

West Hillsborough Elementary School

School Site Council 2012-2013

Year In Review

Roger E. Avedon, Ph.D., Chair

Membership of the 2012-2013 council included:

Roger Avedon, Chair, parent

An Chen, parent

Anu Hoey, parent

Leslie Huie, parent

Ingrid Kitahata, parent

Katie Pierce, parent

Dr. Jamie Adams Principal

Colleen Golden, 1st Grade Teacher

Kristi Shreve, 3rd Grade Teacher, replacing Kristina Kaufmann, 2nd Grade, who went on
maternity leave

Angie Padian, 5th Grade Teacher

Jay Beams, Specialist

Betsy Miller, Staff Member

The West SSC traditionally spends the first several meetings reviewing, updating and approving the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and then votes on a set of discussion topics for the balance of the year. This year the SPSA was finalized and approved at the December meeting, but in a change of process, the council discussed and agreed to use the final May meeting to review data gathered for the SPSA.

Changes to the SPSA from the preceding year were as follows:

1. Goal 2: Essential Outcomes was augmented to include the same requirement (90% of students to achieve a grade of 3 or higher) for “Problem Solver” in addition to “Effective Communicator”.

2. Goal 3: Differentiation was changed to focus on providing a differentiated curriculum for “high achievers”.

3. Goal 4: Social/Emotional was augmented to include development of the positive attributes of confidence and self-esteem in addition to coping and conflict resolution skills.

The SPSA was approved unanimously by voice vote at the December meeting.

Other meeting topics for the year included:

January: Lunch, Diet and Nutrition

February: Technology and the Future of Education, with guest Margi Power, Clerk of HCSD
Board of Trustees

March: Safety and Security

April: Gifted Education, with guest Mary Ellen Benninger, Member of HCSD Board of
Trustees

In the January discussion of lunch, diet and nutrition, the council discussed what the appropriate role was for the school, the "Quiet Dining" policy, candidates for replacing the existing hot lunch program, and the extended closure of the first grade boy's bathroom.

The February discussion regarding technology and the future of education touched on Khan Academy and "flip teaching", social media and cyber safety, and what technologies are currently used in West classrooms.

For the March discussion of safety and security, the council addressed policies and procedures for parents retrieving children after a safety incident, and possible improvements to lockdowns. One idea that came up is the recognition that many families don't associate the emergency contact they provide at the beginning of the school year with earthquake safety, and often give a geographically distant relative. In the event of an earthquake or similar disaster, where both parents may be physically prevented from returning to the school in order to retrieve their children, it would be very valuable to identify a local contact, ideally a trusted family also at West, where one or both of those parents would be authorized to take children from the school.

In the April discussion regarding gifted education, the council discussed whether there was a meaningful distinction between gifted and high achieving students, how gifted students are identified, and whether and how the needs of gifted students are currently addressed.

Please see the following minutes and hand-outs for more detailed information.

Site Council Meeting September 19, 2012

1.0 Call to Order

Attendees: Roger Avedon, An Chen, Anu Hoey, Ingrid Kitahata, Katie Pierce, Leslie Huie, Kristina Kaufman, Angie Padian, Colleen Golden, Jay Beams, Betsy Miller, Dr. Jamie Adams

Guests: Don Geddis, Jackie Greenwald (Grandmother)

2.0 Election of Secretary:

We will share the responsibility and rotate the position each meeting.

Snacks:

We will share the responsibility and sign-up was distributed. See Below:

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Snack</u>
October 24	Anu	Leslie
November 28	Leslie	Angie, Kristina
December 12	Ingrid	Jay
January 16	Katie	Betsy
February 20	Anu	Colleen
March 27	Ingrid	Katie
April 17	An	An
May 15	Leslie	Jamie

3.0 Minutes from April 20th, 2012, approved

4.0 What is your personal objective for Operation Risk?

- Roger Avedon: Pursue healthy debate and not always drive to consensus
- Katie Pierce: Bring something (a goal, action) to fruition
- Angie Padian: Speak more this year and contribute
- Ann Chen: Promote grab a team mate and participate
- Leslie Hui: Participate and not just observe
- Betsy Miller: Really participate and contribute
- Kristina Kaufman: Hear and see something come to fruition
- Jay Beams: Learn and see how the process works
- Jamie Adams: Use this time to listen more and speak less
- Colleen Golden: Fit/tailor site council goals into the "small kids" classroom
- Anu Hoey: Observe, participate and see something through to fruition

5.0 Current Business: Single Plan for Student Achievement

- Revising and approving the Single Plan for Student Achievement is our #1 job in the near-term. Our group specifically needs to finalize the School Improvement Measurable Goals.

- Timeline: Everyone needs to read and review by next meeting. Please send email with key ideas to change/add to the Site Council prior to October Meeting. Finalize Single Plan by end of November Meeting
- What is the Single Plan: This is a state mandated document. It outlines the plan of actions to be performed at West to raise the academic performance of all students to the level of performance goals established under the Academic Performance Index. The document has 3 key areas: School Overview (provided by Jamie), Estimated Expenditures associated with the Single Plan, and the School Improvement Measureable Goals.
- Roger met with Anthony Ranii to discuss the estimated expenditures associated with the Single Plan. These dollars are used to support the Measurable Goals. Currently, this money is used to supplement instructional aids' salaries. Anthony feels that it would be disruptive to make any immediate changes to these planned allocations in the immediate school year. However, this pool of money should increase over time (assuming economic environment improves), and we should begin discussions about how to use dollars in the future (i.e., salaries for instructional aids, other opportunities).
- Betsy Miller provided an overview of what instructional aids do and the benefits:
 - In 1988, when Betsy started there were 33 kids per kindergarten class
 - Today, the aids serve as right-hand person to class room teacher, lead small group and individual work, do classroom preparation, and assist with lunchroom activities and yard duty.
 - Multiple benefits including consistency, reliability, everyday presence, focus on getting the little kids ready for second grade.

