



High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group Meeting Minutes September 22, 2016

Welcome and Agenda Overview

Co-chair assistant superintendent Steve Clarke welcomed everyone, then co-chair administrator on special assignment Jeannie Hayden outlined the meeting agenda and referenced handouts (all of which are included in links throughout these minutes).

Consider Revisions to Student Benefits List Based on Sept. 1st Advisory Group Discussion

Jeannie directed everyone to review the draft student benefits as well as suggestion revisions from the first advisory session.

Draft Student Benefits: The new schedule will support students in:	Revisions The new schedule will support students in:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalizing their high school experiences; schedule increases flexibility for students, allows them to explore and develop areas of interest and passion and meets their individual needs 2. Taking robust courses; being challenged and provided with support in taking rigorous courses 3. Reducing barriers in accessing courses at their home schools as well as at intra-district sites 4. Meeting graduation requirements (particularly those who historically disproportionately do not) 5. Not wanting or needing to waive courses 6. Staying in our high schools 7. Sleeping later (schedule adheres to medical research and ensure that students are not starting school activities early in the morning) 8. Developing a balanced life (allowing time outside of school for activities, athletics, family, and personal endeavors) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalizing high school educational plans. The new schedule increases flexibility for students to explore and develop areas of interest and passion and create an intentional, individualized pathway 2. Being challenged and inspired to take rigorous courses (differentiated with staff support). 3. Equitably accessing courses. The new schedule will allow students to access new/more courses at their home high school, intra-district sites and other programs in our community. 4. Graduating in a timely manner. 5. Addressing health and wellness issues. The new schedule adheres to medical research around teenage sleep patterns. 6. Graduating prepared for success in the global community and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options to support diversity of life choices. 7. Meeting homework requirements, thus allowing time for activities, family and personal endeavors. Preparing for the new schedule gives us the opportunity to examine the role of homework to help students develop habits of a balanced life.

Questions/comments included:

Item #6: How will the new schedule make this outcome more likely?

Response: While we will need to work on how we measure student success, clearly the new schedule offers access to more possibilities.

Item #7: Because the school day is being extended, we are potentially taking more time away from family, so would “allowing time for activities, family, and personal endeavors” be because of less homework?

Response: A group engaged in a discussion about homework including comments about students’ experiences when we moved from six periods to alternating three period blocks, how students have expressed concern about more class periods potentially resulting in more homework and questioned the value of homework. We will need to be thoughtful about the purpose of and impact of homework on students/families.

Item #4: “Timely” seems like a very general term. We’d like to see graduation rates increase. For most students that’s in a four-year time period, others need more time and five years may be timely for them.

Summary: Jeannie and Jackie Brawley, Communications Manager, will consider suggestions and further revise the list of student benefits.

Graduation Requirements Work Group Update and Dialogue

Steve Clarke reported on the first meeting of the Graduation Requirements work group. He shared that Debra Smith-Hicks, a new Squalicum High School counselor from Sedro-Woolley High School (which is on a 4x8 schedule), provided some great insight. Steve provided a written [update](#) from the group's September 13, 2016 meeting.

Steve reviewed the recommendations from the group so far. One of those recommendations is the possible requirement of a one semester technical literacy class in ninth grade. CTE (Career and Technical Education) Director Jeff Tetrick shared that some staff report that many students are lacking needed technical skills. While students are tech savvy in many ways, they are often lacking in others (analyzing credibility of information, understanding internet ethics, etc.). The technical literacy course curriculum will change according to student needs. A challenge test for the tech class would be developed so that students can potentially "test out."

Steve noted that it may be that a school district is not able to change the graduation requirements for a class of students once the requirements have been published. That has not been confirmed yet by legal counsel.

At next week's meeting, this group will focus on the total number of credits required to graduate. Deputy Superintendent Mike Copland noted that the decisions that are made around graduation requirements obviously impact staffing.

The next meeting for the graduation requirements work party will be 3 to 4:30 p.m. on September 28 at Central Services in room 205.

Waiver Work Group Update and Dialogue

Director of Teaching and Learning Keith Schacht provided an [update](#) on the work of the waiver work group, which met on September 15.

World Language: In the past, some students were granted world language waivers, typically due to individual educational circumstances. Students who are able to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English can potentially earn world language credits without taking a world language course once they pass proficiency examinations.

Physical Education: Most waivers that are granted are in the area of physical education. Keith emailed high school counselors and compiled a list about why students typically waive physical education. He referenced comprehensive guidelines developed by a physical education work group in 2013 and said it was valuable work that was put on hold pending the implementation of a new schedule.

Keith asked small groups to talk about what their work group may have overlooked, things for them to keep in mind, and recommendations for topics. The share-out included:

- Body image is a hot topic as it relates to P.E. classes.
- Students might be interested in P.E. classes that don't require them to change or shower. The requirement to change or shower can be especially uncomfortable for LGBTQ students.
- Facilities may need to provide more privacy and security.
- It's valuable for students to participate in activities that they don't have exposure to (for instance, a student who participates in club soccer might find great value in a yoga class).

