

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie, Flossmoor, IL
October 11, 2024

In attendance for all of the meeting were, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Wakeley, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Hester, Mrs. Rudan and Ms. Ross-Cook. Ms. Jeanne Miller and Ms. Libby Day were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

Mrs. Hoereth and Mr. Riedel attended the meeting by Zoom Audio/Video Conference.

Ms. Marilyn Thomas, HF Chronicle, representatives from Hanover Research, and Mr. Gould, faculty member, were present for all or part of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes. The September 10, 2024 minutes stand approved as presented.

Comments. No comments were received.

Old Business:

IB Program Evaluation and Recommendation. Ms. Libby Day presented an historical overview of the International Bachelorette (IB) program that is available to HF junior and senior students. She shared that the HF IB Diploma Programme is slightly different than the actual structure of the IB Program. HF's IB program was originally created as a more exclusive gifted academy that is heavily focused on math and physics which is different than what IB envisioned and more challenging than what the International Bachelorette Organization (IBO) requires. Ms. Day spoke on the differences of IB and AP. Currently, the IB Prep Academy has been eliminated which allows students to take higher level learning to increase literacy levels. All students now have access to IB math without the double acceleration. A decline is seen in full diploma candidates but there is an increase in students taking IB classes in general. She noted that students who prepare to earn the diploma generally earn that distinction. Ms. Day reported on enrollment since the inception of the IB program in 2014-2015 showing an increase in students taking IB classes in general. Dr. Hester added that students do not start the IB program until their junior year. She added that the IB Prep Academy was literally focused on students taking AP early as there was never an IB program or IB courses available for freshmen. Only students who wanted to be in the IB program had access to AP courses their freshmen year. Ms. Day spoke on the barriers to the IB Diploma Programmed that included: lack of choice and flexibility in schedule; accessibility due to HF prerequisites; lack of support and resources; and lack of communication and program understanding. Ms. Day also provided suggestions to improve HF's IB Diploma Programme that included: increase course offerings to improve schedule flexibility; lean into IB courses without AP counterparts and those that could serve as capstone courses in CTE pathways; increase marketing and community education about IB, especially to feeder schools, families and underclassmen; and more support and training for staff.

Dr. Hester introduced Ms. Mary Kate Taylor, Hanover Research, who has led with her team together with HF's admin team over the past year. The Hanover team will share evaluation results they have completed on HF's IB Program. Ms. Goretti Vinuales spoke on the perceptions survey that was conducted in January, 2024. 121 respondents included parents, staff and

students grades 11-12 who are currently involved or had been involved with the program. In May through July 2024, data analysis was conducted that focused on college/career readiness indicators and post-secondary outcomes with data from 2019-2023. The stakeholder perceptions were shared that showed parents and alumni showed more satisfaction with the IB program with staff members expressing less. She highlighted the IB Program value and barriers from the stakeholders. She noted that HF's IB program is recognized for its value beyond Honors or AP courses, particularly for intellectual growth and college preparation. However, barriers such as scheduling conflicts, the need for additional student support and the need for a more diverse course selection are noted as areas of improvement. The survey also included stakeholder perceptions for improving IB courses and program completion. The need exists for more elective choices and flexibility in scheduling, enhanced support and resources for students, and improved communication and program understanding.

Mr. Fan Jiang reported on the findings of the data analysis that was conducted. Student participation in AP courses is more common than participation in IB courses. AP participation has seen a slight decline since 2021 while IB participation has seen a slight increase from 2020-2021. IB and AP program costs were compared per student. Hanover observed a higher pre-enrollment cost of IB across all years studied, but the cost difference between AP and IB has decreased starting in 2022. IB costs per students was more than AP costs. As part of the data analysis they looked at program outcomes resulting with students who completed at least one AP or IB course by the time of graduation were more likely to enroll in a post-secondary institution compared to students who took no advanced courses. However, Hanover observed minor differences in post-secondary enrollment and persistence outcomes between AP and IB students.

