bonilla would like to thank the mentors for the work they do. You don't always see what is happening but taking the time to do Check In Check Out with the students is critical for all of us.

c. Summer Program Update

Dr. Vitulli explains that a number of our summer school programs have recently started. The official summer school program, which is virtual where students go to remediate courses that they may have failed. This year we have about 400 kids, most with one class. We also have the Intermediate Academy. Mrs. Piperato explains that this program is to continue learning in an area of student passion. While we do have academic interventions for gaps and needs that students might have, we also want to echo that love of reading. The summer AcadeME program has 183 total enrollments. There are 16 sessions over 4 weeks. It is partially in person and partially virtual but of the 16 sessions only 3 are virtual. We are very excited about the success we've had. This is a strange year but we feel like it's really meeting the students' needs. Dr. Vitulli continues with the Steam-r program. This program is virtual and has 132 students. This program is a stem based program. Lastly, we have the ELO program, Extended Learning Opportunities for our elementary students. This is an in-person program with 3 sessions. The first session had 163 students who attended. Each session we begin to focus more on what those students need and those that have been successful can move on and exit our program. They also have the option to stay for the next sessions. Dr. Bonilla asks Dr. Vitulli to clarify the requirements for students attending the ELO and Steam-r programs. Dr. Vitulli replies that Steam-r and AcadeME are voluntary but ELO was a recommendation by principals and teachers. They examined the students that were struggling in their academics and reached out to those families. Almost all of them said yes and were excited it was in-person.

d. DEI Update

Ms. Lurry states that the DEI Committee is continuing to plan and prepare for next year. She is also looking to include additional summer training for teachers. Also, they are completing the book club. There are 35 staff members and there is a morning and evening session. We are reading the book Stamped by Kenny and Jason Reynolds. We are also going to continue to review this year's data to help guide our decisions for next year with goals and how we are going to move forward with our DEI efforts as a district. Dr. Bonilla adds that the Board is planning a DEI training for this summer. We are working with external presenters as an opportunity to ensure a fresh lens on the DEI work for the Board. Ms. Bear adds that she wants to thank the committee, and it is really showing a lot of progress. Every time we've talked about a new curriculum whether it be at the high school or for elementary, we're looking through that lens as well. Dr. Bonilla agrees and adds that it's not that individuals weren't using a DEI lens before

but it wasn't necessarily part of the language or as obvious as it is becoming. Mr. Gullstrand adds his personal experience about having a book club. Dr. Bonilla adds that it's wonderful to see individuals engaging during their summer and taking the time to stay connected to this work and to continue to have these conversations to prepare for next year. Mr. Andrews adds he is looking forward to the DEI training.

That concludes the agenda items.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIMITED TO ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

Linda Doering states this is her first meeting and is thrilled about the reading product. She spoke of her personal experiences when starting school. She was an avid reader by third grade. There is nothing in life that you can do well without being able to read. She lived in the Soviet Union with her children and her children learned to read Russian and it really helped them to adjust to the culture and not be an outsider looking in. Ms. Doering states she is not part of ESASD but really supports the love of reading.

Jennifer Floyd thanks everyone for all the good information. She would like to speak on behalf of the Steam-r program. Her son loves it! Not only is he learning but she's learning and other family members are learning and joining him. We appreciate all of the materials that were given to us before the program started and made it very helpful for us to be active participants in the program. We hope that this program will be offered in the future.

VIII. PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO FINANCE COMMITTEE

- a. 400 Schedule B hours to be utilized by various staff for pre-entry planning for the 2021-2022 school year in the following areas. Elementary Math, ELA, SEL, ELO, One District One Book, and others as needed. These funds will be funded by the ESSERS III grant as part of our 20% requirement to recover learning loss.
- b. Summer AcadeME, the hours for Intermediate teachers. Effective immediately, hours range from 15-45 depending on the person. This program will be funded by the ESSERS III grant
- c. CDT training for high school teachers. Maximum of 12 hours each. This training will be funded by the ESSERS III grant
- d. Elementary Student Early Admission Assessment. This will be funded by Curriculum and Instruction
- e. SEL Curriculum Writing-Ripple Effects is part of the 2021-2022 School year re-entry plan. Funded by the ESSER's III grant

Dr. Bonilla asks Ms. Bear as chair of the Finance Committee, where they stand with these recommendations. Ms. Bear replies we moved them forward pending the Education Committee recommendation.

**IX. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

a. Motion to approve items previously submitted to the Finance Committee

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE: Dr. Bonilla asks for a motion to move the previously submitted items above from the Finance Committee. Motion was made by Ms. Bear. Motion was seconded by Ms. Kulick and carried unanimously 4-0.

X. NEXT MEETING- Wednesday, August 11th at 7:00 p.m.- Via Zoom

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:
Motion was made by Ms. Kulick to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Mr. Gullstrand carried unanimously, 4-0.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Newberry