

DPMS SCC Meeting Notes - February 12, 2020, 3:00-4:33.

SCC Members Present: Mary Anderson, Heather White (Chair), Stephanie Fowler, Allyson Dunbar, Chad Smith, Krista Pippin (Vice Chair), Holly Neibaur, Brandi Ripa, Megan Gebhard, Lindsey Moffat, Kevin Rothert, Cindy Krueger

SCC Members Absent: Robin Perry, Mike Neyman, Kit Linkous,

Staff and Community Members Present: Randall Seltz, Jenny Baer, Kathy Bitner, Kimberlee Montoya, Cynthia Lloyd, Kristana Price

1. Welcome and Approve January 8, 2020 SCC Meeting Notes - Heather White

- a. *Ms. Fowler made a motion to approve the meeting minutes with no changes. Ms. Dunbar made a second.*
- b. *The motion passed unanimously.*

2. Counselor Update - Megan Gebhard

- a. Ms. Gebhard provided an update on the programs and activities the counselors have been running throughout the school. For a list of activities, please see the PowerPoint slides presented in the meeting.
- b. The You Going Forward Field Trip is coming up on March 5. It's an awesome experience for students to explore career options.
- c. Students who opt to come to school but not go on the field trip will be assigned an alternate assignment. This is designed to increase participation and maintain an academic focus on the field trip.

3. Counselor SHARP Survey Data - Megan Gebhard

- a. Survey is conducted with a random sampling of students from schools all over the U.S. It aims to measure depressive symptoms, school engagement, drug and alcohol use, and other behaviors and attitudes among students.
- b. The survey compares students in Utah, DPMS, and national samples.
- c. Please view the slideshow for specific survey results.
- d. Ms. Neibaur asked several questions about how the survey was administered and what consent forms were sent to parents. Ms. Pippin said parents were notified prior to their students taking the survey and had to return a signed permission slip in order for their child to have access to the survey.
- e. Ms. Neibaur asked in what grades the survey is administered. Ms. Gebhard said it is administered in 6th, 8th, and 10th grade.
- f. Ms. Neibaur said the topics addressed on the survey are heavy and might make students feel uncomfortable.
- g. Mr. Smith said that students are aware of sensitive topics like suicide and there is a more open dialogue about these issues in an effort to support and help students and families.
- h. Mr. Smith said his takeaway is that parents ought to be more aware of how they can help kids and their families with some of these issues.

4. Board Update - Mary Anderson

- a. Mr. Chip Watts will be the principal at DPMS next year. He will be at the 2/25 Student-Led Conferences to meet and greet parents.

5. 6th grade Honors ELA & Math - Mary Anderson

- a. There is a discussion happening at the district level about whether honors classes in 6th grade are developmentally appropriate.
- b. Ms. Anderson presented the following information:
 - i. Most 6th grades across the state and nation do not have separate honors classes
 - ii. There is no research that suggests honors classes at the 6th grade level support more learning or more engagement with students
 - iii. Most 6th grade students have enough on their plate with the transition to a new school and 8 different teachers.
 - iv. Collecting 5th grade data is difficult and, at times, inaccurate.
 - v. With Open Source Math, the only difference between regular and honors are the extension questions at the end of each unit. If time allows in any class, teachers often use these questions to challenge students who finished the lesson quickly.
 - vi. Core classes at DPMS are already rigorous. Extension questions can be added to math and ELA for the students who would like them.
- c. Ms. Lloyd discussed how she uses the challenge questions in her 6th grade math class.
- d. Ms. Anderson said 6th grade English teachers are not allowed to assign additional Summer reading, which is now against the State School Board ruling. The honors and regular level ELA classes are essentially the same class now.
- e. Ms. White said having an honors section means the students in the class are more focused on what is being taught, rather than being off task and disrupting the class.
- f. Ms. Ripa said what Ms. White described sounds like a classroom behavior management problem, rather than an honors vs. regular class issue. She said her job is to provide the rigor that challenges students to reach their potential.
- g. Ms. Neibaur raised several concerns about what Ms. Anderson presented.
- h. Ms. Dunbar asked how having honors classes affects scheduling students. Ms. Gebhard said yes, trying to fit so many students into honors sections can create some scheduling difficulties. She said there is often a perception from parents that their children are eligible for honors when in reality the test scores do not always reflect that.
- i. Ms. Neibaur said that several schools require an honors entrance exam to be placed in the class.
- j. Ms. Lloyd said the Open Source Math program works best when there are students who can talk to each other about the math and the concepts being taught. She said the more successful conversations happen in regular level classes because there are varying levels of ability.
- k. Ms. Anderson said the district just published data that suggests that across the district, students in the regular level classes are scoring higher than the honors students on the benchmark assessments.
- l. Mr. Rothert asked why the honors and regular classes are the same curriculum now.
- m. Ms. Lloyd said the Open Source math curriculum has a high level of academic rigor for all students. It has brought honors level rigor to all classes.

