

Redwood High School

Department Chair Council

Minutes of the January 16, 2008 DCC Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. Present: Karen Barrett, Fran Bozdech, Heather Curtaz, Chris Gilmore, David Goldsmith, Jennifer Harris, Ann Jaime, Skip Lovelady, Keith Murray, Nancy Neu, David Plescia, Greg Stevens. Parents: Elaine Bengle, Ashu Sikand, Suman Vyas. Students: Sarah Barr, Danielle Magaline, Beau Shaw. Sam Miller took minutes.

Minutes from the 10/5/07 DCC Meeting (Nancy Neu)

The minutes approved as submitted.

Work Order Process (LaSandra White)

LaSandra clarified the work order process. All building work order requests should be emailed directly to Bill Bridges. Once Bill receives the request, he will direct it to the appropriate person on site or direct it to Joe Knighten at the Corp. Yard where Joe will assign it. Bill will respond to all work orders he receives. If anyone in your department has an outstanding work order that needs to be followed up on, please let LaSandra know.

Every 15 Minutes (Keith Murray)

Keith announced that Every 15 Minutes is scheduled to take place on March 19th and 20th. The crash scene will take place on the South lawn in front of the Amphitheater on the 19th and the assembly in the gym will be on the 20th. The assembly will include the junior and senior classes only. Freshman and sophomore classes will watch a video of the crash scene and evening guest speaker in their classes. Keith is currently in the process of selecting students to participate in the program. He is looking for approximately 30 students and is asking for any recommendations from the department members/teachers. He would like any student recommendations by Jan. 23rd, if possible. He distributed the handout which outlined the criteria that should be considered when recommending student. Selection input will also come from parents, staff, and student groups. The committee will make the final decision on which students will participate. Once the participating students are selected, Keith will be meeting with them on weekly basis. No names of selected students will be released. On the evening of the 19th, participating students will listen to a special guest speaker.

Blue Ribbon School (Nancy Neu)

Nancy told the group that the application process for the Blue Ribbon School is about to be put together. Stephannie Haver and Ann Tepovich have been working on the application. Nancy stated that the application process for the Blue Ribbon is much different than for the California Distinguished School and the criteria has changed over the years. The nominations are broken down into three different categories. We qualify in category "C", that is the percentage of students scoring at or above the proficient level in English/Language Arts and Math in the highest grade tested places the school at or above the 90th percentile when compared to other schools in the state. Our API and AYP scores are high and the state has already reviewed those scores. The Federal government is verifying our application. Nancy talked about the importance of continuing to keep our scores high by having at least 95% our students take the STAR and CAHSEE tests and begin talking with our students about the seriousness of doing well on the tests. Nancy plans on speaking to the junior classes about this. 35 schools in the state were nominated for the Blue Ribbon. Receiving the award would give the school national recognition and it would be noted on student's transcripts and the school profile. No other high school in Marin has received the Blue Ribbon Award.

Nancy talked about department goals that were set in the fall. She handed out their copies and asked that each department review where they are at in that process. This will be addressed more in the next DCC meeting in March. She stated that we need our students to be ready for STAR testing. Nancy reported that at the last Instructional Council meeting Data Director training was discussed. Teachers will be trained and will have access to the Data Director themselves. This tool will give teachers the capability to look at their students and access all of their past records which will provide teachers with some insight on the educational history of the students.

I. B. (Nancy Neu)

Steve Hettleman reported that he is working to meet one-to-one with staff for their feedback regarding the I.B. Program. There were conflicting opinions about the program among the staff. Some concerns included:

- Non-Redwood students coming to Redwood to take I.B courses (One suggestion was to have the I.B. courses held at the Carlisle Building)
- The attention given to the I.B. Program would be taking away focus/programs from low achieving students (Steve reported that currently our district spent \$130,000 on that population in creating new sections, in staff development programs, and literacy coaches. No less than \$40,000 was spent on supplies to help support them.)
- There was concern about the impact on I.B. would have on existing programs. (With the I.B. Program, there is

flexibility in what's offered. A.P. classes will still be offered as well. Steve noted that some departments will have an easier time implementing I.B. than others)

- Concerns about process with regards to changes in the curriculum process
- How will the program be evaluated and will it be here forever? (Steve Butler said that I.B. courses need to go through the Instructional Council and standard course eval will be used for evaluation process)
- Concern about short-changing students chances of getting into college without A.P. classes (Students who take high level I.B. courses with a score of 4 – 5 match a score of 3 in A.P. Schools are aware of the level of I.B.)