8.0 Future Agenda Items

These are ideas suggested by the group as possible items/actions for future agenda items. We will discuss and prioritize for the coming year. Ideas included:

- Have Modell come and discuss star testing results and future curriculum plans. We would like to leverage her plans into are future goals/actions. We will try to get Modell to speak at a Parent Group Meeting to allow for greater discussion during SC meetings. **[Post meeting update: Modell is confirmed at the WPG meeting, December 7 at 8:45 am in the West MPR]**
- Allocation \$\$ for the West Parent Group. The allocation committee is going to give the SC approximately \$5,000 to support our goals. How will we use this money? We need to determine by January deadline. We will discuss in the December meeting. Please begin to consider prior to this meeting.
- Review the computer lab situation given the new teaching structure without a designated Computer Lab Instructor. Get feedback and insights

- for instructor and teachers to determine if adjustments are required. This discussion can be held in the spring.
- Speedy Facts have been brought up negatively again in a single instance; we are not currently getting significant complaints. What can be done to share past efforts in Speedy Facts with the public at large? Does the SC want to spend any more time on this topic since it was a significant effort last year? Is the issue better communication to new parents?
 - It has been observed that most if not all West teachers supplement the official Everyday Math curriculum. What is the perceived gap in EM and how does this apply for the different grades?
 - Does the grading scale on report cards accurately reflect the grades achievable at West? If not, how can we adjust the rating scale to be more accurate? Is it possible to achieve 4s? What is required to achieve a 4 and is that consistent across grades and teachers?
 - How do we enrich the curriculum for those kids that meet benchmark early on in the school year? Especially in the primary grades.
 - Obesity is a growing concern for children. Does the lunch window encourage proper eating habits? Can we provide more information/ education about nutrition?
 - How to leverage computer-based learning to let kids to learn at their own speed given the budget constraints and larger class sizes? Especially for children who are excelling in classes.
 - Behavior on the playground? Bullying? How is it going at school? What works at home? Can we leverage learning's in both directions?

Homework:

- Review the Single Plan and have a point of view on the measurable goals for October meeting
- Schedule Modell to present at Parents Group Meeting (Ann Chen to do)

Site Council Meeting
Oct. 24, 2012

1.0 Call to Order

Attendees: Jamie Adams, Teresa Pai, Kristina Kaufman, Betsy Miller, Judy Pappas, Ingrid Kitahata, Leslie Huie, Colleen Golden, Angie Padian, Roger Avedon, Jay Beams, Don Geddis and Katie Pierce

2.0 Approval of minutes – Done

4.0 Single Plan of Student Achievement

4.1.1 Review of Goals

- Roger would like to review the goals by addressing 2 questions: Can we see the data measured and how we performed? Does the goal make sense?
- Jamie said that this document is state mandated and is aimed at the low achieving schools. She would like to get through the approval process of the goals to move onto more discussion on other topics. These goals are a subset of overall school goals. She will pull together the data needed to measure performance against the goals.
- Jamie and Judy pulled together data to review for each goal. A handout was presented with the data for the current goals #1 and #2. Data include STAR test results, district benchmarks for ELA, and effective communication.
- Discussion regarding the goals, the data, and possible changes were completed for goals 1, 2 and 4. There was a lot of discussion regarding goal 3 which is harder to define and measure.
- Jamie Adams will incorporate the changes into the goals and review with SSC next meeting.
- There was some discussion about whether not performance results were reviewed last year, but no consensus achieved. Some people remember an annual review of the goals, whereas, others were unsure or don't remember.
- Goal 1:
 - Judy explained the data for academic goal which included STAR test performance and district benchmarks for ELA.
 - West does very well in STAR testing. Our goal of 95% for proficient or better was achieved in Language arts.
 - For district benchmarks, Judy thinks that looking at the end of year performance is a better measure. The data presented is for 2012/2013 school year and baseline assessments.
 - The results from last year still need to be presented to determine how well West did.
 - This goal has been on Single Plan for a couple of years.
- Goal 2:
 - Data for the Effective Communicator Essential Outcome was reviewed. The 80% goal of all students getting a 3 was achieved in all grades.
 - The 80% goal will be increased to 90%.
 - There was discussion about when a 4 should be given. The teachers said that this is such a new area on the report card that they are currently

addressing how and when to award 4. The parents, teachers, administrators all had ideas/comments in this area.

- Goal 4:
 - No data was available to evaluate performance on this goal.
 - The current metric of visits to councilor's office will be changed because doesn't accurately measure this goal. It is good to have kids visiting counselor too.
 - Jamie is going to create measurable metrics by which to evaluate the performance against this goal. She is going to base these metrics on actions taken by the Councilor (Sherry Lynes) and the teachers. For example, has each teacher reviewed the entire social/emotional curriculum, are the emotional vocabulary words posted in each classroom. Change metrics to align with actions taken by councilor
 - The language of the goal focuses on improving negative aspects or weaknesses in kids. We would like to add wording and measurements that focus on building strengths, self-esteem and leadership skills (or more positive aspects/strengths)
 - Measurements for leadership could include Class Ambassadors participation.

- Goal 3:
 - The current goal as stated is very difficult to measure.
 - The current goal as stated is very broad.
 - Differentiation occurs at all levels for a teacher. The gradation would have to be very fine to accurately track and measure.
 - Differentiation is a main emphasis for the school.
 - There was discussion on how to measure West's performance against this goal. No decision was made and we will continue the conversation next meeting. PEP goals, in some form, were considered.
 - There was discussion about how to refine goal to more specifics, but not decision made. We will continue the conversation next meeting.

8.0 Meeting adjourned.

Site Council Meeting

November 28, 2012

1. Call to Order

Attendees: Roger Avedon, Anu Hoey, Jamie Adams, Don Geddis, Teresa Pai, Colleen Golden, Betsy Miller, Leslie Huie, Ingrid Kitahata, Katie Pierce, Angie Padian, An Chen, Julia Zhen, Jay Beams

2.0 Approval of minutes for October 24, 2012 - Done

4.0 Current Business

4.1 Single Plan for Student Achievement

4.1.1 Approval of Revision to Goals 1, 2, 4

- Jamie submitted a revised draft incorporating last meeting's comments for Goals 1, 2, 4.
- Individuals to review and comment after meeting

4.1.2 Discussion of Goal 3

- Is this something that can be measured, reported on, on an ongoing basis?
- If the PEP goals are met then is that measuring the Differentiated Curriculum (D.C.)?
- PEP is project-based whereas D.C. is occurring everyday in class.
- What are we trying to say in this Goal? Provide a D.C. for each grade level or provide an individual method to achieve the standard grade level curriculum? It should be an individual method to achieve the standard goal.
- Ingrid says: If the testing scores are improving then doesn't that mean the PEP goals are met and individuals are improving?
- Teresa pointed out we may need data points over time to better understand if we are achieving the goal.
- The goal of differentiated instruction (per student/ kind of learning level) has been met but we don't have a differentiated curriculum.
- Roger asks: Are all the "Goals" in the Single Plan "mission statements" or are they supposed to be goals that are met and move on to newer goals?
- An suggested: Common Core – Anthony Ranii told parents at the Superintendent Coffee that the testing would be more individualized

(eg. If a student's answer to the first test question is "A" then the test would change to ask different questions following the path of the test taker.)

