

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie, Flossmoor, IL
May 20, 2025

In attendance for all of the meeting were, Ms. Jackson, Dr. Smith, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Wakeley, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Hester, Mrs. Rudan, Dr. Cook and Mrs. Erdey. Incoming Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Norrell and Incoming Director of Career Pathways & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Dallacqua were also in attendance for all of the meeting. In addition, IB Coordinator Ms. Day was in attendance.

Marilyn Thomas from the HF Chronicle was also present. Ms. Beth Larocca, community member, was also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes from March 19, 2025 stand approved as presented.

Comments.

Mr. Legardy welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the 2024-25 school year.

Ms. Larocca requested an update on tutoring services. She also commented on the low enrollment discussion that was reflected in the last meeting's minutes regarding not running courses with low enrollment, Ms. Larocca expressed that it is not unusual for colleges not to run classes due to low enrollment and that saying no to running low enrollment courses is part of reality.

Dr. Hester shared that they recently celebrated IB and AP teachers who have been providing tutoring sessions that included evenings. She also noted that teachers have been prepping for the administration of the SAT exam. Dr. Hester shared that there have been some glitches in the assessments' testing systems that they are working through. Students who completed the testing felt it went well in general. Retakes are available for anyone who had problems with the AP testing particularly not being able to access the Blue Book. Concerns were expressed regarding if there would be enough time for students to re-engage due to the systems' glitch. Dr. Alexander shared that retakes will be available tomorrow, Friday or next Wednesday. Dr. Norrell, who is a CollegeBoard Trustee, will find out this afternoon during her Trustee meeting if there will be a charge for retakes and report back.

Dr. Wakeley noted PRESS Policies on today's agenda will be tabled as a result of moving policies to the Personnel Committee for their review. He noted that there are no policies that need immediate attention at this point.

Ms. Jackson expressed that she is happy to be rejoining the Planning Committee and looks forward to the work ahead.

Dr. Smith shared that she is also very excited to be on the board and happy to be a member of this committee. She expressed her thanks to Ms. Diaz, Mrs. Gnaster and the whole team for helping her get her acclimated in her new role.

Mr. Legardy welcomed Ms. Jackson and Dr. Smith and noted that Ms. Jackson was a very active member during her first tour on this committee. He noted that this is Dr. Wakeley's last Planning Committee meeting and expressed his appreciation to Dr. Wakeley for "leaning in and taking action," in getting this ship steered in the right direction on many fronts. He addressed Dr. Wakeley and stated, "the school needed a turn around and you did that turn around." Mr. Legardy extended his best wishes and congratulated Dr. Wakeley on his retirement and the new chapter that is about to begin for him. Mr. Legardy noted that they have been able

to get their arms around a lot of issues that plagued this school and this district and credited Dr. Wakeley for making it happen.

Old Business

Student Services Update

Mrs. Rudan provided a Summary of Findings regarding the 2024-25 Terrace Metrics Resiliency Project that was completed in the fall of 2024. She noted that this is the third year of getting the mental health screener. Mrs. Rudan pointed out that we are on the right pathway and remain committed to educating the whole child at an optimal academic, interpersonal, and psychological functioning level, now and later as adults. She reported that overall, 42% of students reported resiliency wellness in the satisfactory or optimal functioning categories, which was 7% higher than baseline with fewer students reporting resiliency in the “may need assistance” category over time. Most mean resiliency scores have increased over time, with the exception of incoming 9th grade students, anxiety levels have gradually decreased over time. In addition, there is a downward trend in self-criticism across grade levels. Ms. Jackson expressed the trends make sense and in an effort to help drive them down further, she suggested finding an opportunity to use the data reported to give students a better space perhaps directing them to Snowball or Snowflurry. She remarked that she is interested in hearing some of the actions that will be taken to address this. Mr. Legardy commented on the dramatic improvement that can be seen this year. Mrs. Rudan stated she feels that over the last three years, they have been intentional about making students feel more comfortable to talk. Dr. Smith commented on the positive impact the Bridge Program had on her own sister who was part of the Bridge Program’s inaugural year. Dr. Alexander added that the Bridge Program gives kids a sense of involvement and has a wraparound effect that positively impacts our school’s culture. Mr. Legardy stated that he is aware that students are assessed in the fall and asked if freshmen could also be assessed in the spring. Mrs. Rudan stated that everyone was assessed in the fall, but in the future, they will probably move back to assessing all students in the fall and spring. In addition, the state of Illinois has mandated mental health screening for all students and so far 13 percent of schools in Illinois are ready which includes HF. Mrs. Rudan added that the district is in a very good position and is way ahead of the game and will be looked at as a model district to help other schools. Mr. Legardy stated that this is another initiative brought by Dr. Wakeley and the district is well ahead of the curve in this category.