I.B. has an online center that teachers can access. If any teacher is interested in accessing the website, give Steve their name and he will give them a password. The Board and Superintendent support the implementation of the I.B. Program. I.B.'s philosophy focuses on depth, while A.P. focuses on coverage. Steve will write the application and he has asked the Admin. to meet individually with departments to speak with them. I.B. benefits students intellectually and that's why it is being brought here. I.B. has extensive quality control and feedback as well as staff development. Steve and Nancy have been contacting a Santa Rosa school with the I.B. program to bring back feedback here. They will also be meeting with an I.B. consultant on Jan. 30th to meet with teachers who have any questions. Part A of the application (finance, commitment, etc) will be submitted March 1st and part B is due on June 1st. Steve will be meeting with Nancy Forester twice before the application is due.

9th/10th Grade Support Programs (Nancy Neu)

Nancy said that she will present an overview at the next staff meeting on at-risk students. The focus will be on identified 9th grade at-risk students (Alpha, Academic Workshop, and Cluster). In order to identify these students, teachers and Admin looked at 8th grade CUM files, GPA's, etc. Changes were made in the program. Nancy reported that according to the data, 9th grade Alpha students improved their STAR scores and their GPA's. There were no "F's" in the Alpha 9 class. They also improved in areas of attendance, Core Portfolio scores, and discipline. There were mixed results in the Academic Workshop class, but overall attendance improved (copies of this statistical data will be handed-out at the staff meeting). Nancy believes we are beginning to reach and hold on to these kids, we need to continue to find methods to support these students. Homework group and other programs have been started, but there are still some students that are resistant to support programs. We still need to think about alternative programs that will motivate kids (i.e. Culinary Program). The Special Education department wants to see that become a focus. Alpha 10 students reported feeling supported and ready to exit the program. Skip Lovelady noted that making changes (i.e. more block periods) may benefit students. Chris Gilmore reported there are currently twice as many students wanting to enter Alpha now.

Back-to-School Night/Open House (Nancy Neu)

Back-to-School Night has been scheduled for September 4, 2008, but the original date for Open House (April 9, 2009) is Passover, therefore, Open House will be moved to the week before, Thursday, April 2, 2009. Nancy asked the DCC if the minimum day should also be moved to the Friday after Open House (Friday, April 3, 2009) or leave it scheduled for the Friday before the break (Friday, April 10, 2009). The DCC will take back to their departments for discussion and bring back at the next DCC meeting in March.

A.P. Honors (Nancy Neu)

Nancy asked department chairs to start scheduling their A.P. informational meeting and testing dates and putting them on the calendar in room 107 (Sally Robert) and give those dates to Sam to input in the A.P. Matrix. Nancy reported that last year's dates worked well. Names will be due prior to the break on April 3rd. Matrix should be ready in early March.

8th and 9th Grade Registration (Fran Bozdech)

Fran reported that the 8th Grade Parent Night has been scheduled for March 6, 2008 and the 9th grade registration has been scheduled for March 13th, 2008. The process will be same this year as it was last year. Similar information is provided to parents at both meetings, but at the 8th Grade Parent Night, parents have the opportunity to meet with the elective teachers.

PTSA Membership (Fran Bozdech)

Fran asked the DCC to talk to their departments and encourage people to sign-up for the PTSA. Fran has the forms if you need them.

Additional Items

- Steve Hettleman said that he would email out to the DCC his notes on his discussions regarding the I.B. Program with the staff, but asked that they do not make additional copies for their departments; only share out the information

through discussion in order to avoid back-and-forth emailing.

- Steve announced that the English department is preparing for their used book sale and is asking Homeroom to collect books. The Homeroom with the most books collected will win a prize.

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.