

ENSURING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES- Monday January 27, 2014

6:30-8:00 PM, S112

Mission Statement of Committee:

Our committee is a community of parents, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders whose purpose is to advise the BOE on issues of academic excellence and serve as an advisory group to the TH BOE and School administrators on the issues of academic excellence.

Attendance: Matt Fuller, Angel Rubet, Sandra Gardner, Rob Breen, Cybil Howard, Kim Chirichella, Sally Williamson, Jill Gellert 6:40, Jeannie Altshuler 6:40, Sarah Williamson (~7:15)

Noted doors were an issue, will move meeting to Vet's Community Room

- Explain/Assign roles and responsibilities (recorder- timekeeper- facilitator- , these roles will change each meeting, review previous minutes (5 min.)

Timekeeper: Sally

Recorder: Kim

Facilitator: Rob

- Angel Rubet Reviewed group norms and protocols- (5 min.)
 - Norms that are essential to accomplishing our goal...
 - Show respect for all thoughts with kindness
 - Remain open minded
 - One person speaks at a time
 - Use the facilitator to monitor conversation flow
 - Protocols- the way information will be shared, how decisions are made...
 - Welcoming- attendance, continue open meeting notification, encourage new membership, take 5-10 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to review past discussions, post meeting minutes on website
 - Commenting- use written and verbal communication as appropriate to collect information, use round table format first to make sure everyone is heard, raise hands for follow-up discussion, use facilitator to monitor conversation flow, facilitator will change each time
 - Consensus- we work for the good of the order, informative efforts rather than opinionated, make series of recommendations, using pros/cons, at times may need to compromise using the majority vote system- last level
 - Parking lot- use sticky notes to come back to later, these issues will be put on future agendas for discussion, facilitator will assist in monitoring
 - Conflict resolution- pros/cons with no decision
 - Conflict of interest- everyone is welcome to attend and any member should recuse themselves or abstain from voting should a conflict of interest arise, trust individuals to make the right choice (added from last meeting)

- Norms reminder- facilitator will gently remind
- Discussion of request to speak at Policy Committee concerning weighted grades and February BOE meeting, Sandra will take lead on Policy, Angel will take lead on BOE
- Updates to committee from sub-committees
 - Weighted Grades (40 min)-
 - Sub-committee members spoke first, Rob was not committed at first found later strong opinions from his own child, not a factor for colleges, felt over all good idea for weighted grades, Jeannie did not know at first, GPA in favor, Kim shared articles and summarized, Angel full agrees with weighted grades, we have them or don't only on AP classes, honor classes, change later on, fairness, equity comes from school, rewarded, retroactive? College classes? Rec to policy committee
 - Sandra share counselor statement from Kim Carlo I brought the weighting grades concern to Marie, Jim, and Donna today during our weekly meeting. We have looked at previous classes and feel that the students in the top of the classes are taking the more rigorous courses. Colleges ask high schools how we compute our GPA and Rank so that they can undo our formulas and use their own. If however there is a push to continue and begin weighting, we ask that it be done is a gradual process beginning with next year's incoming 9th grade.
 - Discussion on how to implement, when continued
 - AP? College? Honors? What are we talking about
 - Whole new programs, AP, colleges accept only their school's anyways
 - Jumping grade- changes Valedictorian, graduations, how benefits our students, long term research AP verses acceleration
 - Sandra explained levels of courses, varieties, wide range of rigor, offerings SUNY Albany, Co-Gr, I.e. Science Topics verses Chemistry
 - Question Accelerated verses AP
 - Sandra explained acceleration and AP
 - Discussion re ½ day
 - Advanced classes have no limitations
 - Not required to take the AP exam, district does not pay for it
 - Sandra clarified that you are able to take the AP exam without taking the course
 - More discussion on AP and rigor of AP credits, more prepared taking higher level classes
 - Sandra asked for a wrap up statement for Feb 4th
 - We have to figure out what we are after GPA, rank, weighting
 - Discussion to start somewhere with AP, start setting precedents, with current Sr class
 - Purpose- for the school raise the standard
 - In favor of some type of weighting, start with something, for the purpose of students here at TH to show importance
 - Favor a slow start, sophomore class

- Not in consensus with just AP, look at what is offered, who takes it, numbers, details I.e. AP/New Visions, rigor not only AP
 - Sandra summarized discussion- As a group we favor weighted grades to raise standards, continue to study/gather data and make a thoughtful recommendation
 - Questions regarding policy committee- two readings, only make recommendations to, impact for fall questionable at this point
 - Sandra re-summarizes- favor weighted grades, collection of additional data for more recommendations, ask Sandra for data if you would like it,
 - Bd policy would need more details but would be for them to work out
 - Sandra will provide policy committee with our consensus statement and we will continue to work on project
- Grading and Homework Policies (20 min)- Cybil chair of this sub-committee
 - Reviewed documents sent by committee grading policies 6-12
 - Broke up report-weight of grades, mid-term, final, regents-standardize and balance grading & homework
 - Scrutiny regarding academics, teachers and administrators
 - Homework policy-student evaluation, weighted grades
 - Calibration- mid-terms/finals equal the playing field, easy action step to recommend course outline webpage, parent engagement, all teachers upload course outline
 - Next time Marie/Sandra will answer questions about exemptions of final exams, not use one examination in a regents course
- Web page usage (5 min)- update on recent training
 - Summary of recent training during December SCD was given by Sandra- Google webpages
- Self-esteem- continue to table
- Marie will update us on the college prep process 9-12 (10 min)
 - Marie's email was reviewed that outlined the process and the counselor webpage was noted
- Wrap up and sent next meeting date and agenda (5 min)
 - Feb 25th 6:30 p.m.
 - Agenda will continue discussions from tonight