



Meeting Minutes High School Schedule Implementation Advisory Group November 17, 2016

Welcome and Agenda Overview

Co-chairs Jeannie Hayden and Steve Clarke welcomed everyone to today's meeting. After the group reviewed and accepted the October 20, 2016 meeting [minutes](#), Jeannie highlighted today's agenda.

Graduation Requirements – New Information from Science

Steve referenced the updated Graduation Credit Requirements [handout](#) and shared changes from the October 20, 2016 advisory group meeting. Director of Teaching and Learning Director Charisse Berner provided some background information with regard to the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Charisse works closely with the Bellingham Public Schools science teachers; they propose that a specific course sequence for science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) be required in order to support all students in meeting the standards. Charisse introduced high school science representatives Jamie Yoos, Kimberly Davis, Amy Hankinson and Rebecca Krueger who provided a summary of their work and fielded questions. Bellingham High student Jace Taylor asked if students would be required to take physics even if they do not have an interest in taking the course. Charisse explained that physics will be a required course, in part, because there will be physics content in the upcoming required comprehensive science test for eleventh grade students. Other questions included:

- Will the elective courses have prerequisites?
- Will students be able to “double up” in science?
- Will the additional science requirements be a barrier to graduation for struggling students?
- Will it ultimately be possible for students to graduate if they fail the science courses but pass the eleventh grade exam?

The advisory group spent considerable time discussing the repercussions of *requiring* as compared to *recommending* a sequence. When we increase requirements for students, we need to also consider increased support for students, particularly students with IEPs, English Language Learners, low level readers, students who are behind in math and students who otherwise struggle. The group wondered how we can deliberately build in supports to maximize the success of all students. Some worried that students had to take the classes but they could possibly fail. In other words, the group hoped the science team could articulate how all students (including low level readers and kids who are behind in math) will be set up for success.

The group landed on the idea of using the phrase: *expected course sequence of Biology, Chemistry and Physics*. We will need to establish a clear process for students with extenuating circumstances.

Student Support Work Party Recommendation

Jeannie presented some results from the November teacher and student [surveys](#) with regard to their preference on how often we should offer THOR, Anchor, SSR-RTI time. The primary debate revolves around offering the support time daily, which provides a consistent schedule and built-in time, but at the same time reduces instructional time. Some are concerned that instructional time is limited compared with our current schedule.

Jeannie reviewed the following recommendation from the Student Support Work Party:

We believe that all students should be provided equitable opportunities to seek support from teachers during the school day. We also believe that all students should have the opportunity to learn at high levels with as much instructional time as possible.

Over 97% of the students who answered the survey question and about half of the teachers surveyed in the fall of 2016 indicated a preference for building [THOR-SSR-Rtl-Anchor type] support time into the schedule.

We propose that:

- a. two support classes be offered per week of not less than 30 minutes each.
- b. the support time should be part of the school day and offered in the morning after the first block Tuesday/Wednesday or Wednesday/Thursday.
- c. all teachers, regardless of planning period, be assigned and engaged in specific support activities.

There were questions about “all teachers” contained in the recommendation. Jeannie stated that the reference relates to full-time teachers. We will need to work with part-time teachers on a case-by-case basis depending upon their FTE. There was also a clarification made that “club time” will not become an alternative to the support time. When Jeannie polled the group to check for support, most group members gave a thumbs up to show full approval of the work group’s recommendation; a small number gave a sideways thumb to show limited approval.

Review Draft Schedules

Jeannie reviewed [two draft schedule handouts](#) - one of which offers matching class lengths and the other matching lunch lengths. After individuals and small groups looked over the schedules, a question was posed as to what the priority should be: matching class lengths or lunch lengths? After small groups dialogued about the schedules, they were asked to stand on a continuum (a consensus strategy) to visually see their position about which priority is most important. Individuals shared their rationale, giving others the chance to change positions. For example, for Squalicum students an extra five minutes can be a great difference for those who go off-site for lunch (this may not be as important for students at BHS and SHS, who have eating establishments closer to the school); therefore, matching lunch lengths makes the most sense for those connected with Squalicum.

The results were very close; many felt they can argue in favor of or against both concepts. Jeannie instructed each advisory group member to present the draft schedules to at least ten people (five students and five staff members) and then come to the next advisory meeting prepared to share their findings and hopefully “land this one.”

Waiver Work Party Revisions

Director of Teaching and Learning Keith Schacht provided an update from the Waiver Work Party and reviewed the provided [handout](#). As part of our students’ high school education and in keeping with the Bellingham Promise to develop healthy and active young people, strong arguments exist for students to take physical education (P.E.). Our physical education teachers are working to expand their course offerings and would like physical education to appeal to all students.



Questions and comments from group members included:

- Do students receive credit for a course when they waive it? The answer is no.
- Will students be intimidated by having to ask for an introductory meeting with a P.E. teacher as part of the waiver process? Keith suggested the student could get the form from the P.E. teacher or a counselor. Sehome principal Michelle Kuss-Cybula suggested modifying the language to “contact” rather than “discuss” – which could be by email or by dropping a note in a teacher’s mailbox. Counselor Hana Schultz added an idea about using a half sheet to clarify the directions for students.
- Student Jace Taylor asked if there is a way for students to learn more about the online test. Keith answered that online study guides are readily available.

Further discussion about the process ensued. The guidelines from the Work Party indicate that students should be juniors and seniors and full-time status (not have open periods). Some advisory group members liked the idea of allowing waivers for sophomores as well. After the advisory session and further consideration, advisory group co-chairs Steve Clarke and Jeannie Hayden decided to ask PE representatives to meet with the advisory group on Dec. 8.

Communications Manager Jackie Brawley reminded the advisory group that while we will make a recommendation to Dr. Baker, we do not make a final decision. Once Dr. Baker receives the recommendation, he may accept it, ask for clarifying information, or make changes prior to finalization.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15.