Instructional Coach Program

Dr. Norrell stated that she and Dr. Hester have been working together on this initiative. In an effort to work at full capacity as a true Professional Learning Community (PLC) there is a need to participate in the national training being offered this summer through Learning Forward. One of the biggest impactors of student achievement and student growth is the efficacy of teachers. She explained this professional learning is designed to strengthen instructional coaching practices and build professional capacity within the district. They are recommending entering into a contract agreement with Learning Forward to provide an Instructional Coaching Academy for the district. The contract includes: the facilitation of six days of on-site professional learning for up to 20 participants. The duration is May 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 at a cost not to exceed \$43,120. The cost covers on-site facilitation, travel, professional learning materials and one year

Learning Forward membership. Dr. Cook added that the contract will be funded from the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Although this initiative was not originally budgeted, it is aligned with the district's instructional priorities and vision to grow and support coaching practices. Dr. Norrell stated that she is requesting permission from this committee to move forward. Dr. Cook recommended that they move forward with the agreement as it has been delayed and it is now a priority. The committee members agreed to move Dr. Norrell's request forward to the board for approval. Mr. Legardy shared that Dr. Wakeley has already shared this information regarding entering into an Agreement with Learning Forward last Friday so all board members are aware of the training being requested. Dr. Hester noted there are 5 Instructional Coaches. Dr. Norrell added that school leadership as well as the Department Leads has been invited next week to attend so they can help support the coaches when they come into their departments. This item will be on the June 17, 2025 agenda for board approval.

IB for All Proposal

Dr. Norrell expressed her appreciation to Dr. Wakeley and Dr. Hester who met with her three months ago giving her a real in-depth look at the current state of the district's International Baccalaureate program. Initially she received the Hanover Report and there were many pros and cons that have been expressed including using the resources of the district on the program. She added that Dr. Wakeley and Dr. Hester took the time to share some of the concerns of running the IB program and it was helpful in analyzing if there was any feasibility in salvaging something that is still highly regarded in the world. Dr. Norrell noted that one of the biggest concerns is being responsive to the community in terms of the resources that it takes to run that program based upon the number of students actually receiving the benefit. She added that leveraging the work the school already is doing, and the work required in the future to maintain the district's status on the school report card, they have found a way to save and re-imagining and elevating the IB Programme's impact to include all students. Dr. Norrell also thanked Dr. Alexander and Mrs. Rudan along with Ms. Day who also provided helpful information. She also pointed out that being able to connect with Dr. Dellacqua whose work will be poised around workforce learning and career training and preparing students for career readiness. Today's presentation will talk about the IB Programme being elevated, also the College and Career Pathways which is mandated by the state of Illinois. Schools are just getting on board with this and this is year two for our district. She added taking this path will ramp up some of our designations as a district in the state and includes the work the faculty has already engaged in which is standards-based learning. The leveraging of these things will be the sole focus going forward for at least the next one to three years. Dr. Norrell added that this committee would monitor the work that they are doing. With the plan that they are proposing, all students would be able to receive the IB designation. She added that there are schools successfully doing this that look like HF. In addition, Dr. Norrell noted that the district's Strategic Plan has been utilized in this proposal. They are anticipating to provide this opportunity to students in the fall of 2026 and they will be working on this plan all next year. Dr. Dallacqua has done this in her current district and they are one of the leaders in the state. An extensive presentation on Elevating the IB Programme with College and Career Pathways through Standards-Based Learning was provided which outlined the comprehensive alignment of the Diploma Programme with the Career-related Programme.

Dr. Alexander added that as they prepare to increase the district's internal capacity they will attend the IB Global conference in New Orleans. He noted that there will be a year of thoughtful planning as they expand the internal capacity and what the program will bring as it pertains to teachers, students, families and the community. Dr. Alexander asked for the committee's approval of the conference and the reallocation of resources along with the scheduling of two additional 6th assignments. Mr. Legardy extended his appreciation for the detailed and informative presentation along with the plan moving forward. Ms. Jackson stated that she appreciates the thoughtfulness and collaboration for our students. She added that she really appreciates how they have been able to leverage information from other districts who have done this. Ms. Jackson expressed a concern that the community may believe this is just an opportunity for our top students. She added that to open this up to all students the way it is laid out and the holistic approach is fantastic in addition to having a resource here to avoid the pitfalls and land mines. Ms. Jackson asked that as this evolves to provide the committee with a check point. Dr. Smith asked if there will be a barrier if not all of their plan can be implemented. Dr. Hester responded that they will have to ensure that it all goes together, being carefully constructed so there are not barriers. Mr. Legardy expressed that he is extremely pleased with the plan that has been presented and it appears to rectify the IB Program which is exciting to him. Dr. Norrell noted that there is just an additional \$1,000.00 cost to IB to proceed. Through articulation with the feeder schools, Dr. Norrell stated that their focus will be shared along with what the future focus will be so that the feeder schools can align themselves in the same direction. Mr. Legardy reiterated that this is a good path forward and he is glad that the IB Programme is salvageable and will not risk being canceled.

New Business

Policy Updates

This item was tabled and will be reviewed at a future date.

Instructional Resource for Introduction to Education

Dr. Hester requested approval for the purchase of an instructional resource for the Introduction to Education Course for the 2025-26 school year. Introduction to Education is offered for dual credit with Lewis University. The text being recommended is also being used by the students at Lewis University. The committee approved the administration's request and this item will be on the June 17, 2025 board agenda for approval.

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