

Broad Based Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2015

Committee Members Present

Jeff Osterman, Leslie Kimery, Luke Kimery, Laura Samide, Lisa France, Diane Young, Kelcey Archer, Kevin Archer, Greg Dana, Claire Dana, Charles Dana, Cara Voorhorst, Andrea Brown, Dustin Sites, Melissa Ervin, Ginger Davis, Christy Shepard, Leila Rostam, Amy Maharas, Lizzy Maharas, Mary Burkhart, Matt Shockley and Venetia Faulkenberg.

Minutes

The meeting began at 6:35 p.m. on Monday, September 21, 2015. Mrs. Faulkenberg welcomed everyone for volunteering their time to this committee. Introductions were made. Mrs. Faulkenberg stated that the committee as a whole would meet four times this year to work together on the goals and objectives of our high ability program where all voices would be heard and participation be had by all. She welcomed all the students that we have on this year's committee and is excited to have their insight into the program.

The Avon Community School Corporation's Mission, Beliefs and Goals were briefly reviewed. These were updated at the last meeting of the 2014-15 year. Venetia shared some goal highlights: Dr. Ginny Burney and Dr. Kristie Neumeister will come in January to conduct a program evaluation of our K-6 high ability program. Grades 7-12 will be conducted next year. Our second goal is communication. One sub-committee will be responsible for a study and recommending an action plan for reporting progress and growth to parents.

The 2015-16 High Ability Grant revealed the amount to be \$78,820.00. That is up \$8,363.00 from last year. One reason for the increase was the work by Barb Marcotte last winter to review and clean up all PowerSchool tags to make sure that all high ability students were tagged correctly.

Funds from the Making A Difference Grant were used to allow seven Avon teachers gain their high ability license with a special program at Ball State University. This program condensed a two year program into six months. Two of our seven teachers are here tonight and gave their insight into this experience. Dustin Sites commented that the program was beneficial from the beginning, as he was able to use the knowledge to help his class immediately, and saw positive results. Christy Shepard also commented that the affective needs piece was most important. It is easy to lose some high ability kids that become bored or find the work too easy to stay focused, and don't reach their full potential. Lisa France asked if there are plans to send more

teachers to this program. Venetia answered that we would love to open this up to secondary teachers, as the first group were all elementary teachers. It is a very different process at the secondary level, and we want to make sure we have the right program for secondary teachers. Greg Dana asked what is the percentage of high ability licensed teachers in Avon. Venetia commented that it is very small and we are trying to increase this number. Claire Dana questioned the fact that high ability classes are being taught by teachers without high ability licenses. Mrs. Faulkenberg also explained that teachers in many schools have only clusters of high ability students in their room, therefore not requiring a license. The high ability license would help with the differentiated instruction in the classroom to assist teachers who have both general ed and high ability students in the same classroom. We will continue to offer the course work to help teachers gain the knowledge of a high ability curriculum. Mr. Shockley added that a teacher who has an Algebra endorsement to teach Algebra, needs to support the high ability, general ed and struggling students that can all be placed in the same Algebra class. Venetia added that the hiring process is at the building level and although we would like to have new teachers come in with a high ability endorsement, however there are not many teachers with a high ability endorsement out there.

The question was asked if Avon Schools offers any professional development for our new teachers. The Essential Avon, or TEA, is a program that we offer to all new-to-Avon teachers, however, it covers many topics, but not specific to the high ability program. We do have a program being offered to our teachers now, Six Standards of Effective Pedagogy, in which a professor from IUPUI is conducting a three day course in Avon to teachers regarding differentiated instruction. That course, with help from building coaches, can help teachers with the various levels of student needs in the classroom. Other professional development is on an as-needed basis.

Mr. Shockley gave an update on the K-12 mathematics textbook adoption. We are trying to work together for the first time so that we can provide alignment in the textbook adoption process working with the curriculum. Beginning with the K-12 science curriculum work next year, we will try to document everything digitally K-12, so that we can eliminate gaps and repeated items. Venetia explained that curriculum work is first started with gen ed courses and then the high ability curriculum is derived from that by going above the requirements at each grade level.

Writing of Performance Tasks was next on the agenda. This is the third year of foundation skills being used to apply to real world tasks.

The floor was opened for questions and/or comments. Mr. Shockley brought up the fact that the high school is looking into the representation of minority groups within the high ability program at the high school. This was brought to their attention by the portrait of the Top 25 students, who last year were of one population. Venetia mentioned that this was brought up in

committee about three years ago and tabled to work at the building levels first. The question was brought up about the length of time students have been enrolled in Avon Schools versus move-ins. Mr. Shockley noted that when talking with our National Merit Scholarship students all of them have been in Avon since third grade or earlier. Do we need to concentrate on transfer students? Mrs. Davis stated that we should be able to identify students as they take their first round of NWEA tests at the beginning of every year. She works with teachers each year to be sure that the students in their classes are placed correctly and will work to adjust the schedules of new students who might be struggling or bored in their classes. Laura Samide added that the Naglieri would help culturally biased students, and that NWEA is so background heavy, which could just show good schooling. Venetia mentioned that the Naglieri is not research based, and not recommended by the Indiana Department of Education. She also stated we use the least biased instrument recommended by the IDOE and the National Gifted Organization, the CogAT.

The group then focused on the next item on the agenda, Committee Breakouts. Due to the highly successful parent night last year, we were asked to host another one this year. Because of this, we will have our first sub-committee group work on planning another planning night. Maybe host second semester, or perhaps another location? The second sub-committee will work on reporting research. Overtime we've struggled with how to report what is going on with high ability students to parents. Research and recommendations would be the charge of this group. The last sub-committee group will be our high ability website. We started this last year and are in the process of making it user-friendly and accessible to everyone.

At 7:15 p.m. the group broke into sub-committee work and were to end their work by 8:00 p.m.