



Curriculum Committee Minutes

Location: Board Room

Date: 1/3/2024

Time: 5:00 p.m.

I. Call to order

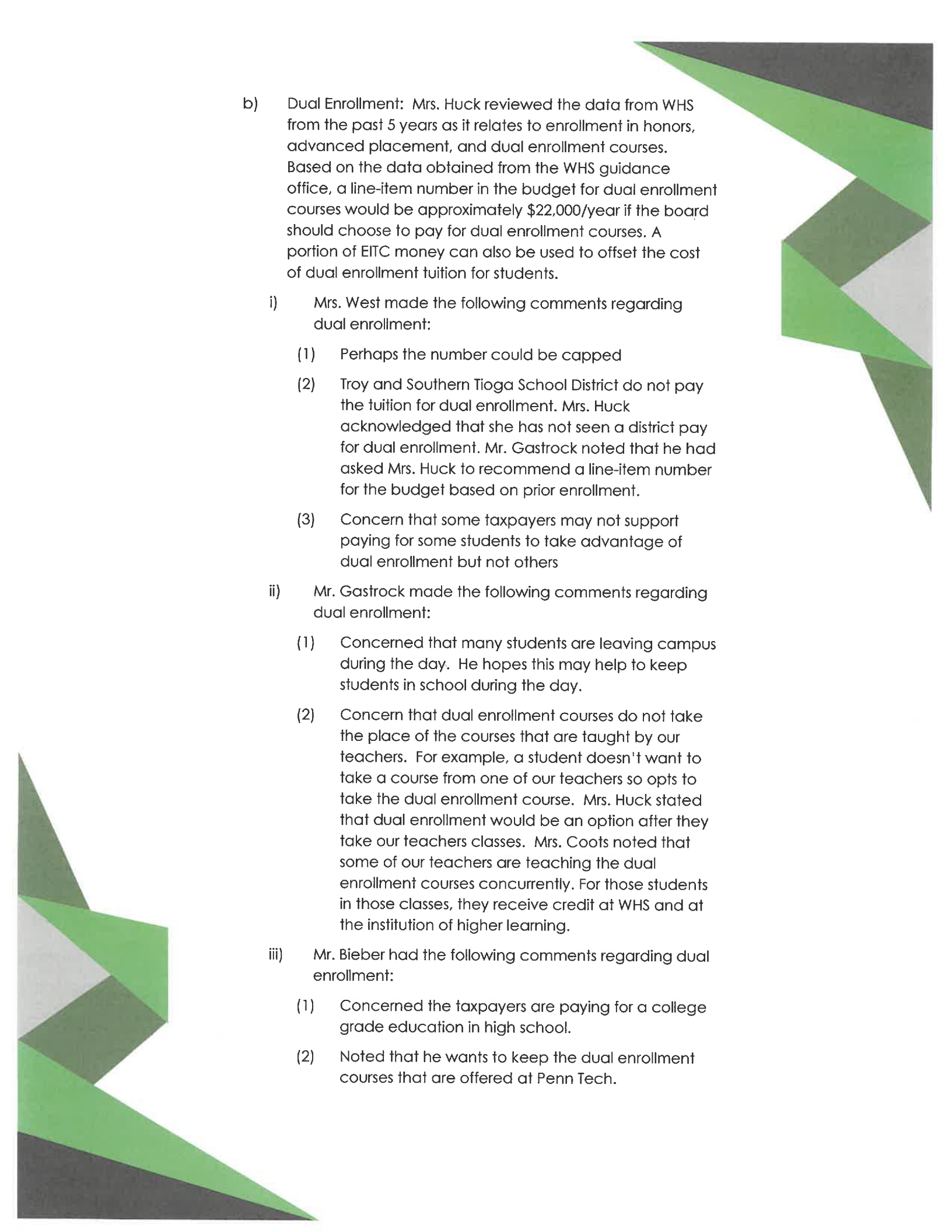
Chris Gastrock called to order the regular meeting of the Curriculum Committee Meeting at 5:00 p.m. on January 3, 2024 in the board room.