Ms. Goretti shared recommendations for next steps based on Hanover's two research projects that included stakeholder feedback and analyzed program data. Recommendations included continuing to explore ways to support students in preparing for post-secondary education, especially among those students who do not participate in the IB program; explore opportunities to provide additional academic support and preparation in early high school for students interested in pursuing an IB diploma; consider reviewing the current IB program structure to allow for more flexibility in course selection and scheduling; consider reviewing the current IB program structure to allow for more flexibility in course selection and scheduling; and given the minor differences in post-secondary outcomes between the AP and IB programs, HF should weigh the costs and other factors to determine whether the IB program is a good return on investment.

The Hanover representatives were thanked for their research and presentation by Dr. Hester and the committee. It was noted that the board requested a third-party study of HF's IB program. Dr. Wakeley stated that there are choices that the board/committee needs to make moving forward: are we going to keep the current IB Program as it is; discontinue the program and just be an AP school: or, keep the dual program that makes changes that reduces duplication and eliminates some of the barriers. Dr. Wakeley stated that from an administrative perspective, they cannot continue to offer this program in its current form and he would not recommend that it would be in the district's best interest to continue down this current path. Ms. Day expressed that she does believe it is possible to institute this program with fidelity. She added to improve the program there is a need to increase course offerings to schedule flexibility. Lean into IB courses without AP counterparts and those that could serve as capstone

courses in CTE pathways. Increase marketing and community education about IB, especially to feeder schools, families and underclassmen and provide more support/training for staff. She also presented potential course offerings that are not available in IB or AP but could be in IB. Discussion ensued and the committee members had an opportunity to share feedback, comments and concerns. After a lengthy and fulsome discussion, the committee felt that if the district continues to offer an IB program then it needs to be aligned to the IBO expectations and standards globally and implemented with fidelity. The committee expressed concerns that HF's IB program has deviated from the IBO standards from its inception and asked what needs to be done to change that. They also requested to be provided with the strategy on how to grow the program in order to see the benefit from a cost benefit analysis. Dr. Wakeley stated that if they are going to consider maintaining this program, then the administration needs to come back to the committee with a plan on how it will be implemented and what the goal is to implement it with fidelity. The committee requested a total cost analysis of the IB program. The committee asked for a projection of what the costs are and a projection of what the costs will be in alignment with the IBO structure. Dr. Wakeley stated he will get back to the committee shortly with when they will provide the information requested by the committee. Dr. Wakeley noted that they will have to develop a goal on what success looks like based on the challenge – what makes this worth it.

English Course Proposals. Dr. Hester spoke on two new proposed courses that were tabled at the September Planning Committee meeting: English 3: LGBTQ+ Lives and Literature and English 4: Global Voices in Literature. She noted the: English 3 course does have a definite focus on English. The course descriptions have been re-written with the Illinois course catalogue. The proficiency scales that were approved outline the reading, writing and speaking progressions and the course descriptions point that out in terms of English 3 and 4. A broad survey was given and students were surveyed for English 4: Global Voices with 8.4% interested, 40.6% might be interested and 51% would not be interested. Total survey respondents given to grades 9 – 11 with 1,141 respondents. She pointed out that 48% – 49% who might be interested is pretty typical. For English 4: LGBTQ+ with 8.1% interested, 19.7% might be interested and 72.2% not interested in taking the course. Dr. Hester reviewed the lengthy process of proposing courses. Dr. Hester pointed out that the teachers reminded them of the equity in courses and felt there was a need to support our students who identify in the LGBTQ+ population. Mrs. Hoereth pointed out that if there is value in this data, and the majority of students are not interested in this class, she asked if the data indicates most students will not register for the English 3 course. Mr. Legardy stated as a follow up, we have student outcome of less than 30 percent in reading which is not acceptable and has never been the standard at HF. He added that his question becomes, can you give evidence that these two courses will turn this trajectory around. Dr. Hester responded that they cannot get that trajectory. She added that their strategy is standard based learning and they are committed to having clarity in learning requirements and having assessments aligned to ensure that all kids meet or exceed the standards. Mrs. Rudan pointed out that these courses do align with the college/career readiness standards. Dr. Hester added that the courses align with English department goals, the district's goals for equity and college/career goals. Ms. Miller voiced that Global Voices replaces Contemporary Literature and the LGBTQ+ course is being added. Ms. Miller stated that there are more than enough students for a number of sections and that the district's due north is

