

School Council Meeting January 19, 2023

Meeting commenced at 4:32 pm

1) School Improvement Plan

a) What goals should we work on for next school year?

i) FIT (Focused Instructional Time)

- Looking for ways to improve FIT time across grades; Angie explained what FIT is.
- Jamie - there are some great ideas brewing at the high school with STEM
- Science and math teachers are looking for ways to introduce more content into FITs.
- Might try to roll it out for Quarter 3, if not, then Quarter 4.
- Also something for next year.
- This would help students with basic things such as using a calculator, order of operations and other essentials.
- Current freshmen or sophomores are the target groups wanting to obtain some basic skills.
- There are specific gaps they would like to fill, based on input from Science teachers.
- Karin came from a much differently structured high school and very much appreciates the SSCPS way of doing things.
- At the high school, as at K-8, there is a lot of remedial work being done. Mary also uses FIT time for junior and senior seminars as well as being a time to schedule things that don't fit elsewhere. Also enrichment.
- Mary believes that where it's currently placed in the high school schedule isn't working best; it would be nice to have it at the end of the day, to accommodate sports as well as studies when kids have homework accumulated.
- Angie agrees and they will take a look at the scheduling. There is an impact with specials, OT, Speech, etc. She does think it will be possible to put it at the end of the day.
- Angie read Rowena's submitted comments (she was unable to attend the meeting).
- 5-8 FIT, Jamie has increased the enrichment for STEM.
- The science dept has cooperated with this goal.
- They would like to keep it cohesive 5-12 so students aren't missing out on anything.
- On Level IV there is a financial literacy FIT, plus enrichment, coding, support, etc.
- The middle school needs to work on using the available data to create these groups; scheduling is the main issue. Teacher recommendations shouldn't be the only driving force.

- The question was asked if middle school students have the same thing every day. Angie responded that they have different FITs every day.
- Teacher requests are part of the process of choosing. One thing is the teachers work hard to make sure support FITs aren't the only thing students have, but do more enjoyable FITs as well. Looking for balance; it changes quarter to quarter and day to day. Scheduling can be difficult, to fit everything in.
- A PD day could be used to work on this scheduling.
- In grades K-4 it used to be that teachers by grade level would choose FITs. Intervention groups are happening, as they should. DIBELS results dictate a lot of that.
- There has to be balance between intervention and enrichment.
- There are two reading specialists and administrators running reading intervention in grades 1-4.
- This year, term 2 groups were created across classrooms. During Covid students were isolated by class.
- In Level II there are various groups based on need or enrichment.
- The implementation of the social emotional curriculum is taking a good amount of time; Angie would like to get back to using the full FIT block for both support and acceleration.
- The 1st grade team is doing a good job with this.
- Ann M thinks it would be helpful for parents to understand what FIT is all about on their child's level(s); she would like to see the information shared with parents.
- We're using both classroom teachers and paras to run FITs, also SpEd, parents and administrators, which all helps have small groups of students. She would like to have more parents doing FITs, the problem is finding space to put their groups.
- Anne has the impression that other things are encroaching on FIT time, like library. She asked about the role of IXL. Angie said students might have one day with IXL. It's used a bit more in middle school. There is not as much staff 5-8.
- Other things encroach a lot more on Levels I and II than in the older grades.
- Math and Literacy also lack enough time, with snacks, travel time between classes, etc. There never seems to be enough time to fit everything in a day.
- Angie repeated what she got from the discussion: implementing the grouping for FIT classes, looking at scheduling, looking at data, communication with families about what's going on during FIT time.

ii) Community Service

- Community service has suffered the last few years due to Covid
- Mary said the logging of community service hours isn't well organized
- Rowena suggested that the guidance department coordinate the hours for students, but Mary doesn't feel that would work well.

- It used to be done by advisory but that didn't work well either.
- There should be easier ways to do it. Coordinating with so many hometowns, abilities to drive, etc. makes it difficult.
- Shawn said that at one time community service on Level IV was part of the portfolio, with the same teacher for two years in a row coordinating.
- Possibly Google Classroom could be used, staying with one advisor for four years to help streamline.
- From the perspective of a new parent (Karin) they're finding the amount of community service hours needed seems to be a lot. She likes the idea but isn't sure how to manage it.
- The requirement is currently 30 hours per high school year; district schools are more likely to require 15. Students accumulating even more hours can get that accomplishment delineated at graduation.
- Mary agrees it's too many hours and is daunting to many students.
- Karin says she believes it should be encouraged but shouldn't be a chore. It should have meaning. It should be about the community and making a mark rather than simply being a checkmark on a to-do list.
- Shawn said he's offered community service hours for doing things that help at school events, such as sports games (i.e. keeping score, etc.).
- Angie mentioned that requirements for community service vary by grade level (as in, hours v. acts), but also, things that can be done at school or school events can be easier to accomplish than from home.
- Mary thinks these are great ideas but the accumulation of hours is stressful for students. The difference between "acts of service" and "hours of service" can be confusing. Some kids can stay after school and do hours, but some can't. How to make the opportunity available more globally is a challenge.
- Angie asked if we could lean on the Parents Group to help. Movie night helpers, beach cleanup, etc. Community building should be the point.
- Ann suggested each level have a level community service event scheduled for specific days. Park cleaning, senior center reading/performing, etc. Having service be something that's done both in school as well as things happening outside of school .
- Angie noted that middle school and high school projects and workshops do these kinds of service events. They've done beach cleanup, Cape Cod Canal cleanup, etc.
- Angie noted that some parents were displeased with the school taking their children to pick up trash.
- Mary noted that the cost of transportation can be an issue, as well as the size of classes. She noted cleaning Assinippi Park could be a good thing.
- Ann noted that a school she worked at had one block a week devoted to community service for the school. She liked the idea of even little kids helping their school, learning how to use cleaning tools.
- We used to have a school improvement goal called "Clean School"; 10 minutes at the end of the day was devoted to cleaning the school.

- As the school got larger it became less about service and reflection, and more about hours and spreadsheets.
- The School Council can work on these goals.
- Mary suggested services by grade at the high school.
- There have been variations of what was and wasn't allowed for community service; including that hours in school didn't count.
- The Student Handbook has a blurb about Community Service.
- Angie wants to work on Community Service and make a lot of improvements in how it's implemented. She will bring the info from the Handbook to the next meeting to discuss.
- Ann and Anne will bring this up to the PA to get feedback and suggestions.
- They will also ask about Extracurriculars; the biggest obstacles being costs and people to organize events.

iii) Extracurriculars

Meeting concluded at pm

Attendees:

Angie Pepin

Karin Johnston

Marco Pedulli

Anne Bell

Jamie Allen

Mary Carter

Ann Mantil

Tochi Anuonyemere

Arya Suryawanshi