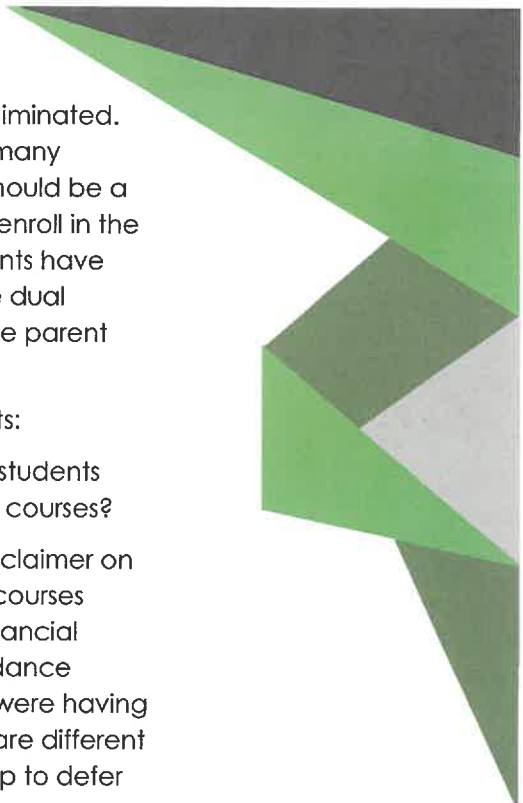
II. Attendance

Attendee Names: Chris Gastrock, Maegan McConnell, Al Bieber, Linda West, Karen Farrer, Amy Coots, Steve Adams, Ben Miller, Jeremy Byrd, Rob Kreger, Bryce Bitner, Courteney Russell, Alanna Huck, Dave Messineo, Peyton McClure, Tracy Doughtie

III. Old Business

- a) **Weighted Grades:** Mrs. Huck began the discussion by reviewing the presentation from November 7th, 2023 work session. The presentation has been updated with additional information, specifically to dual enrollment. The Powerpoint can be found at <https://www.wellsborosd.org/o/wasd/page/curriculum-committee>. Mrs. Huck acknowledged that most colleges take the grades of applicants and use their own weighting system, however, WHS students may be missing out on scholarships as students in our district are not on a weighted scale as the neighboring school districts. Mrs. West noted that STSD only weights the grades of dual enrollment courses that are taught by their district teachers. Mrs. Coots noted that is a local decision and school districts handle it differently depending on the board. Mr. Gastrock talked about wanting all students to be on a level playing field.

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- b) Dual Enrollment: Mrs. Huck reviewed the data from WHS from the past 5 years as it relates to enrollment in honors, advanced placement, and dual enrollment courses. Based on the data obtained from the WHS guidance office, a line-item number in the budget for dual enrollment courses would be approximately \$22,000/year if the board should choose to pay for dual enrollment courses. A portion of EITC money can also be used to offset the cost of dual enrollment tuition for students.
- i) Mrs. West made the following comments regarding dual enrollment:
- (1) Perhaps the number could be capped
 - (2) Troy and Southern Tioga School District do not pay the tuition for dual enrollment. Mrs. Huck acknowledged that she has not seen a district pay for dual enrollment. Mr. Gastrock noted that he had asked Mrs. Huck to recommend a line-item number for the budget based on prior enrollment.
 - (3) Concern that some taxpayers may not support paying for some students to take advantage of dual enrollment but not others
- ii) Mr. Gastrock made the following comments regarding dual enrollment:
- (1) Concerned that many students are leaving campus during the day. He hopes this may help to keep students in school during the day.
 - (2) Concern that dual enrollment courses do not take the place of the courses that are taught by our teachers. For example, a student doesn't want to take a course from one of our teachers so opts to take the dual enrollment course. Mrs. Huck stated that dual enrollment would be an option after they take our teachers classes. Mrs. Coots noted that some of our teachers are teaching the dual enrollment courses concurrently. For those students in those classes, they receive credit at WHS and at the institution of higher learning.
- iii) Mr. Bieber had the following comments regarding dual enrollment:
- (1) Concerned the taxpayers are paying for a college grade education in high school.
 - (2) Noted that he wants to keep the dual enrollment courses that are offered at Penn Tech.

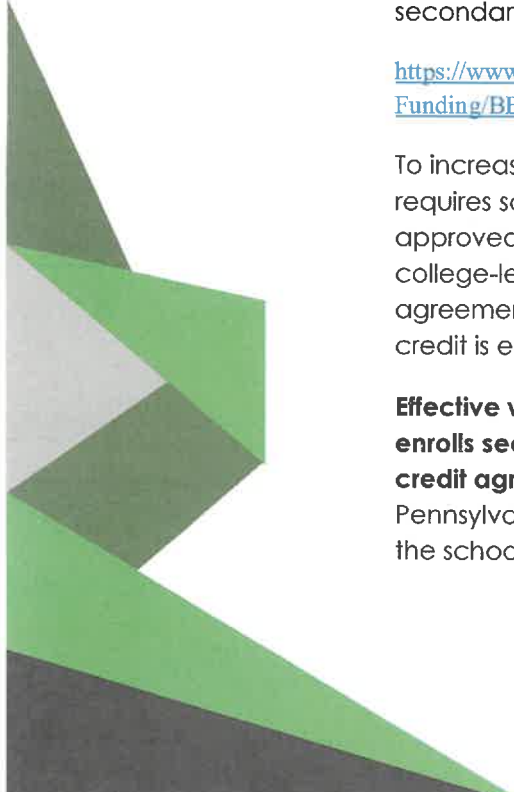
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- (3) Noted that dual enrollment should be eliminated. Mrs. Huck noted that we already have many students taking advantage of it and it should be a parent's choice as to whether students enroll in the courses. She also noted that many parents have stated they have no issue paying for the dual enrollment courses as it is a savings to the parent when the child goes to college.
 - iv) Mrs. McConnell had the following comments:
 - (1) She asked how much of an issue it is for students that cannot pay for the dual enrollment courses?
 - (2) She asked if the district could have a disclaimer on the dual enrollment courses like the AP courses which states that if a student has any financial issues paying for AP, please see the guidance office. Mrs. Huck noted that if students were having a hard time paying, she was sure there are different entities in our community that would help to defer the cost for students.
 - (3) Mrs. Coots noted that Pennsylvania requires schools to enter into agreements for dual enrollment. The following information is from the PA Department of Education as it relates to Mrs. Coots' comments:

Background and Guidelines **Effective with the 2022-23** school year, Pennsylvania law (24 P.S. § 15-1525) requires school entities to enter into agreements with IHEs approved to operate in Pennsylvania to allow students to earn college-level credit prior to graduating high school. These agreements are referred to as dual credit agreements because credit is earned at both the secondary school and the IHE.

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Purdons/Pages/DualCreditAgreements.aspx>

To increase access to dual credit coursework, Pennsylvania law requires school entities to enter into agreements with IHEs approved to operate in Pennsylvania to allow students to earn college-level credit prior to graduating high school. These agreements are referred to as dual credit agreements because credit is earned at both the secondary school and the IHE.

Effective with the 2022-2023 school year, a school entity that enrolls secondary students must enter into at least one dual credit agreement with an IHE approved to operate in Pennsylvania to allow students to attend the IHE while enrolled in the school entity. A school entity may have agreements with



more than one IHE; IHEs may have agreements with more than one school entity.

A school entity must weight credits earned through the agreement in a manner similar to Advanced Placement (AP) Program, International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program or Cambridge advanced courses in the school entity's grading system, including both academic and technical courses. Course weighting is determined locally by school entities.

School entities are required to submit to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) information pertaining to dual credit agreements and student participation no later than July 31, 2023, and each school year thereafter.


When possible, dual credit courses are aligned to the [student's graduation requirements](#), the requirements of a career and technical education (CTE) program offered by the student's secondary school, or a career pathway offered by the student's school.

Research indicates that students who participate in college-level coursework dual credit opportunities during high school tend to remain in college (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Dual credit students tend to transition to college better than students who do not participate in college courses during their time in high school. By providing a pathway for students to move seamlessly between K-12 and college.

- c) Course Proposal – Recent US History: Mr. Bitner spoke about the reason he would like to have this course included in his schedule. He and Miss Russell spoke to the challenge of getting in all of the information in World and American History. There is so much content that it is hard to pick and choose what is important. Mrs. Huck felt the information that Mr. Bitner would like to put in the course is something that all students need to learn; not just those who want to take the elective. Mr. Bitner noted that you cannot teach all of US History in one year. Miss Russell noted she does not get enough time to teach about other civilizations in world history. Mr. Kreger noted the history department topics were revamped many years ago when there was talk by the state of having history as a tested subject.

