Concord School District
Instructional Committee minutes

Date: May 15, 2013

Committee members present: Jennifer Patterson, Chair, Tom Croteau
Committee members absent: Barb Higgins, Clint Cogswell
Other Board member present: Kass Ardinger
Administrators present: Chris Rath, Superintendent; Donna Palley, Assistant Superintendent

Committee Chair Jennifer Patterson opened the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley gave an overview of the Common Core standards, developed by The Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. Ms. Palley reviewed the mission of these standards, to enable all students to be college- and career-ready.

Following are the most important principles of the new Common Core standards:

In Language Arts:
- The balance of informational and literary text
- Building knowledge in the disciplines, e.g. reading primary documents, writing like scientists and social scientists
- Growing toward complex text
- Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text
- Developing an academic vocabulary

In Math:
- Focus on few topics
- Deeper understanding of concepts and skills
- Coherence in the K – 12 progression
- Real world application
- Fluency – quick and accurate at each grade level
- Dual intensity: learning both basics and real world processing (fluency and application)

Ms. Palley provided an overview of the work in the District over the last several years to prepare to make the transition to the Common Core standards. This included
professional development for all teachers from preschool through middle school. Training for high school teachers will be provided in fall 2013.

Assessment

A new assessment produced by the Smarter Balanced Consortium will be a computer-adaptive measure. The last NECAP assessment will be given in fall 2013, and the Smarter Balanced assessment will be given for the first time in spring 2015.

In response to a question from a Board member about the District’s readiness for computerized assessment, Ms. Palley explained that Director of Information Technology Matt Ballou and others have been planning for technology requirements in the budget process.

Ms. Palley described the development of a new writing assessment that was aligned with the Common Core for Kindergarten to grade 9. For example, Kindergarteners through grade 2 students wrote informational text, based on what was read to them.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, Instructional Committee Chair
Chris Rath, Recorder