

Minutes of DSA School Improvement Team Meeting January 15, 2014

Attendance: Hawks, Cunny, Nagel, Jones, Martin-Klein, Tolbert, Bailey, Stein, Rice, Borg, Ciccone, Vernon, Martin, Payan, Smith, Corey

5:00 Opening of meeting; Discuss agenda items and nothing to add

5:05 Approval of minutes – approved

5:07 Results from Focus Groups

- Tolbert shared on Literacy Group discussion
 - Improve pedagogy (art and science of instruction)
 - Improve literacy
 - Teacher and student efforts
 - Motivational concerns, Effect of practices, “Best Practices”
 - Still in planning and idea generating phase

- Mr. Hawks gives a suggestion:
 - Assign classroom warm up –
 - Example: Please talk about the conflict between “A and B” and write a paragraph/draw a diagram
 - If you notice someone isn’t reading, pull them to the side and discuss the reading with them (are you reading? If not, find out where the problem is: unable to read, comprehend, etc.)

- Discussion of ACT vs. SAT (from the concern of the actual reading of the test)
 - NOTE: The state has gone completely to the ACT
 - Students didn’t necessarily not know the material but couldn’t deconstruct the questions***
 - The questions are pretty much at grade level
 - Some high school textbooks “dumb it down” – written at a 6th or 7th grade level
 - Need to teach or give explanation of how to “deconstruct” questions and the processes in order to be successful
 - *** This is not a new problem

5:19 Motivation and its effect on Literacy and Reading Level

5:21 Culture of Success but also need a culture of “WORK” says Mr. Hawks

5:24 – Math subcommittee reports

- Teachers need to support Math Literacy – understanding what the problem is asking. Some students seem to need more support with Math Vocabulary.

5:26 – Parent involvement subcommittee report

- What is the problem?
 - Getting parents to come the PEP meetings
- This should be a Goal for School Improvement Plan for next year
 - Facilitating relationships between parents and school before problems arise
 - Partnerships ahead of time
 - PEP's are 15 minutes beaurocratic necessities vs. truly beneficial meetings
 - When parents come they feel it is a Shaming experience (“your kid is doing poorly”)
 - We need to think of ways to create this partnership
 - Remember there is a difference between parent involvement vs parents as teachers
- Idea to reach out to parents and get more information to parents and students: Record informational meetings and put on School Youtube site to access at times other than the meetings since some parents have schedule conflicts with meeting time.

5:40 – Principal's Update

“The Reading Apprenticeship Method” – an approach to teaching understanding

- Learning the language of the different subject disciplines
- Learning meanings from the text
- Different types of meanings
- Certain language parts particular to a subject area

5:50 – Continuing the conversation on parent involvement and student success: Place proper responsibility on student – Model for students the way to take responsibility.

Suggestion of the SIT: Require students to come to most parent/student/teacher meetings. Help the student understand what they need to do to be successful.

6:00 Meeting adjourned. Next meeting Feb. 19.