- Pushing the curriculum further is the same as Operation Risk.
- Katie: Differentiated Instruction is good at the lower band to help lower level learners. Teachers: do you have a DC or do you add to the core curriculum? Coleen: At 1st grade level, everyone does Open Court Reading. If there are some students already reading at the Open Court Level, then we move them to "hallway reading", and onwards and upwards. For math then they advance to math tiles, etc. This differentiation is using up the same class time not in addition to base level learning. Some students are doing Open Court while others are doing high level reading at same time.
- Katie had a suggestion: Could the teachers in each grade take 2 subjects (Language Arts and Math) and say here's core curriculum, then make a list of additional curriculum above and beyond. At the end of year report number of kids doing above and beyond.
- Ingrid gives an example of concrete differentiation happening in our school right now. Mathletics: DC is happening and concretely showing that they have met a level above and beyond. Math is more of a measurable subject: kids are getting the tough problems. English is harder to measure in a concrete way.
- Jamie asks for clarification: Are you trying to measure it in a public way? Our goal is not to measure the accelerated kids, we want to get all the kids to a level and get them all accelerated.
- Roger notes: Lots of machinery in place to get below benchmark up to benchmark. There isn't a piece that addresses students who come into the grade with some mastery of subjects to push them further ahead.
- Julia suggests: Utilize teachers' specialties to lead that ONE subject for the few students who are excelling. Crystal Springs or other private schools have this. Ingrid and others point out: Junior High is more specialized than at the elementary school. Julia notes: Right now students are "stuck" with one teacher. Coleen and Ingrid and others: Elementary should be collaborative and more holistic not specializing at such a young age.
- Jamie suggests options for resolution: 1) leave the goal as is, 2) change it to reflect some sort of documenting/ communication of achievement of goal.

- Teresa suggests: A small number of people from Site Council could break out later as a task force to enforce and document.
- Roger: Don't make the Site Plan a Mission Statement. Make them goals only.
- Jamie suggests another option. Keep the goal, but add a caveat: Teachers write a plan for top 10% students. How would you measure this? Even those who are not gifted can strive and thrive beyond. Take the top 5% of the 95% who have achieved our academic (goal 1). For those who are high achieving, what are we doing for differentiation?
- Goal may stay the same but the tools will change every year.
- Keep the wording "Curriculum" not "instruction".
- Students' learning is organic. Some students may traditionally score low on tests but in class they may exhibit signs of taking off on a concept (oral learners/ visual learners). They may thrive in learning more and more concepts in class.
- Katie: We want to make sure we aren't targeting GATE students. Just top achievers in each subject. Some kids excel in math but not verbal. GATE is across the board.
- Jamie notes: We have 22 GATE level students that have been identified but are not necessarily gifted. Just because a child is moving along at a quicker pace doesn't mean they should do next grade level homework.
- Jamie emphasizes that all our teachers are caring and support all the kids in their individual learning styles and goals.
- Jamie will take a crack at editing. Do we have enough to quantify it?
- Teresa suggests: In addition, can we come up with an improvement goal? For example, if trimester 1 has a result of 5% above benchmark, can we achieve 7% above benchmark in trimester 2? Roger notes: Can't do this yet. Lets get consensus that we are actually achieving this goal then year 2 and 3 we can track to see if there is effectiveness. Math Assessments are concrete and can assess improvement over time.
- Student engagement is best assessment. So not concrete assessments necessarily important to move them to next level/ grade.
- Jaime will go and edit goal 3 for top achievers and add language for some kind of measurable of goal.

4.1.3 Allocations of Funds

- Roger states: In the past there was a large amount funds as part of Site Plan. Now the money shrank. This money is usually mostly earmarked for Instructional Aides. Since we now have more money in the district should we reassess or approve that it will still go to instructional aides?
- Betsy notes: Only 5 instructional aides in the district (Crocker and all elementary schools). All other aides are “one on one” aides for special instruction. Used to be 8 aides and each classroom had a couple of aides. Things have changed a lot.
- If its not Site Plan money the Instructional Aides will be paid out of another fund in the district.
- This money is money for West and allocated by district. We should take control and use for West only.
- Motion to keep the Estimate expenditures for Instructional Aides? Katie motioned, Colleen seconded. Motion passed.
- West Parent Group has approx \$5,000 in allocations for Site Council. What can it go towards? Dr. Adams wants to use it for differentiation for Operation Risk. Pay for expert like last year she used some of it for the 5th grade re-enactment of American History.
- Motion to keep the money as a discretionary fund for Jamie to use towards enrichment at the school. Motion: Katie motioned, Betsy seconded. Motion passed.

4.1.4 Other Revisions

- Jamie welcomes additional comments after everyone has had a chance to review offline.
- Jamie pointed out that Goal 2 has been revised, adding an essential outcome for problem solving.

7.0 Future Agenda Items

- Katie wanted to know who determines our upcoming agenda items. Roger states: Site Council determines our own agenda items
- We will reserve the last meeting (May) to review our approved notes/ changes to the Single Plan for Student Achievement.
- Potential Topics for months Jan, Feb, March, April:
- 4. Everyday math/ math curriculum (bring Modelle in). Crocker was thinking of extending the math instructional time at Crocker. We should learn more about what Crocker is doing since our 5th graders are moving there soon. Jamie noted she didn’t hear anything new brewing from the current Crocker Principal, but will ask.

