

05/15/2007 Meeting Minutes
School Advisory Council, Mountain Vista High School

Attendees

Wendy Brodsky
Nancy Fritz
Steve Johnson
Dave Peters
Jennifer Simmons

Sheri Bryant
Mary Godsey
Larry Kerr
Sonny Poling
Ali Skalla

Shannon Carmody
Ingrid Johnson
Lisa Myers
Ron Rohlfling
Leslie Trow

Guest: Corrie Hitchens, Dean

Action Items

- ___ All – Send any agenda items you have for the June meeting to Wendy by May 29 so that she can put together the agenda before her vacation.
- ___ Steve – Fix Course Guide if it says that AP exams are required. They are only encouraged.
- ___ Sonny, Mary: Help Corrie Hitchens with the parent guide.
- ___ Steve – Discuss the NEFI curriculum opportunity with the Department Chairs.
- ___ Chairperson - Move teacher issues up to earlier in the agenda since the teachers have to leave for 2nd period.

Approval of Minutes

04/17/2007 minutes were approved with one change. Shannon Carmody was in attendance at the 4/17 meeting.

School-Wide Communications Efforts

Corrie Hitchens, Dean, reviewed the parent guide she is compiling and the SAC members provided feedback as follows:

- Similar to Welcome Committee booklet that Mary Godsey has (20 pages).
- Need to speak to MVHS's policies: 1) pull versus push communications 2) students advocate for themselves.
- Include a checklist for new parents (e.g., Infinite Campus login / password, check website weekly, etc.)
- Scholar Pass (Mention that the student has to have the community service completed.)
- Parking
- Recognition (e.g., lettering)
- AP – Do you have to take the AP exam?
- Target audience: Parents only (How do I learn about a brand new school?)
- Format you can put in a purse.
- Don't put too much in it.
- Have the information in an easily accessible place of the website.

Action: Fix Course Guide if it says that AP exams are required. They are only encouraged.

Action: Sonny and Mary will help Corrie with the guide.

By-Law Discussion / Membership

By-Laws were adopted.

We're in line to get the School Improvement funds for the 2007-2008 school year. We'll deal with the rest of the SAC compliance requirements in Fall.

Book Swap Sub-Committee Update

The committee is working with Sheri Bryant and Cindy Gardner, DECA and FBLA sponsors respectively, to put together a book swap for AP and Honors students. The following options are being considered:

- (This is the preferred option if there's enough business to justify the effort.) DECA / FBLA sell consigned books as a fundraiser.
- Book swap day in the cafeteria once or twice a year.
- Simple website where sellers can list information and buyers can contact them.
- Just pointing students to places where they can buy used books (e.g., half.com, amazon.com, etc.).

SAC members provided input and decided that SAC approval for the final approach / plan is not required.

School Improvement Dollars

Funding is to align with the accomplishment of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which, in turn, must address the End Statement (G1) and / or Executive Limitation 2.0. The District has streamlined the process and forms. Need to settle on the goals and then establish action plans towards achieving the goals. Then, can figure out how to best allocate the School Improvement Dollars. At the June meeting, will share the feedback from the students.

Next year, there will be a website where every school's SIP will be posted. The SIP process is becoming more of an ongoing process instead of an event each year.

NEFI – National Endowment of Financial Education – provides free curriculum guides to teach high schoolers about all things financial (e.g., taxes, W4, college financials, budgeting, cost of living, credit cards, etc.). Sheri Bryant and some of the CFS teachers have used the curriculum. It is flexible and can be taught in many ways. It could be taught during RAP, although student feedback was that it might not go over well in RAP (unless it was limited to once a month). It's an excellent reference for kids after they leave High School. Steve would like to wait until Fall for the new Assistant Principal to start and he/she will be assigned to look at how best to incorporate this program school-wide. This is most critical for those students who don't take Marketing or CFS.

Action: Steve to discuss the NEFI curriculum opportunity with the Department Chairs.

