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PRAIRIE CROSSING CHARTER SCHOOL



WHERE EDUCATION COMES NATURALLY

The PCCS **Excellence in Academic Programs Advisory Committee** meeting was held on **Monday, August 24, 2009**, 1531 Jones Point Road, Prairie Crossing Charter School, in Grayslake, Illinois 60030. Approved 9/28/2009

Members Present

Geoff Deigan
Karen Achtemeier
Andrea Koeniger, teacher
Ben Haight, teacher
Naomi Dulin, Environmental Ed.
Instructor
Myron Dagley, Director
Cynthia McGovern, teacher
Cindy Hooten
Barb Provost
Brian Greene, Principal

Absent

Sherry Halvorsen
Cheryl Pytlarz

Public Present

none

Staff Present

Chris Hershiser

Mission/ Purpose of this committee

The Excellence in Academic Programs Advisory Committee (EAPAC) is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Directors to assume the primary responsibility of working with the Director and the Principal in an advisory role to define indicators of student achievement (in such areas as environmental stewardship, global citizenship, and standardized achievement tests). The committee will ensure that all board members know the charter promises made to the community and ISBE regarding student achievements and to devise clear and consistent measures to monitor these goals.

Proposed Goal(s) for Year 1

Produce a curriculum that articulates a scope and sequence of topics and skills and integration of content areas, and provides evidence of alignment with learning standards of state (e.g. Illinois Learning Standards) and professional agencies or

organizations (e.g. NAAEE).

Agenda Topics

In an effort to create a purpose and mission for the committee, along with the understanding of the goals set forth on this committee from the strategic plan, these agenda items were created.

1. Motion to Approve Open Session Minutes: 6/22/2009
 - A. Proposed definition of integrated curriculum
 - B. In reference to minutes of 5/18 clarification - which grades and which subjects the Theory of Evolution and Natural Selection will be taught according to Illinois State Standards.
 - C. Steps needed to confirm - Service Learning / Environmental Outline
 - D. Straw Dog - Decision-making process

Discussion Highlights

Discussion led to the following definition of integrated curriculum:

Proposed definition of integrated curriculum

Our environmental integrated curriculum breaks down traditional barriers between subjects and makes learning more meaningful to students. We teach around environmental themes with which our students can identify. This permits interrelationships and interactions with the knowledge and skills from all content areas.

The committee will vote on this definition at the next meeting.

In reference to minutes of 5/18 clarification - which grades and which subjects the Theory of Evolution and Natural Selection will be taught according to Illinois State Standards.

Cindy Hooten asked for the 5/18/09 minutes to be adjusted. She was not at the June meeting in which the minutes were approved. Barb Provost will prepare the adjustment for approval at the next meeting.

The Illinois State Standards include both science standards (12.A.3a, 12.A.3b, and 12.A.3c) and social science standards for the teaching of the theory of evolution in Middle/Junior High School.

At PCCS, the theory of evolution's explanation of the origin of man is not taught prior to the 5/6th curriculum. The Bones and Stones books are used. These materials are from the National Academy of Sciences. Other grades touch on the theory of evolution regarding geology.

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Principal: Brian Greene

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Steps needed to confirm - Service Learning/ Environmental Outline

The Service Learning document is intended to educate teachers regarding methodology.

The Environmental Outline highlights seven major themes of environmental education: Energy, Matter/Cycling of Materials, Interrelationships, Change, Sense of Place, Choices and Sustainability, Skills and Technology. Ms. Dulin will identify grades in which those themes are addressed.

Straw Dog - Decision-making process

The EAPac committee will be made aware of any programming changes of the curriculum prior to going to the Board. The principal will make decisions on changes of means and methods that occur in the classrooms.

Decisions Made

No formal decisions were made at this meeting.

Next Steps

- ✓ Establish goals/criteria to measure curriculum that comes to the committee
- ✓ Integrated curriculum definition
- ✓ Approve discussed changes to the 5/18 meeting minutes

Next meeting date is September 28th at 6:00 pm.

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How the work of this committee supports the Mission and Values of PCCS

<p>Mission Prairie Crossing Charter School is a public school that transforms our children through academic discovery and interaction with our unique natural, ecological, and community resources.</p>	
<p>Value Statements</p>	
<p><i>Environmental Stewardship:</i> We respect the Earth and conserve, protect and restore the natural environment.</p>	<p>This value is met by validating the integration of environmental stewardship into the curriculum at all grades.</p>
<p><i>Ecological Understanding:</i> We believe the natural environment provides a fertile ground for creativity, wonder, inquiry and integrated learning across academic disciplines.</p>	<p>This value is met by validating the integration of ecological understanding into the curriculum at all grades.</p>
<p><i>Academic Rigor and Innovation:</i> We use effective and innovative teaching practices that result in consistently high student achievement.</p>	<p>This value is met by validating that rigor and innovation is a part of the curriculum at all grades.</p>
<p><i>Partnering with Parents:</i> Parents are our children’s first teachers and their support and involvement strengthens our school.</p>	<p>This value is met by providing appropriate opportunities to have parents partner with the teachers and students in learning activities throughout the school.</p>
<p><i>Promote Personal Responsibility:</i> Our small school fosters an academic community where students, staff and parents are compassionate, just, caring and health conscious individuals.</p>	<p>This value is met by assuring the tenets of Tribes are inserted into activities and behaviors of the teachers and the students at all levels.</p>

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara Provost - Chair

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