- 8. Gate, High End differentiation – Who can talk about it? Anu or Don (they were representatives at GATE mtgs). We would like to hear, from the teachers, what is high end differentiation in their classroom?
- 10 Computer Based Education – Margi Power wants to come and speak to us.
- 9. Lunch, Diet, Nutrition Education – This may be good for January's conversation. An is on the committee.
- Teresa asks if we can provide more on a social/ emotional level? Can we bring in more drama or creative writing? Jamie answers that these are subjects decided on a district wide level. Jamie would have to ask the district. An suggests one possibility: we could funnel some of the money dedicated for assemblies thru site council to run these programs. (It costs around \$3000 to get 2 people in to talk.)

8.0 Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

**West Hillsborough Elementary School
School Site Council Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Location: West Library

Members Present: Jamie Adams, Ingrid DeMoor Kitahata, Angie Padian, Jay Beams, Katie Pierce, Colleen Golden, Roger Avedon, Leslie Hui

Guests: Don Geddis, Marlene Tuzar,

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER, 3:20 pm

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, 3:30 pm

3. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION – Approval of Site Plan Student Achievement Document

This meeting was abbreviated with the sole intent of approving the Single Plan for Student Achievement and School Goals (SPSA).

School Goal #3: We spent some time discussing Goal #3 on Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction. Jamie announced that as a result of our SITE council discussions, curriculum would now be added to school discussions at each of the other schools. Specific language in goal #3 was tightened down. – Goal subsequently approved.

School Goal #1: changed number to 95%, no verbiage change. - Goal approved

School Goal #2: includes additional essential outcome verbiage to include “problem solvers”. - Goal approved

School Goal #4: Verbiage added “support venues for building student confidence and self-esteem through leadership opportunities and other classroom activities and programs.” Verbiage eliminated “behavior referrals reduced or increased to counselor and principle.” Goal #4 approved with the intent that Jamie Adams would add additional verbiage with respect to the subject of a more organic and holistic approach to learning in the classroom.

Entire SPSA was reviewed and approved.

It was agreed that we would look at data accumulated in the SPSA at the last meeting of the year to determine its success. This would include second trimester data but not the third trimester since it will not have been completed. The third trimester data will be shown and measured at the beginning of the next school year (2013-2014).

Final edits to come from Jamie and to be put on the website.

Next meeting topic will be on: Lunch, diet and nutrition.

Roger will create a common framework around topics for the rest of the year. He will come up with questions on these topics such that it creates a debate and effective format for discussion. Four potential topics will be discussed during these last 4 meetings. The last meeting in May will be reserved for review of the SITE plan data.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA -none

5. OPEN FORUM FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public are invited to comment – none

6. ADJOURNMENT - 4:10 pm

Lunch, Nutrition and Diet at West

Here are some ideas, questions and links to spark conversation at the next meeting.

What is the role of the school in educating children about nutrition, diet and eating? Beyond the classroom instructional environment, students routinely consume snacks and lunch within the context of the school day. They are also presented with special opportunities to eat at school, including birthdays, holidays and some school events, such as the Welcome Back BBQ. Is there a consistent pedagogical approach to nutrition, diet and eating across these experiences, in principle or in practice? Should there be? What should it be?

Lunch is the only formal meal students experience within the context of school. Beside the obvious requirement to provide an opportunity for students to eat a meal, should lunch serve other, i.e., pedagogical, purposes? Is the *social experience* of eating within the school's pedagogical purview? Should it be? Is that responsibility purely negative (sanctioning students who are disruptive) or are there positive requirements as well, e.g., actively teaching children proper behavior when eating? And beyond that—skill at dining conversation?

Given that, students in the lower grades are constrained from socializing for part (all?) of their lunch through a policy called Quiet Dining. What purpose does this policy serve in theory, and in practice? Is it in harmony with educational goals, to the extent they exist, and with the natural development of that social component of eating? Some schools enforce Quiet Dining during only part of the lunch period. Would that be an improvement or not?

There is also a growing national conversation about the shrinking *time* given to school lunch, and concerns about how rushing children through meals may be associated with obesity. For example, see [USA Today](#) and [The Iowa City Gazette](#).

Some programs have discovered significant benefit from shifting the lunch recess to before the lunch period. Students are better able to settle down and eat after a period of play rather than rushing through eating to get out to play. Should that be considered here? The shift, along with a number of other interesting ideas, were implemented at [John Muir Elementary](#) in Berkeley.

Lastly, there is an emerging consensus that poor diet in childhood has significant long term health effects. From the [CDC](#):

“Schools play a particularly critical role by establishing a safe and supportive environment with policies and practices that support healthy behaviors. Schools also provide opportunities for students to learn about and practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors”

One related issue that you may not have been aware of is the potentially negative interplay of the school environment with the modern American diet to create chronic constipation in children. From the [New York Times](#).

Date: Jan. 16, 2013

Present:

Katie McDivitt, Ingrid DeMoor, An Chen, Don Geddis, Leslie Huie, Betsy Miller, Colleen Golden, Kristi Shreve, Jamie Adams, Roger Avedon, Anu Hoey, Angie Padian, Valerie, Leung

Motion 1: Approval of Dec. minutes. Unanimous by voice vote.

Roger: **topic is lunch and nutrition/diet at West**

What is the role of school?

Betsy: parents responsible for educating children, they speak about healthy snacks in K and 1.

Colleen: The teachers do talk about it. The kids are able to get a snack whenever they need to depending on the classroom.

Kristi: Kids bringing in more water bottles than ever before, some teachers have snacks in classroom in case kids get hungry

Betsy: We used to have specific snack time before K got more rigorous ... should we institute that again?

Jamie: There has been some talk about extending the lunchtime by 5 minutes but the entire district has to agree.

Betsy: 5 minutes of quiet dining for K-2 (12:10-12:15) so kids eat. She has noticed they actually do eat during this time.

Leslie: Her son says that if they talk during quiet dining, the kids have to go on the stage on steps. Some kids are intimidated and don't enjoy lunch because of it.

Jamie: Doesn't happen that much but does occasionally.

Why don't kids eat? Mostly because they are talking to friends.