Critical Thinking Workshop

Feedback about workshop:

- First day – grueling and intense. Helped identify things that teachers can do differently to challenge all students with critical thinking. Very valuable.
- Observations from some parents: Critical thinking happens in elementary, but is lost in middle school – more of a box. HS – students are allowed to come back into critical thinking in *some* classes.
- Powerful implications for the school. See a gap K-12 in explicit instructions to kids, “What does it mean to be a thinker?” This framework is nice for helping kids learn.
- IB program overseas – one of the components, Junior Class: Theory of Knowledge – all about critical thinking. Teaches kids to be critical of what they're hearing. Helps them think about how they think. Any chance MVHS could have a course about thinking?
- Will apply differently in each class, but will apply.

Next steps: A small group will meet with a group of teachers who will work towards developing a plan for next year and a 3-5 year plan. This is a feeder effort, at the school board's direction. MVHS is taking the lead on critical thinking, other feeders are taking the lead on other pieces of the end statement. It has great potential,

but it must be taken from theoretical to practical. For example, what does this look like for a teacher on a day-to-day basis and how would it be implemented in a classroom?

Would like to know if kids are talking about this at home. What do they think?

Concern: How do you train the people who weren't there?

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Department chairs are leaning towards going back to last year's system: Thursday night and then the following Tuesday night once a semester.

The key will be to stick to the times.

Building Decorations

Ali presented the ideas from Student Council which include:

- More cork boards in the pods
- Victory board
- Bulletin boards by the library
- Decorate each classroom with something to do with school spirit
- Make the inside feel different than other DC High Schools
- School logo on the floor
- Use more school colors instead of purple
- MVHS on the rafters
- Library – Make it look more like MVHS

Steve would like to commission students to create more artwork for around the building. It would be nice to have a Stage Flight Theatre mural (like HRHS's).

We must be careful not to overdo the school colors.

Staffing

Steve just posted a couple of requisitions for a new Math teacher, a part-time Science teacher, another Counselor and another Assistant Principal to replace Scott Allensworth who's going to Jeffco and who can really focus on curriculum and instruction.

Academic Lettering Policy

The wording was approved with one minor change. Changed "another" in second paragraph to "an." This will be in place for Spring, 2008 letters.

Open Forum

Action: Move teacher issues up to earlier in the agenda since the teachers have to leave.

Issue Bin

- IC and updates
- Honor Roll Posting – other student recognition issues
- Discussion about "bribing" students to attend CSAP and take it seriously. Where is the accountability for kids who don't attend and take it seriously?
- Student accountability – citizenship – perhaps use some of the \$60 towards this

Future Meeting Agenda Items

- Review norms again at June meeting
- School Budget / Tax Dollar Spending (How to apply the \$60/student) **Next steps:** At the next two SAC meetings, we'll focus on getting school goals firmed up and then go back to the list for correlation between these ideas and the school goals. We will need to know the relative costs.
- DAC
- Infinite Campus
- Review implementation of NEFI curriculum when new AP is on board
- Issue Bin (see above)
- Update: Staffing
- Update: Book Swap Sub-Committee
- Update: Storage Unit Sub-Committee
- Update: Building Decorations (next steps)
- Update: School Wide Communication Efforts – Parent Sub-Committee (pull versus push communications, new parent primer)
- Safety (address in Spring)
- Credit towards DCSD graduation and college entrance requirements for Foreign Language and High School-level Math taken in Middle School. (Status? Is this tied to the graduation requirements survey, or can we influence this now some other way?)
- Review of outstanding action items
 - Was the AP exam wording fixed in the course guide?
 - What was the input from the students about how to spend the “School Improvement Dollars?”
 - Were non-elected parents invited to future SAC meetings?
 - SAC website – more discussion needed? Were meeting dates changed on the website (to 3rd Tuesday of the month and 7am to 8:15am)?
 - Availability of student transcripts in IC – more discussion needed?
 - Name tags available before 7am – procedure in place?
 - Honors English action item. Did the department chair change the wording about the textbooks for 9th grade Honors English?
 - Explanation about where tax dollars go
 - Community rep for SAC
 - Result of Steve looking into the possibility of giving credit for pluses and minuses to motivate kids to try harder (e.g., change a grade from a B to an A-).
 - Status - 2nd semester Back to School Night?
 - Was a message put into IC stating that the expected turnaround time for getting grades into IC is two weeks?
 - Were students informed about the academic lettering policies as well as what happens when graduating with high honors?

Next Meeting

June 19 at 4pm