

MSAD 68
AD HOC SECONDARY STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING
SeDoMoCha Elementary Multi-Purpose Room
September 2, 2009
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Members Present: Sue Mackey Andrews, Vandy Hewett, Cindy Ranta, Joy LaCasce, Walt Emmons, Jane Conroy

District Representative: Alan Smith, MSAD 68 Superintendent

MINUTES

1. Introductions/Committee Member Updates

2. Review of Minutes

- Minutes of the August 19th and August 26th meetings were approved as written.

3. Review of Law Enforcement Presentation

4. Foxcroft Academy Presentation

- Vandy Hewett, Foxcroft Academy Head of Schools, introduced Jonathan Pratt, Academic Dean, who used a PowerPoint presentation to give an overview of the programming that is available at Foxcroft Academy as well as a folder which was distributed to Committee members that contained information that is given to parents/students of Foxcroft Academy, including the student handbook and course guide.
- Mr. Pratt began the presentation by explaining the graduation requirements for Foxcroft Academy which are the following:
 - At least 8 semesters of secondary school enrollment
 - At least 17 credits from mandatory courses
 - At least 3 credits from elective courses
 - At least 36 hours of community service
- Mr. Pratt then provided an overview of the courses that are available to students at four different levels of study: general, college preparatory, college preparatory advanced and Advanced Placement. In addition to the mandatory classes in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health, Computer Applications and Visual and Performing Arts, FA offers World Languages, which includes French, Spanish, Chinese and Latin. Students are also offered electives in consumer and family sciences and technical education. The Technical Education program includes classes such as Auto Maintenance Technology, Woodworking, Welding and Engineering/CAD. Mr. Pratt noted that 179 students are enrolled in at least one tech education course.
- The Academy also has a Special Education program that offers students classes in basic math, English and social studies as well as life skills and career prep.

- Distance learning is also provided to students as an opportunity to enhance or enrich the curriculum by offering them the chance to take a class that they are interested in that might not be offered at the high school. Virtual High School (www.govhs.org) is one of these programs that the high school utilizes. Another program that is available to students offers AP courses online free of charge. This website is www.ap4all.org.
- Educational partnerships are maintained with Tri-County Technical Center, Upward Bound and Early College for ME as well as SeDoMoCha. Rebuilding bridges with the middle school is of interest to the high school and has been occurring in such areas as math partnerships, G&T support and the 8th Grade Step-Up, which allowed the eighth graders to spend time at the high school.
- Academics at Foxcroft Academy are standards-based. A grade of C or better in all standards within each course is required to pass.
- Academic Supports are offered to students in many forms, such as study halls, conference periods, academic support periods (ASP), opportunities to take replacement assessments as well as the opportunity to raise the grade of a standard within a course that the student may not have passed. A question was raised about access during ASP time. Every effort is made to ensure that students are able to access extra help. Although there may be issues with bus students connecting with teachers after school, it was not seen as a pervasive problem and most students were able to get help if needed. Another question was asked about the replacement assessment policy and whether the teacher was able to replace the assessment with another format or another assessment to test the student's knowledge in a particular subject area. Mr. Pratt noted that replacement tests were left up to the discretion of the teacher.
- Reports are sent home to parents on a regular basis. Parent-teacher conferences occur mid-semester. Graduation Progress Reports, which have been sent to rising seniors in the past, were sent to rising sophomores and juniors over the summer.
- Foxcroft Academy offers many extra- and co-curricular activities for its students.
- As local student enrollment has decreased dramatically over the years, FA has looked at ways of sustaining its program. The recent completion of the \$7 million dorm project is a result of an increasing international student enrollment. This increase makes more money available for programming to benefit all students.
- It was also noted that during the Academy's annual giving campaign, the biggest contributors are FA alumni with a majority of the contributions being used toward educational programming for the students.

5. Public Comments/Synthesis

- Alan Smith commented that he would like to continue building the relationship between MSAD 68 and Foxcroft Academy

- Joy LaCasce commented that during her time on the School Board that she had seen a progression to the positive between the relationship between the District and FA. She felt that more communication/contact needed to exist between the Boards and that wished the District could have a little more input into the curriculum at the high school. She hoped for more coordination with PHEC and wanted FA to look at their schedule to make it easier for TCTC students to attend and to look into doing more for the general-level student.
- Jane Conroy asked for clarification between an advisor and guidance at the high school. Lee Pearsall, Director of Counseling Services at FA, explained that the guidance position was more about academics/college support and she likened advisors to being part of a “supportive family” for the students.
- Walt Emmons noted that what he appreciated about the TCTC presentation at a previous meeting was that the school seemed to be about instilling expectations and gravitating students toward something in the future and that there seemed to be more responsibility and accountability. He hoped that the students at the high school would be held to that same accountability and that they would be better prepared for their future as possible.
- Jon Pratt noted that FA did not have the same flexibility that TCTC has with students that don't want to be held accountable, but that there was always room to be more explicit.
- Others commented on the seeming disconnect amongst the local students and the international students and wondered if enough was being done to integrate the students. Vandy Hewett noted that the integration during the day was probably more prevalent, but the high school was trying to do more.
- A comment was made about drop-outs and what the high school was doing in that regards. Jon Pratt stated the Academy was always looking at this and that in reality, the high school probably spent more time on students that were struggling than those that weren't.

6. Review of Survey Instrument/Consolidation Comments

7. Review of Schedule/Presenters

- Sue has been in contact with Deb Boyd, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, and she has recommended some businesses that will present to the Ad Hoc Committee on September 30. The rest of the scheduled Committee meetings are as follows: 10/7 – Parent Forum, 10/14 – Community agencies, 10/21 – Committee work-discussion session, 10/28 – Review of report to the MSAD 68 Board of Directors.

8. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Berce