

DSA SIT MEETING Feb 19, 2014

Attendance: Charlene Martin-Kline, David Hawks, Allison Rice, Sherine Vernon, David Stein, Melba Payan, Benjamin Bailey, Patrick Ritchie, Karen Ciccone, Mark Maya, Larry Downing, Ken Jones, Michelle Hunt, Helen Cunny, Sarah Nagel

The meeting started at 5 pm.

Minutes from last meeting were approved.

School Calendar for next year: The two options, A and B were discussed. B was preferred with a 2 week winter break and an earlier spring break with positioning over weekends allowing for easier travel.

Duke Partnership(DGIN) : David Stein announced that his job duties have changed and now Jenny Carolina will be coming to the SIT meeting. David will be greatly missed and the team thanked him for all his work over the years. Two DGIN proposals were discussed and approved:

- 1) Ms. VanDis: "Sacrificial Poets" Project to work with writing and English classes. Sacrificial Poets is a local group that will come to school to work with students to express themselves through oral and written language. This group has great appeal to students and is very diverse. This fits well with our literacy goals.
- 2) Mr. Nevels: proposal for "deconstructing auditions," with a high quality Broadway artist to work with theatre students (master class) and also give a performance with the whole DSA community invited. This will help students learn to build connections with professionals working in the field, help open doors. Mr. Nevels will be asked to video some of the instruction so it can be shared with other student groups in the future.

Parent Input: Helen Cunny shared an email she received from a parent to the SIT concerning classroom participation. The parent suggested classes, especially AP classes, have class participation grades to encourage students to come to class having read the material and be prepared for discussions. It was suggested that this might decrease the "blank stares" teachers sometimes receive when they try to start classroom discussions. Mr. Hawks said this is an issue at many schools. Teachers said they would like a copy of the email to discuss with their departments. A copy was provided.

SIT Committee Norms and Goals were presented by Dr. Nagel and Mr. Hawks, discussed and adopted:

- 1) Expectations/norms for the SIT meeting
 - a. Timely – 1 hour maximum
 - b. Considerate – if you must leave early, do so quietly and swiftly
 - c. Participatory – all are welcome to speak

- d. Oriented toward the entire school – teachers should speak for their departments, not their classrooms
 - e. Have a printed agenda
2. Goals -- in the past SIT goals have been fairly strictly directed by the district; now we may have more freedom.
- a. We must in some way communicate to our students and parents that our culture of success is a direct result of the work that we put in. “Work Harder, Get Smarter”
 - b. We need some way to guide/aid the 9th grade orientation/transition
 - c. Other issues/needs of the school community as they arise

All agreed to follow these norms and goals for SIT meetings.

Principal’s update: Mr. Hawks presented his vision for the future at DSA. He wants to capitalize on our culture of the arts and build on our culture of success. The major detractor to our culture of success is that 20 to 30 percent of our students don’t have the work ethic to match their desires for success. So we need a plan to communicate to students: “Work Harder, Get Smarter.” Students need to be taught explicit skills regarding how to work. We have a unique situation where we have students for 7 years, in grades 6 to 12; we need a growth plan for students at each grade level.

Develop a rubric of our support plan for students so it is transparent to all parties if students are not succeeding; will allow gaps to be identified. All teachers in all subjects will offer tutoring opportunities.

Student development is a goal with student involvement and growth. This includes making sure all students have the opportunity to plug into school co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Each teacher needs to support a club or other activity. DSA needs to have summer camps where students are engaged over the summer.

School climate is a strength at DSA. DSA has a safe and orderly learning environment. It stresses tolerance, diversity and personal responsibility. This will continue to be stressed.

Make a plan to capture more parent involvement starting in 6th grade. They can start with being involved in 6th grade with the PTA, and then as their children get older, they can help with field trips, proctoring, dances, the booster clubs and other school activities. Their enthusiasm with winning the lottery and support of the school needs to be captured.

Continue strategic communication plan with the community that emphasizes our focus on visual and performing arts and rigorous academics to help parents/students decide if DSA is the right choice for them.

These and more ideas will be discussed in the next meeting.