IV. New business

- a) K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Topics/Courses: The building principals presented an overview of the social studies curriculum in each of their buildings.

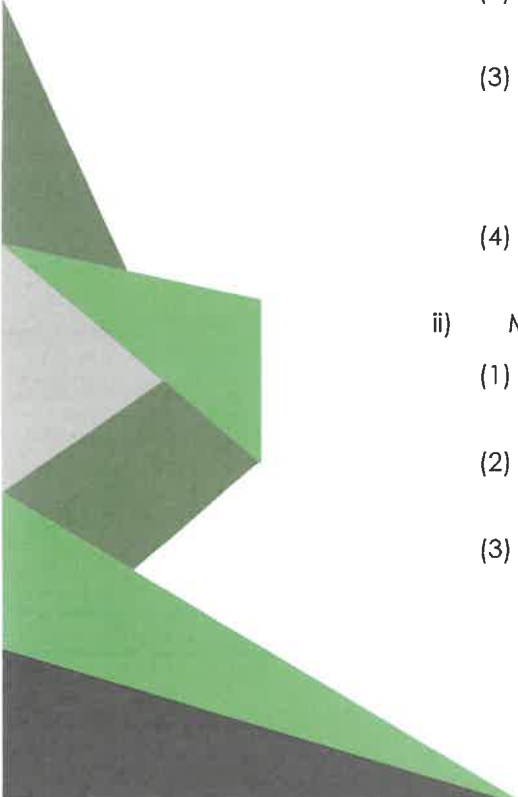
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- i) Mr. Adams:
 - (1) K and 1: The Pledge, communities, maps, respect and a focus on Veterans Day.
 - (2) 2nd Grade: National Holidays, Colonial Days, Local History, US Flag
 - (3) 3rd Grade: Pilgrims, Native Americans, Oceans/Continents, Local/State/Federal Elections
 - (4) 4th Grade: PA History; Local Community Members such as fireman and police. Field trips for local history

- ii) Mr. Kreger:
 - (1) Please see Grades 5 – 8 course descriptions at the end of these minutes.
 - (2) Dr. Miller noted that students have talked about the Constitution several times before getting to HS. He noted there is so much to cover in social studies that students are getting a little bit of everything prior to getting to the HS.

- iii) Mr. Byrd:
 - (1) Please see the pages from the course guide at the end of these minutes.

b) Open Items for Discussion

- i) The following comments were made by Mr. Gastrock:
 - (1) Asked for teachers to come to the meetings to share their input.
 - (2) Asked for a list of courses that may not be needed based on enrollment.
 - (3) Wanted to ensure that if weighted grades become a reality, that it is phased out over time as not to hurt those students who started under the current valedictorian/salutatorian track.
 - (4) Inquired about having students have the option to have weighted grades on their transcript.

- ii) Mrs. West had the following comments:
 - (1) Asked if the guidance counselors can be present at the next curriculum meeting.
 - (2) Would like to hear from each department on what is working and what is not working.
 - (3) Would like to see the criteria for all of the current scholarships.
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c) Public Comment

i) Mr. Messineo had the following comments:

- (1) He asked the board to consider the cost of dual enrollment for all students as .00089% of the budget.
- (2) He noted the difference between civics and politics
- (3) Asked the board to help get kids to their dreams.

ii) Mrs. Doughtie had the following comments:

- (1) She noted that scholarship entities do not re-weight students' grades. She is aware of some WHS students who missed out on scholarships due to WHS not having weighted grades.
- (2) Offered support for a 4th Social Studies teacher.
- (3) Asked the board to consider teaching courses with a low enrollment as some of the courses are needed by students.
- (4) Inquired as to whether or not students could have their grades weighted or unweighted when sending a transcript to a college or a scholarship entity.
- (5) She also asked the board if we could do a better job getting graduate input.

iii) Peyton McClure (Class of 2023)

- (1) Offered the idea of the social studies credits moving from 1 to 1.5 credits to have more time to teach content.
- (2) Offered that he does not feel we need labs but what we do need is the time in classes to be better utilized. Teach the core classes well.

Chris Gastrock adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Alanna R. Huck