

Broad Based Planning Committee Meeting

Monday, October 2, 2017

Members in Attendance: Amy Beliles, Laura Samide, Matt Shockley, Amy Maharas, Mary Burkhart, and Sara Hunter.

The meeting began at 6:35 p.m. with Sara thanking everyone for coming. Introductions were made, and Sara noted that we have a very short agenda, but a long meeting planned tonight. We will start the night with a review of our Mission Statement.

Sara handed out the school corporation's 2016 High Ability Report of 2016 Data. Looking through the data, we will review the data and keep in mind the three solid goals: share observations, root cause – why? and implications. What do we notice with the data and once you observe, ask why? What is the root cause? Last, the implications of us as a Broad Based Planning Committee? What stands out to us? Sara gave time for everyone to pair up and review the results.

At 6:52 p.m. we came back as a group. What observations do you have? Laura Samide questioned the Free/Reduced percentage for the state of Indiana being so high. Sara noted that on the Percentage of High Ability Attaining Pass Plus on ISTEP+, the graph does not contain grade 10 results. Other than that, what observations can we make? Amy Maharas noted that we are better in Math than Language Arts. She shared that math is her passion, and as a teacher, that probably translates to the higher math scores for her students. The comment was made that these scores were all pre-Bridges math. Amy Beliles commented that in math you can focus on skills, with language arts, there is so much grey area. The focus this year will be on Language Arts.

Another comment was made on the drastic drop in math scores from sixth grade to seventh grade. One reason for that is the criteria used for students to qualify for high ability math. In grades 3-6, students must score a 96% on CogAT or 95% on NWEA, whereas in middle school, the NWEA qualifier drops to 75%. Students are tagged high ability through identification for grades 3 through 8; while in high school, it is by courses they self-select. For example, if a student who previously was in English 8 takes Honors English 9, that would change the student's tag to a high ability student. During our secondary high ability evaluation last year, it was noted that we need to review our current identification practices. Looking at the graph on the first page, the implication is that this has to change within the year. Course selection is not true high ability. Sometimes high ability is thought of as an elite status by families and they push for the label. We want all families to be confident that their student is placed correctly and getting the correct instruction that they need. Sara commented that we do receive many appeals over the summer for children to be placed in the high ability program, and it is okay for students to be placed in general ed courses, as those classes have students with a wide range of abilities. For us, how can we communicate with the community about what the high ability program is and how it meets the needs of our students? We have to have our students needs met and keep them challenged.

Next topic was subcommittee goals. We have three goals to work on. The first is a Parent Night to host this school year. The second goal is communication – telling our story. The third goal is to increase knowledge of the social and emotional needs of high ability students. Sara shared that she created a high ability newsletter and sent out to high ability families in the district. Barb will share the link with all

BBPC members this week. The newsletter lists books and links for resources useful for high ability families. Mary Burkhart commented that she liked the newsletter, as it was concise and to the point. A long read may not be viewed by many families. Sara added that there have been 1,400 clicks so far.

Laura Samide shared the great news about the Lilly Comprehensive Counseling Grant that Avon Community School Corporation received. The Lilly Foundation awarded ACSC with \$792,005. Laura stated that with the grant money, we will be able to hire two new counselors, which will lower the caseloads, and help counselors with the biggest issue: social and emotional needs of students. Money can also be used for professional development for counselors. AEF has given money for mindful spaces in each building that students can use, as needed, to remove themselves and safely have a time-out to collect themselves before going back to class. Mindfulness is being taught currently in kindergarten through 8th grade.

At our April meeting, we worked on the Innovators Compass and the four quadrants: observations, principles, ideas and experiments. The focus is on kids and families, so it was agreed to focus tonight on the upcoming Parent Night. The last Parent Night was quite a success. Matt Shockley was the keynote speaker and then families were invited to attend two different break-out sessions. It was agreed to host the meeting at the high school again this year, so Matt and Sara will work together on securing a date. January is still a good time, as there are not a lot of extra-curricular activities. Discussion was held on how we can get the word out to families including emails, phone messages and newsletter blurbs. After our last Parent Night, there was some discussion about hosting an elementary and secondary parent night on separate dates to attract more families with younger students. The fact that the elementary buildings high ability programs are tailored to each building's needs makes this difficult. Don't want to confuse anyone, and elementary parents were in attendance at the first Parent Night, so one night for all families is best.

Do we still want a guest speaker? Yes! A student panel? Yes! Sara would like the guest speaker to be available during the day to speak to our teachers, and then at night for families. A key item for this night is for parents and students to be together and share this experience. If students are not able to attend, parents would still be welcome. Maybe hosting a session on what the high ability program looks like from grades three through high school? A lot of parents are concerned with future classes and how high ability classes will affect high school years. Especially for high school students, who self-select classes, parents may not be aware of the amount of work involved in AP courses. This can reduce the angst of realizing what your student signed up for before scheduling AP courses.

Stress and Anxiety would be the best topic for the guest speaker to address. Perfectionism, mindfulness, self-regulation and how to support our students and families. Emotional needs are increasing in today's world and this is very concerning. Should we consider this for another breakout session? Managing stress and self-regulating is an area that Christy Shepard and our counselors could work on.

What about moving the February meeting date to November to work on Parent Night? The consensus was to keep the February meeting, so that we can de-brief about Parent Night and still keep the April meeting.

To finalize on Parent Night, we will host at the high school in January with a guest speaker and break-out sessions available on Social/Emotional Needs, Student Panel, Growth Mindfulness, and Matriculation through the ACSC High Ability Program.

Sara offered two handouts for members to take and read at their convenience and thanked everyone for their time. The meeting ended at 8:00 p.m.