

**BERLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Curriculum Committee Meeting**  
**December 9, 2019**  
**MINUTES**

Attendance: Mr. Richard Aroian, Chair  
Mrs. Jaymee Miller  
Mr. Timothy Oakes

Also in Attendance: Dr. Erin McGurk, Assistant Superintendent (arrived 5:10 p.m.)  
Mrs. Eileen Eustis, Berlin High School Principal

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m., in the Flagship Conference Room at Berlin High School

II. Berlin High School Program of Studies- Honors Challenge

Mrs. Eustis presented an update on the Honors Challenge proposal for the Berlin High School Program of Studies. The Honors Challenge is offered for select courses in our elective areas that are heterogeneously grouped. This opportunity is available to students who have a strong desire to strengthen their depth of knowledge and development of skills in a given course. Students will have options to take on more complex, in-depth exploration of course material through a variety of assignments or assessments, independent projects, co-curricular, or experiential activities. Honors Challenge expectations are developed by each elective department for designated courses.

Mrs. Eustis discussed the ways in which this proposal aligns with the Berlin BOE Core Values, with the BPS District Continuous Improvement Plan, and with CSDE Graduation Requirements. She further explained how this proposal addresses the imbalance of the number of advanced or honors opportunities offered in our electives departments in comparison to the core areas as noted below.

	Total Courses	AP/ECE/Honors/ Advanced	College Prep/ Standard
Core Departments (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, PE/Health, World Language)	90	29	61
Elective Departments	73	8	65

The Honors Challenge approach is designed to promote rigorous college and career-ready personalized learning pathways in our career and technical pathways, expand the opportunity for

complexity and depth for our career and technical pathways, and provide consistent access to and participation in alternative learning opportunities for all students across all pathways.

Mrs. Eustis shared an updated Honors Challenge learning contract, showing how learning activities and assessments would be aligned with appropriate content standards. During the spring of 2020, the following steps will be taken to prepare for the launch of this model:

- Universal Honors Challenge Guidelines and contracts will be developed by the spring of 2020
- Consultation with Heidi Hayes Jacobs in developing learning opportunities
- Guidelines and contracts will be reviewed by department coordinators and administration
- A system for evaluating the pilot of the Honors Challenge will also be developed by June of 2020

In response to concerns raised about the scale of this rollout, Mrs. Eustis shared a list of the courses that will be designated for Honors Challenge in the fall of 2020. This list now represents just two courses per department

*Art:*

Digital Art II

Drawing II

*Business:*

Communications (formerly a CCP course)

Marketing II

*Family and Consumer Sciences:*

Baking and Pastry Arts II

Culinary Arts II

*Music and Theatre Arts:*

Concert Band II

Bella Voce

*Technology Education:*

Video Game Design II

Woods and Manufacturing II

The committee further discussed logistics of course enrollment, identification of students who elect to participate in the Honors Challenge, and issues related to equity. Committee members expressed support for the proposal, given the revisions presented, and recommended moving the proposal forward to the full Board for consideration.

III. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin K. McGurk, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction