

# MINUTES

## Curriculum Committee Meeting October 28, 2020

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### In Attendance

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C. Arrington, B. Beilfuss, C. Berrini, R. Bishop, M. Brown, W. Brown, C. Covington, L. Cruz, N. Cunningham, R. Duran, J. Durkin, K. Fair, B. Fickes, V. Franco, C. Friedl, M. Gonzalez, N. Graham, D. Gray, J. Hines, A. Holmes, D. Holmes, K. Hodges, T. Horton, S. Jones, V. Jones, J. Lewis, W. Mendenhall, J. Merwald, J. Mitchell, J. Moore, T. O'Quin, R. Penman, L. Pietraszewski, T. Porter, W. Russell, R. Sieber, J. Steward, C. Surina, N. Tarala, M. Vrehas, K. West, T. Whitaker, A. Whittington, E. Williams, F. Williams

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### "Z-Marts" Thornton Township Food Pantry Proposal presented by Brett Fickes and Troy O'Quin

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The communities of Harvey, Dolton, Dixmoor and Riverdale and being targeted by the Chicago Food Pantry Network to provide addition access for our community members who could use additional support providing food for their families. Thornton and Thornridge have been identified as possible locations for these food pantries called "Z-marts". It would allow families to come into a safe and clean environment to select the food they are receiving once a month, rather than receiving a pre-packaged box of food. It will be open once a week on a Saturday (rather than once a month) and will be stocked by the Thornton Township Food Pantry providing easy access to local families while granting them a higher level of respect and dignity. It would also allow families to choose foods that might fit their dietary needs better (ex. foods lower in cholesterol). This could also allow students in the Entrepreneur classes to be a part of effort, learning the skill set of owning/operating a grocery store (including product rotation, shelf-display, etc.). The idea is to partner with Walt's Food Service to work with South Suburban College to design a curriculum or certification training. A grant is being written to secure some funding for the project since it is in the planning stages, though not the full amount, covering about half of the cost to build both locations. The Township is working on what other funds can be leveraged. The square footing of the spaces used is minimal, though ADA accessible restrooms would need to be built in as part of the location. The space used at Thornridge 513 sq. feet will be near the security office in the E wing, connecting to the space that connects to the ISS room. The price to convert the space would be approximately \$185,000 and that is to put the cooling, shelving, ADA accessible doorways, etc. At Thornton, the space to be used will be part of the OT building (across the street west of the gymnasium), which is 558 sq. ft., costing approximately \$190,000 to build.

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### Polished Pebbles presented by Kelly Fair

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Polished Pebbles is a female mentoring program. The group is a Chicago based organization that has been around for 11 years serving over 5,000 girls. They focus on girls being great communicators at home, school and the future workplace. Polished Pebbles has worked with Illinois State Board of Ed, the city of Chicago, public housing communities, charter schools, the Cook County Justice Advisory Council, as well as with district 147 and 152. The focus is on the whole community and to form partnerships. A grant that was won a week ago is an opportunity to pilot some of the initiatives and build community. It would start in the district right away, and is equipped to work in person as well as virtually, continuing to October 2021. The program would provide girls with a baseline competency that they need to succeed. Topics such as peer pressure, dressing for success, healthy relationships, and social media are also discussed. Girls would be able to job shadow through established partnerships. They would fit in before, during and after school to have the

students participate and engage. There is also the Polished Pebbles Mommy and Me initiative (proving 15 mother and daughter pairs summer sessions to work on a task or skill/project, while giving a stipend paying the mother/daughter pair. The grant would also allow for a piloted two-week work-study program that would compensate the girls for their work.

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### Male Mogul presented by Walter Mendenhall

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Male Mogul is a male mentoring program. The mission is to positively transform the way young men live and lead their communities through leadership and entrepreneurship development. The program follows a four-pillar approach: character development, academic excellence, workforce enhancement and community empowerment. There is a three-phase program. The first phase is a 16-week program that goes into the schools to teach a leadership class. The program has shown an increase in GPA, and decrease in suspensions, behaviors and absences. The second phase is done after school when the young men's ideas are turned into products and or businesses. The classroom sessions are usually between 15-20 young men. It would cost \$25,000 for a 16 week course, but is a full year program. It is possible to run the program after school to not take up class time during the school day.

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### A Few Good Men presented by Danny Gray

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A Few Good Men is a male mentoring program ran at Thornwood High School that has had over 250 boys over the last 10 years that has run. There is great alumni support that gives the boys the opportunity to discuss topics including depression, careers after high school, college, etc. The focuses of the group are brotherhood, academic achievement, community service and character building. It would be a great opportunity to expand the program and up to the other schools.

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### Open Forum and Questions

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Christyana Arrington is the Student Board Curriculum Committee Chair who will be joining the committee this year.

Over the summer Mary Tina Vrehas, a teacher at Thornridge High School, partnered with Abundant Living Christian Center and is piloting a place to provide students a safe place to go allowing 10 kids at a time from 2-5 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays, providing students with any tutoring or social/emotional help that they need until we get back to school, called a Peace Pod. The ultimate goal is to establish many safe spaces in the community where students can go for assistance. The program is free of charge.

Curriculum is in Atlas Rubicon and is live on the district website so parents and students can see it.