

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Wednesday, January 4, 2012**

In attendance: Maria Martorana, Tammy MacKay, Jeanne Stifelman, Harry Ruiz, Maryann Spagnuolo, David Rosenblatt, Jennifer Fano, Lisa DiAgostino, Dr. Andrew Buchanan, Jennifer Cusmano-King, Michael Portas, Lynn Hughes, and members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

Education Committee: 12-7-11

Updates:

Kindergarten Screening

In April of 2011 the New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Education recently released “Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines”. Although kindergarten is not required under state law, Randolph does offer a half-day program consisting of two and a half hours of instruction accompanied by thirty minutes of art, physical education, library, or music each day. Children who are five on or before October 1st may register for the 2012 – 2013 school year. Each of our four elementary buildings hosts an initial registration week in February.

Randolph’s kindergarten program is just the beginning of the quality educational experience available to our students. As we continue to strive to prepare our students for the next stages of their educational career we aspire to find ways to strengthen our foundation. This year we will expand the opportunity to get to know our students before they enter the classroom on September 6, 2012 by screening each child individually.

In order to identify the appropriate screening tool, Randolph kindergarten teachers and administrators visited school districts, researched a variety of resources, and recommended the *Dial 3* screening tool. The *Dial 3* was used as a pilot at Fernbrook Elementary to screen all kindergarten students for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Fernbrook teachers screened more than 75 incoming kindergarten students in June and approximately 10 additional registrants in September.

Lisa Gross, Principal of Fernbrook School states, " We chose the *Dial 3* to find out where children are developmentally. This allows teachers to adjust their instructions to accommodate the many varied levels of students entering kindergarten. It also enables us to provide additional support where necessary."

A kindergarten screening is a brief assessment, usually lasting 20 – 30 minutes. Randolph Township elementary schools will use the screening protocol, *Dial 3* by Carol Mardell-Czudnowski & Dorothea S. Goldenberg, which is available in both English and Spanish.

The *Dial 3* assess the following domains:

- *Motor Area:* Gross Motor items include catching, jumping, hopping, and skipping. Fine Motor items include building with blocks, cutting, copying shapes and letters, and writing, and the popular finger-touching task from the DIAL-R.
- *Language Area:* Items include answering simple personal questions (name, age, sex), articulation, naming (expressive) or identifying (receptive) objects and actions, plus phonemic awareness tasks such as rhyming and I Spy.

- *Concepts Area:* Items include pointing to named body parts, naming or identifying colors, rote counting, counting blocks, placing a block in named positions relative to a little house, identifying concepts in a triad of pictures, and sorting shapes. The DIAL-3 includes an item that assesses automatic naming of colors. This skill has been shown to be associated with potential learning disabilities.
- *Self-Help Development:* Looks at the child's development of personal care skills related to dressing, eating, and grooming.
- *Social Development:* Looks at the child's development of social skills with other children and parents, including rule compliance, sharing, self-control, and empathy.

<http://www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/enus/Productdetail.htm?Pid=PAa13700>

Our reason for screening kindergarten students is to better understand the skills and abilities of each child. The information gained through the screening will exclusively be used to value the whole child and assist teachers in creating a class primed for diverse experiences.

Teacher training in the administration of the *Dial 3* and a screening schedule will be coordinated by Mrs. Cindy Mizelle, Vice Principal at Center Grove and Ironia. The initial round of screening will be scheduled in June and should take approximately 20 - 30 minutes. In order to make the most efficient use of our teachers, basic skills and rising reader teachers from across the district will work with kindergarten teachers to screen registered students in each elementary school. An additional screening day will be scheduled prior to the start of school to screen additional registrants.

Kindergarten Registration Information:

Children who are five on or before October 1, 2012 may register for the 2012 – 2013 school year. Each of our four elementary buildings conducts an initial registration week in February/March.

Ironia	February 6 – 10
Shongum	February 13 – 17
Center Grove	February 21 – 24
Fernbrook	February 27 – 29 and March 1 and 2

New Jersey Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines:

The New Jersey Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Education released the *New Jersey Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines* on April 1, 2011. As the document states, these guidelines were developed in response to many questions about developmentally appropriate kindergarten practices in the 21st Century.

The 101 page document is divided into three sections and begins by reviewing child development, followed by such things as learning through play, kindergarten teaching practices, assessments, support for students, professional development, health, safety, and nutrition. The document closes with a snapshot of a full day in kindergarten.

To access the complete PDF visit this site:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/guide/KindergartenGuidelines.pdf>

Curriculum Forum:

- NEW:** The Holocaust, Genocide, and Modern Humanity, Honors – Grades 11 and 12
Dr. A. Buchanan and L. DiAgostino
- NEW:** Women in Literature – Grades 11 and 12
B. Valvano and M. Portas
- NEW:** Athletics in Literature – Grades 11 and 12
S. Gutwerk and M. Portas
- NEW:** Science Fiction and Fantasy – Grades 11 and 12
Science Fiction and Fantasy – Honors – Grades 11 and 12
L. Hughes and M. Portas
- New:** Study of Film - – Grades 11 and 12
M. Portas

Jennifer Cusmano-King, Science Supervisor, presented two additional new courses for the middle school cycles. **Web 2.0** was proposed as an eighth grade double cycle course (12 weeks) and **Technological Literacy** was proposed as a sixth grade cycle course (6 weeks). Both proposals were developed to redesign the technology offerings at the middle school and better meet student needs. The grade six offering would be a part of every incoming sixth grader's schedule and would assess mastery of the state standards. The eighth grade offering would be an optional cycle. Neither proposal required additional personnel, textbooks, or supplies.

The committee members asked Mrs. Cusmano-King to consider expanding the sixth grade offering beyond a six-week cycle. The committee also requested Mrs. Cusmano-King to consider a cycle course offering at the seventh grade level. Mrs. Cusmano-King will discuss building space and scheduling issues with Ms. Strowbridge, RMS Principal, and report her recommendations at the February Education Committee meeting.

Motions and Related Matters

A committee will be convened to review and recommend changes to the elementary report cards. Ironia principal, Dr. Dennis Copeland and Shongum principal, Mrs. Laura Hernandez will lead the new elementary report card committee. Participants from previous elementary grading committees will be invited to be involved and this committee will begin with a meeting scheduled for January 25, 2012 at 3:30 PM.

The time line for final recommendations will be later this spring with a new report card created in Genesis and ready for November 2012.

*The next Education Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2012
7:00 PM, Central Office Conference Room*