

ENSURING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES - Monday May 19, 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: Sandra Gardner, Jill Gellert, Jeannie Altschuler, Matt Fuller, John Dodds, Sally Williamson, Rob Breen, Cybil Howard

- Explain/Assign roles and responsibilities (recorder- timekeeper- facilitator- , these roles will change each meeting, review previous minutes (2 min.)
  
- Review group norms and protocols- (3 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 flowProtocols- 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

- Update on Report Card Committee Elementary School (5 min)- John and Sandra
  - Meeting regularly with Mr. Gulisane. He has received input from most grade levels about the Fairport CSD report card model. This will convert our current system to align with the Common Core Learning Standards. We use SchoolTool for our report card. We may move to a different vendor and are looking at e-Doctrina. Cybil added that they discussed how to convert homework and other grades to a 1-4 system. This is not being done with consistency. Matt added that he wondered what is happening with Science and Social Studies on the report card. Cybil mentioned that some teachers want the section removed, others want to retain it. Sandra will take this back to the committee.
  
- Update on Summer Enrichment Program (5 min)
  - Registration is open for the new format of programming. The elementary school has e-mailed the information to parents, but it has not gone out to the junior/senior high school parents yet.
  
- Updates to committee from sub-committees
  - Weighted Grades (20 min)- Sub-committee members
    - ✓ Continue discussion on viewpoints and research compiled by sub-committee members
      - Jeanie and Rob presented the information from the subgroup. Kim sent along some other information. Sandra indicated that the subcommittee met but could not come to consensus. See handout from Jeanie. There was discussion about the information. Sandra presented Kim's research for the group to review. There was discussion about the number of students who take AP versus college courses at Taconic Hills. Jill brought up honors courses. She believes the idea that a course doesn't have an instructor should be addressed. Students in these classes do a lot of extra work independently. Jill feels these courses should be weighted. Cybil asked what our goal is: to encourage students to take more rigorous courses or to reward students who have by acknowledging it through class rank. Matt brought up student effort vs. evaluation. Sandra asked if the committee is satisfied to move forward by presenting this information. Jill expressed concern that if Honors courses are not going to be weighted then they should not be offered because students will be penalized by admissions officers if Honors courses are offered but the students may not have taken it. Sandra will include that information for the committee.
  - Grading and Homework Policies (20 min)- Sub-committee members
    - ✓ Review of elementary survey results
      - Jill, Cybil and Sally have information to share with the committee. Jill summarized what the subgroup has been working on for the last month or so surveying the elementary and jr./sr. high school faculty members. See handout and survey data. There was discussion about the Observations and Recommendations from the subgroup. There are two example policies to share with the district policy

committee and would like to move these recommendations forward. Sandra asked the subcommittee if they would like to take on Parent Involvement as a next topic.

- Self-esteem (20 min)- Sub-committee members
  - ✓ Review of meeting and next steps identified
    - Matt discussed the work of this subcommittee. They would like to arrange some guest speakers and experiences for students to explore careers. There was also discussion about bringing back the Olweus Anti-Bullying program. We are very focused on core academics. We should also focus on helping students develop soft skills like having conversations with others. Sandra also mentioned that her action item is to follow up with the elementary PTO and how they can help with a career development program in the elementary. Jeanie asked about how drug and alcohol education might fit it. Matt said that we have DARE in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, but isn't aware of how that would fit in with the Olweus program. Cybil suggested that they look at Student Council in the elementary and how it functions. She is concerned the kids don't understand how they should function in a student government.
- Review the attached Policy Committee documents and gather any input to provide them (10 min)
  - Matt brought up how report cards don't always get home to students. How will we make sure that happens? Cybil mentioned that at the last report card meeting, teachers talked about using an envelope system. Mr. Gulisane is going to help his staff use that system to help report cards get home. Regarding early identification and intervention, the policy says that services may include support services before school. That should be looked at. He also questioned the promotion and retention standards for the jr./sr. high school and it seems inconsistent with what we currently do. Cybil mentioned the policy indicates plans are required when retaining students. We should be sure the principals have reviewed this policy and have input.
- Wrap up and next meeting date June 16<sup>th</sup> and agenda (5 min)
  - Next month, we will discuss athletic and extra-curricular eligibility policies. Sandra will gather samples for review.
  - The weighted grades subcommittee members are going to disperse to other subcommittees at this time. The choices are self-esteem, student motivation, parent involvement, or athletic and extra-curricular eligibility.
  - Also on the agenda next month: elementary report card, update on summer enrichment, self-esteem, and eligibility
  - Sandra would also like for us to do an evaluation of our committee work next month.