An: 26% of 400 responses from hot lunch survey. 67% do not get hot lunch everyday. 78% parents said taste is most important as well as nutrition.

Other options: Kids Chow- \$4.50 or so + \$0.75 for sides- choose beforehand and comes packaged with name of each child- Kristi Shreve can get info on this vendor.

Katie: Could 5th graders research and present on nutrition and diet? E.g. what is a carbohydrate?

Angie: Pam Muser does something for red ribbon week about fat in certain foods. Everyone does their own thing regarding nutrition in the classroom but no formal initiative other than red ribbon week.

Kristi: 3rd grade does presentation on germs and presents to lower grades- maybe do something like that with sugar, fat, etc...

Roger: topic is boy's bathroom in 1st grade wing

Roger: Boy's bathroom in 1st grade wing is closed for the rest of the year- need to tell families through a blast email coming from Jamie- many do not know this. Some of the younger kids are intimidated by older children in the bathrooms. One possible solution: Change girl's bathroom to boys in that wing? Roger thinks girls may be less intimidated with older girls.

Roger: Rest of year site council meetings:

Feb. meeting- Future of education with technology-Margi Power

Ingrid will produce a one-sheet document about questions we might want to address.

April meeting- GATE and Mary Allen Benninger

March 27 meeting: Safety and security? Katie will create one-sheet document to ask questions about the topic, Jamie will also discuss with police and also get some input from them.

May 15 meeting: Review of Data we have available to discuss the Single Plan for Student Achievement.

Adjourned at 4:20pm

**West Hillsborough Elementary School
School Site Council Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, February 20, 2013

Location: West Library

Members Present: Jamie Adams, Ingrid DeMoor Kitahata, Angie Padian, Katie Pierce, Colleen Golden, Roger Avedon, Leslie Hui, An Chen, Kristie Shreve, Betsy Miller.

Guests: Don Geddis, Margi Power, Valerie Leung, Theresa Pai, Rick Friedman

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER, 3:15 pm

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, 3:15 pm

3. Introductions – Margi Powers, Clerk of the Board of Trustees joined us today

3. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION – Technology and the Future at West; Ingrid provided a document as a means of discussion around Flip Teaching, Cyber Safety and Information through technology feedback Loops.

Roger Avedon made opening remarks; to kick off the discussion of Technology as both processes and gizmos to be used in education. He commented that any use of new technology is always of concern since change can be difficult.

We talked about Khan Academy and how it is utilized for teachers to monitor the classroom and students' progress. The teachers use dashboards that show how each child is doing. Feedback loops for the teacher helps them to see where children are struggling.

We also delved into the topic of "Flip Teaching" whereby the student learns curriculum at home via the computer and then comes to school to do work and projects relating to the information learned at home. Reactions were wide-ranging from comments made by Ingrid, viewing technology as a means to teach basic rote fundamentals and using the teachers to expand the learning... to comments made by Katie that said, she didn't think that computer learning at this age (younger grades) is completely successful.

Discussions on whether our students are getting what they need to be successful in later grades were brought up. Katie – what do they need to be ready for high school and what type of technology will be relevant.

Other topics included the role that the school curriculum plays in technology. Are we teaching information retrieval and keyboarding or is there a greater responsibility. Theresa Pai brought up interest in expansion of technology skills to also include programming. Various members either agreed that programming could help with the overarching curriculum. Learning mathematics algorithmically by doing simple programming tasks can help with math (comments from Roger Avedon). Others felt programming was a narrow focus similar to other electives and would only appeal to a select group of students.

Christie – talked about the reliability of sources on the internet and that the teachers spend time teaching the students how and where to find good information (not Wikipedia, for example) . Leslie Hui commented that in putting together presentations, students must know how to source information, that they (students) can't copy but must make references.

Roger next initiated the discussion around district rules and policies with respect to phones etc. Jamie Adams explained that no personal devices were to be used or available during school hours but that after school this was outside of school jurisdiction. Jamie and teachers say they do not see technology gizmos on campus.

Katie commented on parental controls and blocks and that they only work so well. It is very difficult to manage. Jamie delineated that the school was not trying to take on parenting and that these issues were beyond the schools control. Rick Friedman brought up Instagram as one source of social media currently being used by 6th graders. Margi recommended having computers in a public space at home as a means of control and that you, the parent also need to get involved with what the children are using and viewing.

Gloria Moskowitz will be speaking in May about cyber safety. Theresa Pai talked about the Internet Safety Pledge for 3rd-5th graders and that they will be getting a lesson from Sherri Lynes.

Roger moved the discussion beyond the gizmos and opened the discussion to “what else”?

Margi – subscribes to a lot of information on forward thinking about education, and looking at the big buckets of what technology skills will be in the future. One source that teachers are using is “Pinterest” –which is a way of gathering ideas from great web sites and/or build our own for HCSD forward (Ed Tech Ideas etc)

Comments from various teachers around what they are using in the classroom included:

Colleen Golden - Fluency P – store (learning about money in the 1st grade). Kids learn differently and technology helps different kids assimilate the information.

Colleen Golden brought up –How are we going to project forward?

An Chen and Ingrid commented on the need for students to be tech savvy and knowledgeable about how to use power point, blogging, web sites.

Jamie – opened up the question of “what we gain – or lose with the use of technology”.

Katie commented that we should not try to rush technology, because kids may not understand the content beneath. For example, they may put an elephant on a page – and they can highlight things but, not understand what they are highlighting. Technology can make it look like the child understands but, it is masking their comprehension which is a negative.

Roger Avedon brought up the notion that students themselves can create their own educational environment through the use of technology which is a benefit. Kids themselves can get involved in teaching others.

5. OPEN FORUM FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public were invited to comment at this point – Theresa Pai asked Margi about the Crocker schedule and the net increase of \$170,000 to create the new Block A period which would begin at 7:20 am .

Margi responded that this dollar number is the maximum cost and likely would not be incurred since only a select number of students would be taking advantage of this new time slot in the curriculum. Electives at Crocker will largely be driven by the students and their interest.

Next meeting is on March 27th and will cover Safety and Security – Jamie will put together some documentation.

