

Meeting Minutes High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group October 20, 2016

Welcome and Agenda Overview

Co-chairs Steve Clarke and Jeannie Hayden welcomed everyone to today's meeting. After reviewing the September 22, 2016 meeting [minutes](#), based on feedback from the advisory group, two minor revisions of our over-arching goals of the new schedule were reviewed and accepted as shown here:

The new schedule will support students in:

1. personalizing high school educational plans. The new schedule increases flexibility for students to explore and develop areas of interest and passion and create intentional, individualized pathways.
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 schools, 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.
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 and consider a goal to help students develop habits of a balanced life.

Jeannie highlighted today's agenda and noted that two optimistic goals for today include finalizing the recommendations being submitted by the graduation requirements and course waivers work parties.

Graduation Requirements Work Party Recommendations

Steve shared the [recommendations](#) of the graduation requirements work party. Subsequent discussion included the following comments:

- English 9 and English 10 will continue to be requirements (although this is a likely continuing, future discussion topic, and it's possible that in the current process of developing a common course catalog the names could change).
- Algebra II will remain a requirement; some students may take a substitute course based on their Personalized Pathway/High School and Beyond Plan.
- Given that the science department is in the process of reviewing their overall curriculum, Director of Teaching and Learning Charisse Berner recommended that a statement be included about required science courses potentially being specifically identified in the near future.
- The group discussed the concept of a "Personalized Pathway and the High School and Beyond Plan." Student Jace Taylor pointed out that many freshmen do not yet know the direction they plan to go after graduation and experience difficulty completing the plan. While started in eighth or ninth grade, the plan is a working document and can be changed throughout the students' high school experiences as they develop areas of interest and more clear ideas of their goals beyond high school. Student Carl Peterson asked about how the plan is introduced to students, as it isn't clear as to whether all students understand its potential usefulness. Student Eric Newcomer suggested that a potentially valuable course for seniors, something like a "College 101" class, would help students with their plan for life after high school. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Director, Jeff Tetrick, talked about freshmen receiving direct assistance in developing their High School and Beyond Plan, potentially during their technology literacy course (one of the added graduation requirement recommendations).

- Jeff shared information about the technical literacy course that is being recommended as a .5 credit semester class targeting freshmen and explained how students may be able to earn college credit from Bellingham Technical College and Whatcom Community College. Jace asked whether students in the classes of 2018, 2019 and 2020 would be able to take the technical literacy course. Jeff explained that all students would be allowed to take the course, but it would not be a requirement for the classes of 2018, 2019 and 2020. Aramis Johnson asked if students transferring into our district as sophomores, juniors or seniors would be required to take the technology literacy course. Since the answer is affirmative, it seemed clear that the requirement should not be named “Ninth Grade Technology Literacy” but rather “Technology Literacy.”
- Steve shared that, in keeping with the state provision, two elective credits can be waived in a case of hardship/exceptional circumstances.
- Counselor Sharon Gilbert recommended counselor training to work through various scenarios. For example, some students’ transcripts have already been adjusted as a result of moving here from another district that already operates on an eight period schedule. Steve acknowledged that counselors will need time and assistance in working through the complexities that come with a new schedule and the graduation requirements.
- Special Education teacher Mary Lippiatt added that many IEPs will also need to be revised in order to include changes in instructional minutes.
- Charisse asked if any discussion about Health being a required ninth grade class surfaced. Steve noted that it had not been discussed by the graduation requirements group.
- Steve shared that, after consulting with legal counsel, it’s clear that districts are not able to impose increased graduation requirements for any students currently in high school. We are able to outline “expectations” but not call changes “requirements.”
- There was clarification that a credit is the same whether it is one-sixth of the day or one-eighth of the day.
- School counselor Hana Schutz asked if we’re concerned that students who will be on an 8 period schedule but only need 23 credits would choose to not have a full schedule. We will need to address such issues on a case-by-case basis. Steve stated that, in talking with other districts that have already moved to a 4x8 schedule, this had not surfaced as a major problem. Our hope is that we will offer an engaging program that will keep students enrolled. Additionally, WIAA rules require students to take full loads, which will be an incentive for many. It was also pointed out that students who may be taking a course at a school other than their neighborhood school might find it helpful to have a travel period.

A thumb poll was taken regarding readiness to move forward with the graduation credit requirements, and it was decided that we should move forward with the graduation requirements group’s recommendations.

Waiver Work Party Summary and Recommendations

Wellness Director Jessica Sankey reported on behalf of the waiver work group and presented the “[Guidelines for Waiving High School Physical Education Courses](#).” In keeping with state requirements which allow waivers, the group recommends that PE waivers continue to be allowed. The work party’s primary task revolved around streamlining and developing consistent procedures for our district. Time was spent in small group discussions about potential concerns and questions. The share-out to the large group included:

- Is one season equivalent to one semester of credit?
- Are waivers for past or current participation in extra-curricular activities?

- Will there be support for ELL students in explaining and completing the paperwork? It was agreed that we need a waiver process that is available to everyone.
- There was some discussion regarding the exclusions (possibly striking the office assistant exclusion and the Running Start exclusion).
- A comment was made that we do not require a waiver from students who take and pass the Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) test.
- Concerns were expressed about the language at the top of page 2, and it was suggested that “the first two weeks of the semester” be changed to “within the school year.”
- Perhaps there should be a requirement to complete the paperwork within a specified period of time after completing the activity.
- What happens if a student obtains a waiver and then gets injured mid-season?
- What do colleges think of waivers?

Jeannie summarized that because enough questions and concerns surfaced, the work party should reconvene and refine the proposal.

Instructional Implications Work Party Update and Dialogue

Charisse shared that the Instructional Implications Work Party met on October 10, and she shared the [minutes](#) from that meeting. The work party took a close look at an AP class [proposal](#) submitted by Advanced Placement (AP) teacher Alan Doud. Squalicum High School Principal James Everett elaborated on the work party’s discussion regarding the proposal. Charisse shared an idea from the work party that students who take rigorous courses could enroll in optional support classes, rather than requiring a third semester for all AP classes. The next meeting of this work party is scheduled for 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. on November 7, in room 212. Anyone is welcome to attend. Jackie Brawley shared that Superintendent Baker is planning to have a conversation with College Board administrators about the possibility of moving the current AP testing window to later in the year or allowing our district to use the make-up test window instead.

Student Support Work Party Update and Dialogue

Jeannie briefly shared information resulting from the student and teacher surveys. Students have indicated that they value THOR/SSR-Rtl/Anchor Time and recommend that it continue. Staff was split on this issue. The advisory group spent a few minutes discussing the disconnect between the perspectives. Next step: The Student Work Party meets again at 3:00 p.m. on October 26 at Options High School in Room 121, at which time they will review the survey data and make a recommendation for this advisory group.

Closing

Jeannie asked members to identify any additional implementation issues that are surfacing by noting them on the index cards provided. The following implementation issues/questions were submitted:

- Counselor professional development: WIAA rules (scheduling implications); consistency in how courses are converted/transcribed; understanding of waiver process, etc.
- Special Education - IEP adjustments
- Support time grading – P/F or letter grade?
- If teacher creates a class and 25 students from another school want it, will teacher have to travel?
(Answer: *We will have to consider such complex scenarios on an individual basis.*)



- Should we pair Technology Literacy with a specific course like Health – for ease of scheduling as well as ensuring that students get health early in their high school experiences? (*Answer: This example has merit but not required.*)
- Will there be changes to what courses receive CTE credit? (We receive extra funding for CTE courses and follow CTE guidelines in determining which courses qualify.)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.