

HIGHLY CAPABLE LEARNERS PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 16, 2017
9:30am to 11:30am
Central Services

Attendees:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Airoidi
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cathy Beecham
<input type="checkbox"/> Cathie Brown
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dawn Christiana
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Copland
<input type="checkbox"/> Veronica Douglas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prateek Dutta
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chelsea Jackson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rhonda Schraeder-Young | <input type="checkbox"/> Andreas Hajos
<input type="checkbox"/> Robert Kalahan
<input type="checkbox"/> Sharon King
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maryann Kuhn
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regan Levinson
<input type="checkbox"/> Michelle Morse
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trish Neary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quenby Peterson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Pottle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vicky Reardon
<input type="checkbox"/> Carrie Schwarz
<input type="checkbox"/> Brad Stone
<input type="checkbox"/> Maia Thomas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Walker
<input type="checkbox"/> Sara White
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keith Schacht |
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TOPIC	DISCUSSION	DECISION
Welcome	- Dawn Christiana, Director of Teaching and Learning and lead for Highly Capable, welcomed members back from the unexpected break, due to snow days, and went over agenda topics.	
High School – Catalog Discussion	<p>- Keith Schacht, Director of Teaching and Learning, explained after a five-year process we are starting to see a “one schoolhouse” approach to our high school catalog of courses for the 2017-18 school year.</p> <p>- Keith shared the High School Graduation Planning Guide and Course Catalog 2017-18.</p> <p>- A parent asked what a “4x8 schedule” refers to? Keith explained right now we have a six-period day where classes have 55 minutes. Students are often running from class to class and the new high school schedule (also known as 4x8) will allow for eight classes total, however students will attend four classes each day that alternate every other day.</p> <p>- A member voiced concern regarding more classes possibly meaning more homework. Keith said this is not necessarily the case, parents and students should work together to find balance between more rigorous courses and elective courses.</p> <p>- Prateek Dutta, Harvard Doctoral Resident, shared that the new high school schedule has classes being 85 minute periods, which allows for a deeper dive into the content that is being taught versus attempting to cover more material.</p> <p>- Mike Copland, Deputy Superintendent, wanted to make sure members understood that with the new high school schedule, students will be able to access areas of passion where before they had to give up areas of passion in order to fulfill course requirements.</p>	* Possibility of a better explanation regarding Advanced Placement courses (AP courses) and the understanding that taking AP courses does not guarantee college credit. Earning college credit is dependent on the college/university.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A parent voiced concerns around teachers who do not assign homework for their classes. - Dawn spoke to some of the “no homework” courses being offered and that most rigorous classes students participate in will not have as much homework because the focused work time is happening in the classroom. She also shared how professional development choice courses and learning focus days for staff emphasize differentiation for students. One of the things she has been doing is working with High School English teachers to think about transitions in the classroom and make sure we are using every instructional minute to its fullest potential. - Dawn recognized that it is difficult to be a parent of a high school student because parents become more of a consultant as students move through their high school career and beyond. - One parent asked about students being able to sign up for a class that might not be offered at their home school but would be offered at another high school. - Keith explained students can sign up for these classes, however the transportation portion is still being figured out. - Another parent asked about the “T*” and what it means throughout the new high school catalog. - Keith explained these are classes that are technology based and if students want Bellingham Technical College credit, they can pay a \$25 fee for the course. - Keith went over AP courses and what universities are looking for regarding student’s transcripts and AP courses. 	
<p>High School Credits and College Credits Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prateek asked members to read an article from The Washington Post regarding the process for getting into college and asked for comments or initial thoughts. - Many parents shared concerns regarding the focus on volunteer services and the pressure students are now feeling to perform in the volunteer sector. - Prateek talked about depth versus breadth of volunteer work. Instead of jumping around from one volunteer option to another, it may be wise to establish oneself at a specific volunteer institution for an extended period of time. - A parent asked if there was a certain number of AP classes that a place like Harvard would be looking for when students apply. - Prateek said it is not necessarily about how many courses a student is taking but rather how well they are doing in all areas of their life. For example, two AP courses, leading a volunteer effort, watching a sibling while parents work, etc. - A parent voiced concern around the mindset that we need to check boxes off for our kids to get to where they need to be when applying to colleges. - Prateek shared there is no magic formula but rather finding a passion where you can do your best work and follow that passion. - Dawn shared The Bellingham Promise is focused on the whole child and parents and teachers working together to develop the student’s “best self” and that looks different for every child. 	<p><u>*Suggested reading for members: <i>There is Life After College</i> by Jeffrey J. Selingo</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prateek discussed AP vs College in the High School. - Dawn encouraged parents to really think about their individual child and what support can help meet their child's specific needs. For example, some students would do awesome with Running Start and others would find it very difficult. 	
Check In with High School Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rhonda Schraeder-Young, the Case Manager for students identified Highly Capable, shared that earlier in the morning she met with eighth grade students identified Highly Capable and the role she would play in their high school career going forward. - Rhonda also shared that initially the high school students she checks in with were hesitant about the new high school schedule, however as more information becomes available they have become more excited about the possibilities. - Rhonda checks in with students in the fall to see how the beginning of the year is going. She talks with them about scheduling, stress, college planning, etc. Depending on the grade of the student, she will talk about the steps they should be taking during that year, for example juniors focus on SAT, what they want to do after high school, and letters of recommendation. - Dawn took a moment to explain the case manager role and how it has changed over the past couple of years as the number of identified students has increased. There is a large number of identified students moving up through middle school and high school at this time and finding ways to supports these students can be challenging. 	
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dawn thanked members for engaging in the work and asked for suggestions for the March meeting. Suggestions were . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Start with Q&A going over what we discussed during this meeting. - Student Learning Plan (SLP) conversation about whether we should send a blank SLP letter home. - Do ninth grade parents have an information meeting to find out more about AP, Running Start, College in the High School? 	

**FOR NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, March 16, 2017**