6. ADJOURNMENT - 4:25 pm

Site Council Minutes

Date: 3/27/13

Attendees: Jay Beams, Leslie Huie, Jamie Adams, Roger Avedon, Don Geddis, Katie Pierce, Julia Zhen, An Chen, Sarah Adams, Anu Hoey, Kristi Shreve, Ingrid DeMoor, Valerie Leung, Colleen Golden

Approval of Feb. Minutes by Katie Pierce and all

Topic: Emergency and Safety Procedures

Jamie: would like to know how parents would like to retrieve children

For fire drill- get everyone out, by state law all teachers have to wait with children.

For Earthquake- after, try to get everyone out, wait for first responders at black top.

Counselor and Principal responsible for releasing children since they know all of them.

Every backpack has emergency cards, pen, highlighter and stickers.

If someone comes that is not on card, they have to go to counselor and principal to make sure it's ok before releasing child.

Change emergency cards in the office

Need to better communicate to parents that emergency contacts should include local contacts since picking up children is an important possibility, versus phone contact for medical permission, etc. What to Expect Night?

Classes are partnered with sister classes

Ideas?

- An: Encourage parents to identify another parent in their class/grade as one of the emergency numbers so if there is someone to pick up, you have someone close by.
- Julia: Should room parents be responsible to take care of children

that don't get picked up?

- Ingrid: put a "lockdown" sign up for the parents, and also "kids at Blacktop" if that is where they are for parents to know where to go

What is the mandate for school?

All teachers are responsible for all the kids in school. During the waiting time, there are going to be certain teachers that can be released early depending on their own circumstances. But the majority of teachers will be staying.

What is responsibility to community?

If first responders set up here first, the community members can come here for safety, too.

First responders are fire department

An: Put signs for each grade so the parents know where grades are.

Leslie: In Cupertino, each classroom has a 2X4 to keep door closed on hinge side and every teacher can push a file cabinet behind the door.

Ingrid: How about getting walkie talkies?

Jamie: they are talking about getting a panic button

Katie: get parents more involved in understanding security, perhaps at What to Expect Night at general meeting or at parent group meeting.

Julia: Get cameras and a policeman to watch all 4 schools

An: maybe meet with the leads for the Hillsborough network for Emergencies so everyone works together.

Sarah: will share other information from manuals being written by others

Jay: People need to be flexible depending on the emergency but we need to be prepared.

Katie: The kids only know that it is an "intruder" but not anything else.

Any other items to discuss:

Try for Ty- walkathon on Apr. 25 after school

Before end of year, need to replace 3 site council members

Gifted Education at West

Roger Avedon, April 2013

Giftedness is not an anointment of value. A person who shows extraordinary ability for high levels of performance when young and, if provided appropriate opportunities, demonstrates a development of talent that exceeds normal levels of performance, is gifted. [SENG](#)

This is a highly contentious topic. You will probably be made uncomfortable and/or defensive reading this series of questions. Questions about giftedness touch on issues of perceived self-worth, fairness in society, and race, ethnicity and class. The US in particular has always been schizophrenic about intelligence and education. On the one hand, we celebrate success outside conventional education norms. College drop-outs Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg are lionized for their achievements. On the other hand, parents are willing to go to extraordinary lengths, including gaming the system or facilitating [cheating](#), to help their children obtain elite credentials.

“If you had a program for the gifted, that would mean that there are children who aren’t. That’s a truth a lot of parents here won’t tolerate,” says a therapist who lives in Lexington.

“Let’s say there are two parents chatting over the fence,” says Joseph Harrington of Stoughton, a European-history professor who founded the private academic-enrichment summer programs College Gate and College Academy.

“One can brag about a child hitting three home runs. But the other can’t do the same about the kid reading Darwin in the eighth grade. That would be taken as, What are you saying - my kid is dumb?”

For this and other reasons, affluent suburban towns are among the many that do not have programs for gifted children. [Dan Sheridan](#)

The obvious first question to ask is **whether gifted children (about 1 in 50 children) are an *un- or underserved population at West***. Do teachers/administration think of the gifted as a special needs population, requiring particular expertise, or as part of the general spectrum of different student learning styles that is well served by differentiated instruction? **What are the perceived problems for the gifted at West?** What about the highly gifted (about 1 in 750 children)?

GATE stands for Gifted and *Talented* Education, and in some interpretations talented children are non-gifted who perform at high enough academic levels to need additional support. **What is the difference between academic high achievers and the gifted?**

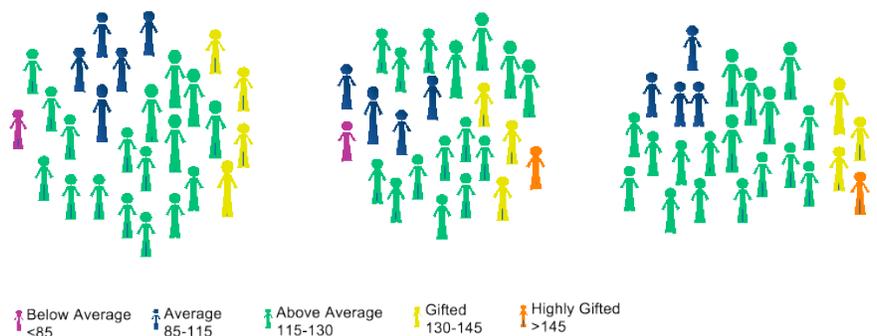
Within the West parent community, there is a sizable group who think that academic achievement is a function of student effort and parental reinforcement unrelated to innate student ability; what has recently come to be known as [tiger parenting](#). It is important NOT to equate tiger parenting with the Asian community or traditional Asian educational norms! There are Caucasian tiger parents (at West!) and tiger parents of gifted children (at West!). In fact, some parents of gifted children may view their use of extra-curricular academics for their children (e.g., Kumon) as providing challenge and interest rather than additional practice for mastery. **So, do tiger parents even accept the concept of *giftedness*?** If not, does that affect how the gifted are identified and/or educated at West?

