

Instructional Leadership Council

Meeting Minutes for January 7, 2021

Attendees: Julie Barker, Jessica Bonadio, Angela Carpin, Tracy Castleberry, Dwayne Cerbone, Kathy Curtis, Jeff Cimmerer, Heather Clayton, Maribeth Curran, Liesa Erlich, Monica Gebell, Amanda Kirkebye, Matt Kwiatkowski, Terese Manfredi-Hill, Esther Marino, Jennifer Marren, Lenore McPherson, ~~Kate Milne~~, Amanda Moon, Teresa Roets, Tish Romas, ~~Toni Stevens-Oliver~~, Patricia Vaughan-Brogan, Joshua Walker, ~~Jing Wang~~, Melanie Ward, Elizabeth Woods

Chairperson: Melanie Ward

Co-Chair: Julie Barker

Note Taker: Laurie Hummel

This meeting was held in an online format through the Zoom video conferencing App and Microsoft Teams.

Approval of December minutes: Approved with minor adjustments.

Sharing from Constituent groups:

PTSA: Noted hearing of some student concerns with the events of the day in Washington DC. These incidents can create anxiety for some. The supports from Student Services, counseling, and administrators who continue to check in with students now and moving forward is appreciated. Classrooms are working through conversations to help kids make sense of what is happening. Culturally responsive learning continues to be important.

First Marking Period Data:

The committee looked at data collected from the first marking period and discussed possible Covid-related dips, implications, and next steps.

Discussion:

- Elementary: First grade showed the biggest learning gaps.
- Secondary data: Honors cohort seemed less impacted, more resilient.
- Feeling that there is little validity in this data. It is subjective and there are so many variables in the measurements and comparisons.
- Potential discrepancies from teacher to teacher in how grades were derived.
- Instruction was pulled back with the road maps and some things are not being assessed.
- The high school course failure report shows an increase with students failing two or more courses.

- The significant data differences may be true indicators.
- The elementary data may have more validity because grades based on standards.
- Teacher empathy toward students during this difficult time can be influencing grades.

Continued Conversations for Buildings:

- Connect with PLCs to keep grading criteria leveled.
- A high school committee is looking at causation and ways to help kids struggling to get passing grades.
- Putting data in the teachers' hands could promote conversations.
- More data points can be pulled together if requested.

This discussion informs a philosophy statement that will guide course recommendation conversations at Secondary ILTs and SAC meetings next week.

Philosophy Regarding Course Recommendations for 2021-22: ILC developed a philosophy statement to assist groups in developing specific guidance and criteria regarding course recommendations at the request of the Scenario Planning Committee.

Currently, there are courses with prerequisites identified in our Program of Studies, or through our practices. Teachers have sought guidance around the process of making course recommendations this year, given the many unique circumstances.

Conditions to consider this year:

- Academic gaps from last year's closure and temporary learning models.
- Different experiences are happening in different learning models.
- There may be fewer grades to reflect on.
- Less access to support from teachers.
- Not all courses listed as prerequisites were offered to remote learners.
- Not able to run the full complement of honors level courses.

Other considerations:

- Historically our data tells us that black/Hispanic and low income students are under-represented in honors and AP level courses.
- There may be difference between the formal, written requirements and the informal, unwritten requirements.

Following thoughtful discussion, the committee drafted a belief statement to share at next week's ILT meetings for feedback:

To assist departments and individual teachers in the process of making course recommendations to students for the 2021-2022 school year, the Instructional Leadership Council believes...

Students should demonstrate interest in the coursework and a desire to be successful along with some indication that they would be successful in the requested course. To the extent possible, students should

not be prohibited from taking a course next year due to the learning model they are in this year.

Teachers should engage in conversation with individual students about their interest, desire, and motivation to take a particular course, rather than focusing solely on academic averages or cut-off scores. Teachers should be prepared to start next year with the assumption that students in all levels of coursework may need various types of support.

Academic averages/numbers should not be used solely as a determining factor in considering a recommendation to honors or AP level coursework.

Round Table:

While there is a lot of discussion about learning gaps and student readiness, many classrooms are doing awesome. We can be amazed and proud of students and staff.

We can be proud that our students came back from the closure ready to learn.

Share: ILC created a philosophy statement regarding course placement for students in 2021-22.

This statement and feedback from this discussion will be shared with building ILT representatives and then Secondary Academic Council.

Secondary principals will share course recommendation philosophy and decisions through faculty meetings following SAC.

Next Meeting: February 4, 3:30 – 5:00 via Zoom