- Having more variety for courses would be attractive to students.
- P.E. classes give students who are very academically focused an opportunity for balance, and with a roomier schedule, students will have space in their schedules for PE.

The next meeting for the waivers work party will be 3 to 4:30 p.m. on October 13 at Sehome High School.

Instructional Implications Work Group Update and Dialogue

Director of Teaching and Learning Charisse Berner helped to facilitate this work group's first meeting on September 19 and referenced [notes](#) from the September 19 meeting.

Example considerations:

What we can do with a 4x8 schedule that we can't do with our current schedule?

How can we work on an innovative vision for our high schools?

Charisse noted that the group read pages 14 and 15 of a [discussion tool](#) that highlights the needed emphases in classroom practice to implement our state standards in the areas of meaning making, participating and contributing, and managing learning.

Charisse then reviewed the [professional learning calendar](#) and shared that content-alike groups will be able to work on courses (October 14 and December 9, as well as during the "choice" professional development days (February 10, March 10 and April 28). Other discussion included:

- There has been some concern expressed about anxiety for course development. Mike talked about staffing needs to cover the new courses.
- While teachers may potentially have new or additional preps, their planning time increases as well.
- Sehome High School principal Michelle Kuss-Cybula explained that student interest/registration will impact the actual courses offered. Jeannie talked about an upcoming student interest survey that will provide additional course planning information.
- Squalicum High School principal James Everett pointed out that while we need to be prepared for next fall, changes and adjustments will be ongoing.

The next meeting of the instructional implications work group will be 3 to 4:30 p.m. on October 10 at Central Services.

Student Support Work Group Update and Dialogue

To transition the advisory group, Sehome High School assistant principal Marty Atkins asked the group, "What does student systems of support mean to you?"

Responses included:

Anchor time, counseling, support classes, student success coordinator, AVID, interventions, mentors, learning center/tutoring, THOR, Anchor and RtI.

At the September 13 meeting, Director of Teaching and Learning Stephanie Korn provided an overview of the district work around Multi-Tiered Systems of Student Support (MTSS). Essentially, staff intervene until a positive response (improvement) is demonstrated by the student.

The work group shared what is currently available to students at each high school, and they noted that considerable overlap exists (See [summary](#) of Sept. 13 meeting, as well as the [themes](#) that surfaced during the meeting.) The students in this group (Eric, Carl and Jace) shared what they do during the time that is provided at their school

(Anchor, THOR, SSR/RtI). There was some discussion about future possibilities, including attaching the support time to lunch or offering optional support classes. There was also discussion about a desire to provide time within the school day for clubs and activities, especially for students who ride the bus and can't stay after school. The work party will spend more time on the question "Should time be included in the schedule for student support?"

As an exit task, advisory group members responded to the following questions and submitted info to Marty to take back to the work party:

1. What is the most important justification for the use of the "advisory" (general term) time? What is the purpose? What is the most compelling reason to have it?
2. Where do you stand in maintaining or putting the time back into classes? And why?

The next meeting of the student support group will be 3 to 4:30 p.m. on September 28 at Bellingham High School in Room 122.

Questions

Questions from the group as well as from notecards that advisory group member submitted:

Question: Concern has been expressed about class size; will class sizes increase with the new schedule?

Answer: We are increasing staffing and overall class sizes are not anticipated to increase significantly.

Question: Who decides which electives are offered?

Answer: We will be surveying students twice – once to get a general sense of courses that students are interested in taking and then as part of the actual registration process. To the extent possible, based on our staffing, facilities, and budget, we will offer courses based on student sign-up and interest.

Question: Will course fees associated with enrichment courses potentially cost families?

Answer: We are working towards offering a free public education and eliminating course fees.

Question: Will we offer bussing for students who want to access courses at other schools?

Answer: Our current plan is to consider courses for which students register and build our master schedules accordingly. It might mean that we strategically place certain courses to allow for transportation, including bussing if student counts justify it.

Question: Will we have master scheduling committees?

Answer: Each school is committed to involving staff members in the development of their master schedules. Prior to developing school specific schedules, Jeannie will work with volunteers to finalize example bell schedules for the advisory group to consider.

Question: How will teachers manage more classes (prep for and grade more classes) with the same amount of prep time as available now?

Answer: Prep time for high school teachers actually increases in the new schedule. The new schedule will definitely be an adjustment for teachers.

Question: Should we be concerned about a lack of textbooks and supplies?

Answer: We have anticipated and allocated additional resources in addition to projecting an increase in staffing.



Question: What will part time staff assignments look like?

Answer: Jeannie is working with Human Resources to develop a staffing chart and will communicate with principals.

Concern: Will middle school counselors be aware of new timelines and schedule details?

Answer: Yes.

Steve shared that the goal is for this group to have a recommendation to Dr. Baker by the beginning of December. This will allow time for the courses to be finalized in time for course catalogs and for staffing to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.