

Hamden High School Governance Council (HHS GC)  
Meeting Minutes  
February 26, 2024

**Members Present** (alphabetical order): Tina DeAmicis, John Hanna, Sharleen Lazaro, Karlen Meinsen, Kevin Mensah, Gina Parillo, Heather Porto, Susan Schultheiss, Chris Wuerth

**Admin/HHS staff:** Scott Trauner.

**BOE Representative Present:** Melissa Kaplan

**Superintendent Rep Present:** None

**1. Greeting – Karlen Meinsen**

- Called meeting to order at 6:07pm.
- Approval of minutes: Motion to approve made by Tina DeAmicis, seconded by Heather Porto.
- Request was made that a reminder of upcoming meeting be emailed a few days in advance of each meeting.

❖ **Hamden High School Update – Scott Trauner**

- Mr. Trauner shared a document: Planning Tool for 2024/2025. The document looks for input from stakeholders on adjustments to HHS systems, structures, policies, procedures, and practices. Topics included in the document include class rank/GPA; student tardiness/absenteeism; Vision of the Graduate; development of a College and Career Center; leveling of classes; and potential changes to grading system.
- The Principal's Round Table and the whole HHS staff will also be looking at the document and providing input.
- Discussion on potential change to grading system: a portfolio grading system would emphasize growth mindset.. The goal is for students to take a risk and try something that is hard. Would students be motivated if they are not receiving a grade? Are other high schools in the area doing this?
- Career Center: there is currently no dedicated person doing this. Mr. Trauner stated that Brooke Stanziale is spearheading the effort on how to rethink and revise what HHS offers in this area. Discussion centered on having some type of Freshman Seminar, to help students understand what they need to graduate. The middle school does a week long orientation. Something similar for incoming freshman could be a great start to the year.

❖ **Subcommittee share out**

- **Leveling Subcommittee:** The committee composed a letter detailing its recommendation to eliminate weighted GPA and class rank. This letter was sent to Principal Jackson, and includes research in support of this recommendation as well as the need for additional research into the impact on the class valedictorian and salutatorian. John Hanna noted his concern regarding the impact that eliminating class rank could have on students' access to scholarships. There will be a number of stakeholders who would look at this recommendation. Melissa Kaplan stated that at the Board of Education level, the Curriculum Committee and the Policy Committee would be involved, and then the full Board of

Education. Next Steps on this issue: Admin will determine next steps, including input from Directors, Guidance department, and staff. A suggestion was made to talk to school districts who have made this change recently.

- **School Data Subcommittee:** The subcommittee decided to focus on ways to impact 9th grade attendance and identify students with attendance concerns before they even start the school year. Other districts have mentoring programs that pair upperclassmen with freshmen. How can freshmen be better connected with clubs and other school activities? A freshman orientation over the summer would be a positive introduction to the school. A suggestion was made that club lists need to be updated. A comment was also made that Dragons United has not yet met this year.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22

Respectfully submitted by Susan Schultheiss