

Site Council Agenda
October 27, 2011
Room 214 7:30-9:00 AM

Established Working Norms

- * Assume and have good intentions
- * Wear different lenses
- * Active listening
- * Speak your mind
- * Equal voice

Refreshments: Olivia (drinks), Barb (food)

AGENDA

I. Operational Business (7:30)

1. Approve old minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

2. Allocation of SC funds

Math has used all of their funds. Olivia gave a short overview of how math spent their funds. She is also requesting \$79 to cover the cost of an upcoming conference on the Common Core Standards. The motion to allocate these funds out of the general Site Council pool was made and seconded. It was carried unanimously.

II. New Business (7:45-8:45)

1. Gopher-palooza

Kathy gave an update on Gopher-polooza which will take place on Feb 15th. She encouraged other departments to get involved if they have student projects that they want to highlight. Next meeting, Kathy will bring back a proposed schedule for Feb 15th.

2. New Course Proposals:

Math – The math dept is proposing an honors geometry course to better prepare students for the advanced math electives that we offer to Juniors and Seniors. In addition, the rigor of the geometry course does not match what the students experienced in middle school. Right now, only the 9th graders who passed Alg I as an 8th grader are eligible to take Geometry. The honors geometry class could restrict course offerings in the master schedule. A question was raised as to how this would affect students headed into the IB program. The department had considered letting sophomore students take the course, but decided to limit the course at this point to Freshman.

Students would need to get high school Alg I credit in middle school in order to be eligible for the course. A concern was raised about the ability of middle school teachers to accurately assess a student's readiness for the course. Olivia felt like she has been addressing this with middle school teachers and that they have worked to make sure that the criteria are clear.

The course would cover the same core content as the regular geometry class. The course though, would cover content to a greater depth. It was noted that other departments have honors courses. In addition, for teachers who have honors and standard courses, the teachers noted the difference in the amount of time necessary to cover material in the two courses.

The students on the council talked about their perspective about transitioning from middle school to high school. They felt that the honors track might be too much for freshman to handle with everything else that they are experiencing.

A concern was also expressed about the potential negative impacts to the regular geometry classes. The focus of the course proposal was to make sure that the students in each course are getting what they need. It was also discussed how this course would be able to expand the course offerings in the math department.

A question was raised about how students drop from the honors level to the regular level. Work still needs to be done with this. It was also recommended that we run at least two sections of the class.

A motion was made and seconded that we accept the honors geometry course. The motion was carried with two abstains.

English – At the senior level, students have three elective choices in the first semester and three elective choices in the second semester. This course would take the place of one of the selectives that is currently offered. The course would be offered each semester as would be aligned to a MHCC course in order to offer college credit for the course. MHCC has provided data that most Freshman are not prepared to take Writing 121. The class would be aligned to Writing 115. The goal is to give students a college prep experience while still in high school.

Writing 115 is focused on fewer papers and fewer skills than the Writing 121 course. It was noted that this course would require 35 textbooks. The question was raised about where these funds would come from. There is a textbook fund, but the funds are limited. At this point, it was not clear who would MHCC would certify to teach the course to offer dual credit. There was question about other courses that could be modified fit the outcomes of Writing 115. This course is designed to meet the needs of students who plan to go on to community college and yet chose not to take the IB English courses.

We were also curious about how this course would truly prepare students for college. We also want more information about how this type of course would help students who choose to go on to MHCC.

A motion was made to approve the Intro to College Writing with the understanding that the English department is not bound by this decision. This motion was also made with the understanding that if this course is not offered this next school year (2012-2013) that the new course proposal will need to be re-submitted in the Fall of 2012. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

There was not enough time to discuss the “Yellow Zone” students or to allow group work time. They will be on the agenda for the next Site Council Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion at 8:55.

3. State Report Card: Needs Improvement Status
 - a. “Yellow Zone” Student Discussion
4. SC Group Work time:
 - a. Writing
 - b. Technology
 - c. Freshman Focus
 - d. IB/Graduation

*Focus Question/Data to gather?
5. 8:45: Share out progress

Next SC Meeting: Nov 22nd at 7:15