How many gifted children are there at West? Intelligence is highly-correlated with educational attainment and income level, so one would expect HCSD to have a disproportionately bright student

population as compared to the US average. Note this has implications for HCSD STAR scores! Here is a picture of a grade for a school of West’s size with the average US statistics for intelligence:



and here is the picture at West if we assume that the “average” West student is as bright as an “above average” student nationally (i.e., if the West “average” is one standard deviation above the national mean):



↑ Below Average <85
↑ Average 85-115
↑ Above Average 115-130
↑ Gifted 130-145
↑ Highly Gifted >145

Does this match your intuition or experience? One confounding factor is the prevalence of [redshirting](#) at West, where a significant fraction of students are two to four months older than the oldest statutory age for a given grade.

The official district trigger for classifying GATE students is the top 2% of STAR test scores for 2 years. The earliest this can occur is 4th grade. There is [scholarly research](#) challenging the value of standardized testing for identification of the gifted. **Is this process considered adequate and effective by staff and by parents? If not, why not?** Are teachers comfortable raising the subject of giftedness with parents or is it usually broached by parents? Given the large number of above average children at West—perhaps even a majority of the student body, most of whom are likely to be academic high achievers—**is it difficult or easy for the staff to identify the gifted beyond relying on STAR testing?** What methods are used?

Given the number of above average children at West who may come from tiger families, is it a concern that children may be identified as gifted who are instead coached for STAR testing? More generally, does the use of standardized testing to “award” GATE status in the district *encourage* parental competition? If a GATE program were instituted in the district with a testing-based mechanism to qualify, would some parents drill their children in order to qualify? Is that a problem?

There is no existing GATE *program* in the district, so any differentiation for the gifted must fall within the context of the normal classroom environment. **How does differentiated instruction serve the gifted in specific?** How would differentiated *curriculum* serve the gifted were it offered?

What is the district policy and practices for [ability grouping](#), including grade [acceleration](#), subject acceleration and the subdivision of a class by ability to study a particular topic? Grade acceleration for the gifted is often opposed on the basis of social and emotional development concerns despite the fact that [there is no research showing such negative effects](#).

Does parental competition in general, and tiger parenting in specific, influence such policies and practices? Should it? If parents are willing to provide academic enrichment sufficient for their children to accelerate to higher grades, should this be allowed? Does the above average (and sometimes older) student population at West create de-facto grade acceleration?

There has been some discussion about how the incoming Common Core Standards (CCS) may or may not benefit gifted education.

The drafters of the Common Core did not write standards for advanced learners and have acknowledged that some students will be ready to move beyond these standards before the end of the year. [NAGC](#)

While public comment on the CCS reflects the desire that the CCS meet the needs of the gifted, there is concern that they do not go far enough. See [corestandards.org](#).

Lastly, [some myths about gifted education and their rebuttals](#).

Other general resources and reading:

The [National Association for Gifted Children](#)

The [Davidson Institute for Talent Development](#), host for the [Davidson Young Scholars](#) program for profoundly-gifted youth.

[SENG](#), Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted, a non-profit organization that “cares and advocates for the unique social emotional needs of gifted children and their families”.

[Hoagies' Gifted Education Page](#), a general resource site.

Site Council Minutes

April 17, 2013

Attendees: Roger Avedon, An Chen, Anu Hoey, Leslie Huie, Ingrid Kitahata, Katie Pierce, Jamie Adams, Angie Padian, Kristi Shreve, Colleen Golden, Jay Beams, Betsy Miller, Marlene Tuzar, Don Geddis, Sarah Adams, Mary Ellen Benninger

Approval of Minutes: Leslie Huie moved to approve, Ingrid Kitahata seconded, all members approved minutes as written.

Topic of Discussion: Gifted Education at West--whether gifted children at West are an unserved or underserved population.

One core discussion item was the definition of gifted. According to US averages, we should have two gifted children per grade. But, given our demographics, should our numbers be higher? There is a difference between gifted and academically talented. The current STAR testing does not directly correlate with identifying naturally gifted children; it focuses more on achievement.

One other flaw of our current system is that the STAR tests results does not identify a child as GATE until fourth grade. How can we better serve the K-3 gifted children? Also, once a child is identified as GATE, nothing really happens. There are not funds that are directed toward GATE and it does not seem like a District priority.

Given our current system, there is a concern that gifted kids are underperforming because they are not being engaged and therefore not rising to their full potential.

Individual teachers make accommodations for students and most strategies for gifted children are organically grown. Despite these efforts, there is no agreement between the staff and parents whether gifted kids are being well served.

The current system does not focus on the gifted rather it is designed to identify children that are falling below benchmark.

There was agreement that we need to split our language when talking about gifted children.

1. High achievers
2. Gifted

Also there was a question on how we should help a child that is exceeding in one area but underperforming in another. Teachers regularly put together individual enrichment packets for student, but they can receive push back from the parents, or the children feel as if they are being punished, in the sense of being asked to do additional work because they have finished all the assigned work.

In fifth grade, the differentiation occurs in project work. They have an upcoming unit on architecture where they can select their partners and they usually self-select to challenge themselves. The fifth graders also have math tiles and writing/journal prompts for enrichment.

Operation Risk really speaks to a lot of this concern since the goal is to drive students to their own level and capacity. The teachers will start a lesson and then set the students free, and this has provided a great opportunity to differentiate.

There was a question as to how we could better leverage Khan Academy so classes could spend 10% of the time on review and 90% of the time on going new places. But, that is difficult given the current State standards. With Common Core and the State shifting toward greater understanding of concepts we will be moving in the right direction.

Don Geddis suggested that we could evaluate a child's skills over time. Then on an individual basis, we could ensure that they are advancing on every skill level. We could produce a one-page sheet that explains the child's skills which could be passed onto the teacher for the next year to provide continuity and consistency.

There was also a concern that Speedy Math has become too much of an aggressively competitive activity. It is tainting the way that some kids are thinking about math. Children can also develop a bad self image given the competitive focus.

One idea is to bring a different set of skills to our children beyond straight academics, like social skills, folk dancing and Shakespeare.

One challenge with coming up with set enrichment programs is that the needs of the high achievers vary from year to year. Last year's first graders were much stronger in math. But there is a different focus each year.

Overall, at West the teachers look forward to getting to know each child every year. They really like getting to know what makes each child tick. We really need to highlight these efforts to the parents to ensure that they understand the teachers' commitment to each student.