- n. Ms. Anderson presented about the Math Pathways Summer Bridge Program where students are able to take 7th grade math in the summer between 6th and 7th grade and take 8th grade math during 7th grade, and then 9th grade math during 8th grade.
- o. Ms. Neibaur said the district has never had a specific official honors curriculum.
- p. Ms. Lloyd reiterated that the level of rigor is very high for students in the Open Source curriculum.
- q. Ms. Pippin said the perception on her team is that 6th grade honors behavior is sometimes more challenging.
- r. Ms. Neibaur said it feels like we're going backwards instead of trying to develop a strong honors program for 6th grade.
- s. Ms. Gebhard said she feels the majority of 6th graders are already so overwhelmed with the transition to middle school, adapting to a new schedule, and more challenging work that honors courses just increases stress levels. Many students who do not take honors in 6th grade feel they are not able to take honors in later grade levels.
- t. Dr. Bitner said she sees the same thing with 8th graders who feel like they are not able to handle an honors class in high school if they haven't tried to take honors classes in 6th or 7th grade.
- u. Ms. Neibaur said students are grouped in elementary school according to their ability.
- v. Ms. Anderson said the same grouping is happening in the classroom now with precision partnering. Teachers choose students of varying levels of understanding in order for them to have a conversation about the curriculum.
- w. Ms. Fowler asked if the district would allow the school to add to the math or ELA curriculum.
- x. Ms. Anderson said the district has purchased a set curriculum that must be implemented with fidelity. The same is true for English - there is not a lot of leeway to add or supplement the curriculum.
- y. Ms. Ripa said the district will not allow the teachers to modify or supplement the curriculum. They must implement it as it - with fidelity.
- z. Ms. Lloyd said she wants to encourage more 6th grade students to take the Math Pathway Bridge Program and many students do not feel they qualify if they are not in honors, even if they are capable of the work.
- aa. Ms. Neibaur said it has been difficult to sell the Math Pathways program to parents since they would have to transport their children to IHMS for 8th grade.
- bb. Ms. Gebhard said she is not sure that students are developmentally ready for honors in 6th grade and it sets many of them up for failure when they try to take on too much.
- cc. Ms. Pippin said she agrees with Ms. Gebhard. She also said she sees a lot of parents who are not willing to let their children learn from failure.
- dd. Ms. Baer suggested Ms. Anderson should visit the SCC meetings at the feeder schools and present the issue before the parents of the students who will be at DPMS in a few years.
- ee. Ms. Gebhard said this conversation is about trying to support all students developmentally, not with not supporting advanced learners. Advanced learners can be supported in all classes, honors or not.
- ff. Ms. Anderson said the best place to have this conversation is at the elementary schools with the incoming 6th graders.

- gg. Ms. Anderson said the new Open Source math provides much more depth for students to learn the WHY behind the HOW. Traditional math instruction only teaches students HOW to solve the problem.
- hh. Ms. Gebhard said we have a hard time knowing how many students qualify for honors math at the 6th grade level because of the unreliable data coming from elementary schools. It is tough to plan how many sections of the class we should schedule until we have all of the data.
- ii. Ms. Anderson said we need to make sure each class has at least 32 students in order for all of the classes to have a balance of numbers.
- jj. Ms. Lloyd discussed how the students in the honors classes have a more difficult time discussing the material because many of the students have a perception that they know how to solve the problem and are unwilling to entertain other ways of thinking about it.
- kk. Ms. Krueger said as a certified gifted and talented teacher she is an advocate for providing high quality, developmentally appropriate instruction for advanced learners. The math pathways bridge program is the best way to address those concerns for high achieving learners to have an honors experience in math.
- ll. Ms. Neibaur would like to table the discussion for now, but continue to discuss honors concerns in ELA next time.

6. Landtrust/TSSP - Mary Anderson

- a. Ms. Anderson said on Tuesday, February 18, we are going to work in teams to develop the TSSP plan. Members of the SCC are invited to participate in the development of the TSSP plan.
- b. Ms. Anderson explained the process we will use to develop the TSSP plan:
 - i. Problem statement
 - ii. SMART goal
 - iii. Action plan
 - iv. Measurement
 - v. Explanation of how it applies for special education students and ELL students
 - vi. Provide a budget for supplies
- c. We will have to determine which items we want to continue from the previous year's plan.
- d. All goals have to be based on data.

7. Electronics Policy

- a. Ms. Anderson presented the final draft of the DPMS Cell Phone Policy.
- b. After being discussed in an SCC meeting, changes were made. The draft was then presented to the BLT and additional changes were made. Ms. Price and Ms. Pedersen worked on revising the language for clarity. This is the 3rd reading.
- c. We will table the discussion for the next meeting.

8. Top 4 Climate Concerns - Ms. Anderson

- a. Ms. Neibaur said she would like to know what the next step is, when we will hear back from the school board about what we sent them.
- b. Ms. Neibaur volunteered to contact Susan Edwards and a school board member to follow up on her questions.

9. Next Month's Meeting - Mary Anderson

- a. Land Trust/TSSP
- b. 6th grade honors ELA (Mary Anderson)
- c. Electronics policy
- d. Timeline for Top 4 Climate Concerns (Holly Neibaur)
- e. 2 bills and a resolution from the legislature (Chad Smith)

10. *Ms. Anderson made a motion to end the meeting. Ms. Gebhard made a second to the motion. The vote was unanimous. Meeting Adjourned at 4:33.*

Meeting notes approved:

DRAFT