

School Council Meeting
February 10, 2022

Meeting commenced at 4:33 pm

1) School Improvement Plan

Review of draft

Goal 1

Math

- Angie has discussed the math curriculum concerns raised at the last meeting with our Math Curriculum Coordinator.
- Included, based on last month's meeting, is "Identify and implement additional curriculum resources for the K-8 classroom that provide more engagement and practice for math fluency, *ongoing*"
- The current curriculum is deemed dry and greater engagement for students was suggested/requested.
- We are going to be adding AP classes for math and science through the STEM AP Access Expansion grant.
- Ann Mantil is an experienced math teacher and would love to take part in working on the math curriculum.

Science

- The Science Curriculum Coordinator is working on the Science goals indicated in the draft SIP.

Social Studies/History

- We will be looking to "Update curriculum units to meet the requirements of genocide education legislation, *fall 2022*" The update will most significantly impact the middle school curriculum.

World Language

- We have had French 1 through 3 classes; now we need to add French 4; we are looking to apply for grants and update standards based on proficiency-oriented outcomes.

Other goals in the SIP

- Angie mentioned several other goals that have been updated in the SIP
- Marco pointed out that one thing lacking in the Plan is the need for the science and math curriculum to be culturally responsive. Not a band-aid solution but implementation of focus areas of anti-racism and cultural sensitivity.
- Angie asked if this should go under a different goal, such as the school culture goal where the need to build an antiracist school culture is, or if it should be curriculum based and specific to math and science.
- Marco said math and science are particularly difficult for some BIPOC students.
- The language addition would only strengthen the cultural responsiveness; Angie asked Marco to draft some language that could be put into the curriculum goals.

- Ann noted that instead of goals being noted as “*ongoing*”, a deadline could be more motivational to actually get the goals implemented. Angie will bring that to the curriculum coordinators and ask them to narrow down the timeline where it is possible.

Goal 2

- Angie brought up progress reports for grades K-4.
- Some teachers/admins attended the NART conference this summer and there were strong points about equity in grading.
- Although the 5-12 progress reports are now online, with number grades, the K-4 progress reports are antiquated, burdensome for teachers, and don’t have the information parents are looking for.
- This is true in many schools. A lot of what Angie gets from her children’s school isn’t particularly helpful; she would like to create a mockup of what would be better to use here.
- We have an opportunity to create something from scratch and she is looking for ideas.
- Anne only has one child, in Kindergarten. Kindergarten has only a parent conference for the first trimester. She didn’t feel this gave her much information.
- More communication about what her child is learning and how her child is doing in school is what she’s looking for, as it’s going on.
- Angie explained that there was nothing in the first trimester to fill out regarding academics. She noted that at her children’s school, Kindergarten progress reports in their first trimester only note things about their social-emotional development, not academics. Maybe a report card that tells parents about progress in those areas?
- Ann has done report cards as a teacher, but feels that marks on a piece of paper are far less valuable than conversations (of more than 10 minutes) which would be far more beneficial. She would also like to see a sample of the child’s work that would help explain how the child is doing.
- One thing we’re going to try this semester is to include the DIBELS report with the progress report. These reports are very helpful to point out strengths and weaknesses in reading and include at-home suggestions for improvement where needed.
- At the moment there are no similar math assessments; Anne would like to see more of these kinds of reports going home to parents.
- Alisha has depended on traditional, old-fashioned report cards and feels there must be best practices for these among schools.
- These are standard-based report cards.
- One well-received comment was that the reports should be more about the narrative rather than just grades or marks.
- Alisha mentioned a school where teachers would be aware that although children may struggle in some areas, they also see the children’s “superpowers” That

information is shared with parents along with suggestions of how parents can encourage those superpowers at home, taking note of the child's real interests.

- Angie noted that there's a lot of variety in how comments look among teachers. She would like to see teachers get help in learning how best to work on the narratives parents would like to see.
- Alisha said she has learned from the comments that the teachers really know her kids and that's very encouraging to her.
- The school has bought copies of Joe Feldman's book; *Grading for Equity*. Angie explained some of the valuable points in the book.
- Marco also offered his opinion from going to the conference; what kind of experience and exposure each student has and where their abilities lie, assessing the whole student rather than grades based on where they started and where they end, not punishing them for what they didn't already know.
- Angie would like to have a PD with the author of the book but so far the school hasn't gotten a response.
- In grades 5-12 we will still use number grades for the time being and send letter grades to colleges, but we can learn to include more understanding of the students' progress, experience, etc.

Other SIP comments

- The family engagement part of the SIP has been put on pause due to the pandemic. The school will work on those benchmarks next year.
- The school is looking into finding a new social-emotional curriculum, which includes anti-bias training.
- The goals haven't changed but they have been tweaked to focus on helping students grow and maintain relationships.
- The Council was asked to think of things we could put in this piece to reach these benchmarks.
- Mary will come up with ideas on ways that students can have events that encourage relationships.
- Anne asked what role the PA could have in these efforts. She will brainstorm with the PA; Angie thinks the Covid numbers have decreased, so we may be able to do more of these events.
- We have experimented with a new way of having open houses for families, called "Talk to Us Tuesday". The past few Tuesdays we've brought in interested new families to have tours. Angie feels it's the best way we've ever done this; it gave families a truer idea of what the school is really like. It gave the families a real sense of who we are; they asked great questions, they got to see teachers teaching in real classes. Krista felt the families really enjoyed it, especially Project. Joe agreed they asked a lot of great questions; he thought it was far better than the way we used to do it: wandering through an empty building and not seeing students in actual classes. The experience has been very positive.
- Angie thinks newly admitted families could be given these kinds of tours to help them see what their children will be experiencing.

- Next week we'll work on the relationship goal. Angie will update the draft SIP and send it to everyone.
- Meeting adjourned at 5:23

Attendees:

Rowena Samuels

Anne Bell

Ann Mantil

Krista Cafourek

Jordan Alexandre

Angie Pepin

Alisha Uhlenbrock-Furst

Joe Kay

Marco Pedulli

Liz Sweeney

Aditi Suryawanshi