

Broad Based Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

November 1, 2016

Committee Members Present

Dustin LeMay, Amy Maharas, Leila Rostam, Darian Rostam, Mary Burkhart, Laura Samide, Jill DeBow, Christy Shepard, Michele Frossard, Jenny Shayotovich, Dustin Sites, Kris Kingery and Sara Hunter.

Minutes

The meeting began at 6:39 p.m. on Monday, November 1, 2016. Sara Hunter welcomed everyone for volunteering their time to this committee. Introductions were made. Ms. Hunter shared that the window for writing of the high ability grant was now open and that ACSC will be getting a small increase in funds compared to last year's amount. This group influences where we spend the funds for the best interest of our high ability students and program.

First on the agenda, we will be hosting a High Ability Workshop on November 17th and 18th for our K-6 high ability teachers. It will be two full days of Bridges math training. About 45 teachers are expected to attend.

Sara then thanked Michele Frossard and the other members of the Parent Survey Committee, who worked so hard on this task. Copies of complete survey results were passed out for members to review. Questions 7, 8 and 9 responses were available to all, but for the purpose of this meeting, the members split into three groups to review and later regroup to share what trends or themes are emerging from the responses. Time was given for this task.

For question number 7, Laura Samide stated that additional information for self-advocacy and peer interaction were the most common themes. There were a lot of comments regarding a lack of communication on student progress. Dustin Sites commented that on student report cards, there isn't a place for individualized comments, just a drop down box of pre-determined quotes that teachers can select from. This is due to the layout of the report cards and lengthy comments cannot fit. Conferences and/or progress reports are for lengthy and/or individualized comments and should be used when needed.

Another theme concerned grades and the anxiety that grades bring to some high ability students. The comment was made that the high ability classes have caused some students to lose sleep and drop other classes or extra-curricular activities just to get homework done.

For question number 8, Christy Shepard shared that her group noted different trends. Parents would like to see high ability classrooms without seat fillers. While this is not possible in all buildings, we do have clearly defined high ability curriculums for teachers to follow with their high ability students alongside the general education students following the general ed curriculum. Some parents resented this practice of two curriculums being taught in one classroom. Parents also would like to see more student-led projects, or collaborative projects in the curriculum. Christy did mention that these projects are being done in certain classrooms currently. Another trend was concern over more homework for high ability students. There should not be more homework, just more meaningful homework.

Question number 9 was handled by Jenny Shayotovich. This question asked parents about differences noted between high ability and general ed classrooms and how should grading reflect the difference? This was a tough question for parents to answer, and it was decided as a group to leave this question out.

Sara asked the group about what sub-committee groups should we host this year. A Parent Professional Development Opportunity should be a sub-committee. Also Social and Emotional Needs of High Ability Students would be another great sub-committee. There is really a need for parent communication, on how to communicate the differences between high ability and general ed programs.

Kris Kingery discussed how for the elementary level, it is hard to have "one plan" for high ability students/classrooms as each building's program is set up for the best success for the students in that building. We have elementary schools with small, medium and large student enrollments. Each building's program will look different based on the high ability enrollment numbers school. Last year River Birch invited all high ability parents to a meeting held in June to help explain their program. The letter was sent out in the high ability invitation sent out by the Administration Center. The meeting was very successful and he is planning on doing this meeting again this year. Nikki Harrison held a meeting in August to explain the program for her buildings. These meetings help parents walk away with knowledge of the program their student is enrolled in.

Based on this evidence that more communication is needed, all agreed that the third sub-committee would be Communication. Discussion was held upon planning a large group parent meeting, as we had two years ago at Avon High School. It was decided to work on a date at our next meeting for a possible date in early 2018. Three years between the large group meetings was agreed as a good time span.

Committees and priority focus will be topics at our next meeting. Sara thanked everyone for their time and commitment to the group. The meeting ended at 8:06 p.m.