equity and they want to ensure that our equity is not only reaching to the vast numbers. Mrs. Ross-Cook added that you want to make sure you lead with skills and then build into the global or cultural experience. Mr. Legardy expressed his concern that minors are being surveyed on their sexual orientation. Mrs. Ross-Cook reminded the committee that when HF partnered with Midwestern Plains Equity Center, part of their program there was a comprehensive survey done with stakeholders and the community. She explained that within that survey there were some blind questions regarding demographics including gender and sexual orientation. Mr. Legardy stated that he is not exactly sure why we are interested where sexual orientation matters and he is not comfortable with it and is a little concerned. Dr. Hester added that offering these courses provides an opportunity to grow and show our inclusivity. Mr. Legardy stated that although he disagrees, he does hear what everyone is saying and added that the committee has taken the position to pass this item forward on to the board. He added that he feels there are some lines that fundamentally schools should not be crossing and they are certainly in that category especially when kids are being surveyed about sexual orientation. Mr. Legardy cautioned that they should be careful and he feels there is a certain percentage of kids who would not be ok with taking this course. Ms. Miller pointed out that the course is not all about LGBTQ+, but written by a LGBTQ+ person. Dr. Wakeley pointed out that people have to understand that the most important thing that has to be communicated is that this has to be a district that promotes standards based learning and all the other things that we teach that does not necessarily demonstrates moving the needle needs to stop in this district. Mr. Legardy stated that he agrees and that our energy needs to be spend on the outcomes. The consensus of the committee is to move this item to the October 15, 2024 board meeting for approval.

New Business

New Course Proposals. Dr. Hester explained that administration asked the social science department to develop a semester long consumer economics course meeting the state requirements and giving students more choice in their schedules. Currently, students have the opportunity to take a year-long economics course with full content in macro and micro economics. The consumer economics is embedded in the full economic course. Dr. Hester explained that often times the content of economics pushes the consumer economics portion further into the end of the year. The state of Illinois requires 3.5 credits to be taken in social studies. However, HF's graduation requirement is 4 credits in social science. Dr. Hester pointed out that if a student takes AP Economics, they will not have to take Consumer Economics, they would take just the 9 weeks in economics. She added that we will still have that full year in our course book at the CP and honors level. Dr. Alexander cautioned that students still have to take the 4 credit requirement here. He added that they cannot implement this without modifying the graduation requirement. Dr. Hester added that it would behoove us to change that graduation requirement. To leave it as a requirement obstructs our requirement and our strategic plan. Dr. Hester stated that it would be good to bring changing the graduation requirement for social science forward to this committee. Mrs. Hoereth asked what does this look like in real time, real practice and the support and communication that is required from their advisors. Dr. Hester responded that the first step in the communication process is that our dept chairs meet with her and Mrs. Rudan and then they go over any changes in courses and how to work with student schedules. Dr. Hester stated based on conversations with the committee and departments and

counselors, they will be more intentional with this communication with the students this year. They will be implementing an Intro to Course Day. The day they come back from winter break all of our teachers will focus with working with our students with what their options are for the upcoming years and looking at those who have not met their economics requirement. This item will move forward to the full board on October 15th for approval with a caution read by Mr. Legardy into the minutes that there is a need to take up the issue of changing the graduation requirement. Mr. Legardy stressed that they will need to be very careful with advising our students to take the Consumer Economics who will still have to take economics to meet HF's graduation requirement. Dr. Hester explained that the proposed Professional Textile Construction course supports students interested in clothing construction. There are students, not a lot, who want to continue with this course. It will be run with advance clothing instruction and some of them would take work-based learning in the future. Dr. Hester anticipates having more of this type of course moving forward as they continue to improve pathways for the HF's students. Mrs. Hoereth asked if they can expect more new course options for approval brought to the board before the school year ends. Dr. Hester responded that unless some new unforeseen legislation presents itself, there will not be. This item will be on the October 15th board agenda for approval.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.