GATE will remain a robust topic of conversation for years to come. Jamie would like us to offer up more concrete suggestions of what they can try. But first, we must split the definition of gifted and decide which population to serve. Roger was concerned that we may not have enough gifted kids within the District to make significant inroads.

Finally we discussed members of the 2013-14 Site Council and Sarah Adams and Valerie Leung have both agreed to serve. Leslie Huie, who served a short term, will continue with a full term starting next year.

Meeting adjourned.

May 15, 2013

Site Council

Attendance: Roger Avedon, Katie Pierce, Julia Zhen, Don Geddis, Leslie Huie, Sarah Adams, Colleen Golden, Judy Pappas, Jamie Adams, Anu Hoey, Jay Beams, Betsy Miller, Ingrid Kitahata

1. Call to Order 3:20pm
2. Approval of 4/17/13 minutes: approved
3. Current Business: Analysis of Single Plan Data (2012-2013)
 - Just a review of the data not a meeting on the content
 - Roger presented a summary “cheat sheet”

Academic Goal:

- Judy presented graphs “West Literacy Data”: 80% versus 75% achievement
 - 3rd grade had achieved very high because this grade was targeted back when they were 1st to need more help. So teachers and staff pooled resources to get them up to a level.
 - Even though we aren’t talking goals – is this data useful for next year’s discussion. Roger wonders if we need historical data to move forward. Judy agrees it would be useful to see the growth. Roger says then we can identify/address the issues as well as use the data to determine if we have the right achievement level. Judy says make sure you know that the data is not always based on same kinds of tests but at least you can track a group of same kids. Jamie says Teachers are using this data all year round. Judy summarizes per grade, but teachers have this data for each individual child. Jamie says as a historical data sheet this could be useful to see a window of time for each group of kids. If we are succeeding the goal is it worth to have 80% a goal, then keep moving the target percentage up?
 - Roger states we should be able to match the data subjects to what we said we are collecting based on the single plan.
- We won’t have Star Testing data (from end of this year) until beginning of next year because the tests are not done. But we are confident that we pasted the goal.
 - Don suggested we propose getting the data ready for first meeting of next year’s Site Council. (FYI next year’s faculty on Council consists of: Lina Butte 4th, Chris Flores 3rd, Sherry Gavin 1st, Jay Beams, Jamie Adams, Sorita Murphy).
 - Judy wants to know what exactly are we proposing: “Class of.... “? So the

cohorts, same kids. Keep the separate categories, but track a group of kids through the years. In the fall can we see the data from end of year 4th and beginning of year 5th (1st trimester).

- Jamie says maybe the goal is different – identify area where growth is needed as opposed to a universal “make everything at 80% achievement”.
- Jamie suggested taking this year’s 2nd grade as a focus because they have not achieved the 80% achievement and put them in historical graphs. Then watch and see. Roger says we do need the same “West Literacy Data 2012-2013” for next year and additionally have a “Follow the 2nd grade” graph.

Essential Outcomes – Effective Communicators:

- Jamie is excited with HCSD forward and focusing more in depth on individual children.
- Roger asks – what do people think about using report card score as the way to measure effective communicators?
- Katie suggests to look if we meet the goal yet – Kindergarten has a large amount of students, 10 students out of 60, who are not at a score of “3” (so not effective communicators). Last year it was 5th grade: 10 out of 60 not effective (scored 2 not 3).
- Effective communicators: what happens in the yard versus in the class? This data only covers in class.
- Colleen: report card additional notes comment on essential outcomes. 1st grade we have social skills lessons. If we need something more tangible to score they can have the kids write up something.
- Roger: the goal says 90% of students, can we use “3” as the level of achievement? What are the teacher/ staff observations? Jay, Deborah, Betsy, counselor all contribute to the evaluation. Because the comments are used to inform the parent and improve, there is still a fine line when it’s manageable but still scores a 3. Comments are what you (as parents) read if there is something that differentiates from the number score. Roger states the quantitative aspect is not appropriate to fulfill the achievement.

Differentiated Curriculum for High Achievers

- “Gifted” is not same thing as “high achievers” as we discussed in a past meeting on “Gifted and Talented Education at West”.
- Jamie suggests that we need to add “Parent input” to the Goal Statement – not just teachers planning curriculum to address the high achievers’ needs. Roger states he believes that’s different from what Site Council is trying to achieve.
 - Ingrid says there is a packet that goes home that is for the high achievers. The packet is differentiated not additional material to the regular homework.
 - Jamie: not every teacher has a “high achiever” packet and not sure if they pass it out. So probably not a good goal to have.
 - Roger suggests – next year ask the teachers to survey their team to see how they respond to high achievers.
 - Jamie says addressing high achievers in class is organic and happens. It’s not

noted and planned. So it's not looked at like "I just met that need". That's why parent input is important so that the teachers know if child is bored.

- Roger doesn't want the Single Plan to be a Mission Statement. The Single Plan should be a "plan" and Site Council should be responsible for it.

Social Emotional

- Betsy doesn't see how you can get quantitative assessments of "Social Emotional".
- Colleen suggests we can give teacher remarks. Maybe new counselor may have new methods in place.
- Roger says maybe social emotional goal can be in mission statement but not in plan because can't identify in curriculum and assessments.
- Don says Sherry Lyons has had meetings for parents so they also know the vocabulary.
- Jay suggests maybe there is a state guideline for what qualifies.
- Jamie suggests maybe the goal needs to be stated "we have this goal and want to place \$ towards this goal" then you can check it off and done.
- Ingrid says you can quantitatively achieve: you can say 4 out of 5 times, teachers can test them then check it off.
- Roger wants to remind that if we have a goal then move on to another goal. Jamie states some goals you can't say you've meet with 100% of children.

4. Items not on Agenda

Roger has 2 items:

1. Roger continues to chair Site Council for next year. You can give feedback to Jamie (in confidence) on Rogers' performance. Or you can talk to Roger directly.
2. Take this idea "West is Best" literally. It might be interesting to get Crocker parents (of West alumni) to comment: "here are some things you could do better" since they have the West experience and the Crocker experience. Then we can implement now. Think over the summer how can we make things better. It would be great to get feedback. Jamie says maybe it would be great in terms of social/ emotional path. Anu said maybe Bonnie Slater is someone we can get to come talk on this subject.