

CRLS School Council: June 17, 2014

Damon Smith, Principal and Co-Chair

Adam Manacher, Co-Chair

Greta Hardina, Family Liaison

Janet O'Reilly, Faculty Rep

Ross Benson, Faculty Rep

John Delancey, LC - C Rep

Gail Stubbs, LC - L Rep

Emily Dexter, CSAG Rep

Lace Campbell, Arts Council Rep

Trina Abbott, incoming LC - Rep

Hae Kyung Chung, parent

Alice Heller, parent

School Council Elections

Greta announced three incoming council members: Trina Abbott LC-L Rep., Robert Birnbaum LC-R Rep., and Rabeya Akter At-Large Parent Rep.

Discussed choosing a new co-chair since Adam has served for 2 years

- Who is eligible?
- Must consider parity between faculty and parent reps
- Should it be someone who is currently serving two year term on council or can someone stay on after two years as co-chair
- Vote on new co-chair each year
- Work on finalizing by-laws and making decisions about details later, but choose now based on previous practice
- Gail Stubbs and John Delancey both interested in serving as co-chair, gave quick overview of why they wanted to do it and left the room for vote
- Gail voted in as co-chair for 2014-15 school year

Work on outreach to encourage a more diverse council. It has been the focus of the group for some time. Next year branching out to other sites will encourage diversity, but attendance at meetings is still an issue. How do we take the next step to diversify membership?

Incoming student body president is Sydney Fischer, needs to be added to the council list. If student body president is too busy to attend meetings, should other students have an opportunity to serve on council? Other students have shown interest. Students could elect a representative. Look at past practice and address in by-laws.

School Council By-Laws

(draft attached)

When we go into the community for off-site meetings, by-laws should be set. It will be difficult to encourage attendance if we are spending the whole meeting talking about details that don't matter to parents. Meetings must be engaging and welcoming.

By-law update: Legal Council was consulted and the draft looked fine, but they had three suggestions:

- Under Membership and Tenure, the bullet that reads, “The CRLS Family Liaison shall also serve at the discretion of the Principal,” should include something like, “or other CRLS staff designated by the principal. This is more flexible. Maybe there should be a back-up person listed if the Family Liaison isn’t available.
- Under Meeting Guidelines, add a line stating that notices about meetings will be posted in accordance with the school council rules.
- Under Member Responsibilities, it is important to address what the process would be for replacing a council member who doesn’t meet the responsibilities of serving on the council. Address the issue now before a situation arises that calls for making a decision about removing someone.

School Improvement Plan

(School Improvement Review attached)

Process is a continuation of last year’s document. Principal Smith asked by district to share template with council. The document includes the area identified last year as needing improvement and then the results and outcomes. There is also a section on accomplishments and challenges. One of the major challenges is untangling the huge number of issues that were identified during the NEASC review.

Look at other schools’ improvement plans. Framingham one example: fewer students of color but more taking AP classes.

Brockton: Core Values and school wide literacy plan were highlighted by the Institute of Excellence. Brockton is a NEASC Exemplar School. Brockton will be presenting at the CPS Educator conference at the end of June, and also meeting with leadership team.

DART – district analysis and review tools – select comparable schools and look at data. Link on CRLS website under Student Achievement. Framingham, Brockton, Waltham?

More interaction with Waltham. A group of teachers visited Waltham to look at academic programs, peer tutoring center, etc.

Honors/AP discussion:

Some schools make it more difficult for students to get into AP classes. Require that their AP students take test which is expensive for students. Should we subsidize? \$80+ per exam (\$20 for students with free and reduced lunch). We had 551 AP exams taken this year.

Do we give message across the board that all students belong in Honor/AP and that there is support if needed? Shouldn’t be encouraged to drop as soon as it gets challenging. Some students encourage others. Are Honors and AP seen as classes where students do their work and don’t cause behavior problems, but students are on their own with no nurturing? Or, students with potential but still need support? AVID is an example of a supportive program, but it’s small. Courageous conversations – can’t come from administration, evaluative aspect for teachers.

Very difficult to start and maintain conversations around dramatic separations at school. Having several different groups reading *The Other Wes Moore* was an attempt. Possible common reading for students in summer 15?

What about students struggling in honors who should be in CP? Are there enough in-depth conversations about course selections with guidance counselors? CP locked in to full year freshman English. Honors students have more choices/electives/opportunities because of schedule. Issue with co-taught classes: those students take English every other day for full year. Can't opt out. What about also offering honors English every other day? It would take away the stigma. Look at data –are there students who do well in 4 years of CP courses and successfully graduate from 4 year colleges?

All 9th grade students do a reading assessment. Full year English necessary because of the #s of students coming in below grade level – if block schedule might not have English again for year and a half.

Peer culture – “my friends aren't there – I can only learn within my peer network.”

Parent email about main cafeteria vs. media cafeteria, and divide. Media cafeteria seems to be based on interests/personality, not race. Also juniors and seniors. What about Cambridge Street vs. Broadway Street lunch?

Interesting NY Times article. Can we do something similar? Who Gets to Graduate,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/18/magazine/who-gets-to-graduate.html? r=0>

Send goals and ideas for speakers for next year's meeting to Gail at gail.stubbs@umb.edu.

Thank you to Adam for his hard work as Co-Chair.