

Walhalla High School Improvement Council
Agenda
October 13, 2016

1. Welcome and Introduction: Tricia Burgess opened the meeting. Introductions were made. In attendance: Steve Garrett, Tricia Burgess, Lorilie Swanson, Olivia Timms, Katherine Allen, Alicia Keys, Dora Leonard, Jessica Duke, Laura Estes, Christie Lee, John Twitty, Meredith Cobb, Zoe Smith, Vanessa McCall, Brij Patel, Rachel Twitty, Alex Hernandez, Maclaine Hanvey, Patrisha Riser, Elliot Wechler, Paul Holleran, Lorilei Swanson, Lori MacLachlan, Madison MacLachlan, Bruce MacLachlan, Carmen Lee, and Amanda Harris.

2. Review and Approve Sept minutes: Katherine Allen read the draft of the minutes from September. **September minutes were approved.**

3. Student Representative Report:

- Ms. Riser shared that the focus has been forming the group.
- They are meeting both during Razor and before school.
- They have nominated Morgan Massey and Rachel Twitty as student delegates.
- All students have signed up for a committee.
- They have created a t-shirt design.
- They will be working on the family night as well.
- 9th grade nominations to student SIC are coming in.

The following student concerns and announcements were shared:

- There is only one microwave in the cafeteria (Mr. Garrett shared that four heavy duty microwaves have been ordered to be placed in the cafeteria.);
- **Competitive cheerleaders are concerned about sharing resources with other off season teams; having an appropriate place to practice and moving heavy equipment to the cafeteria to practice each day. (Mr. Garrett agrees to address the issues with the athletic director.);**
- Anchor Club raised over \$900 for suicide awareness and prevention; funds are also being raised for breast cancer awareness and prevention.

4. Co-Chair Report - Tricia Burgess and Lorilei Swanson:

- a. PAC Report (Parent Advisory Council): representatives from every school attend and meet with Dr. Thorsland four times per year for lunch
 - i. Calendar Options: there are two options for the calendar for next year; start date is dictated by state legislation; concern was that school resumes on January 4th after Christmas rather than the first day of the week; graduation prior to the last day of school was discussed and generally approved of; parents thought exams prior to Christmas break would be ideal.
Parents are encouraged to email Steve Hanvey at the district office with any concerns or suggestions.

- ii. Website/Canvas: new website for the district for the public to access; Canvas is the program being used by parents, teachers and students, similar to the Blackboard system that many universities are using; grades are transitioning from PowerSchool to Canvas. Parents sign in on the front page of the district website using their child's username and password.
 - iii. The district plans to move away from the A/B schedule into a four block schedule per semester.
 - iv. The district is considering a late start next school year. The district office is seeking feedback from parent and school improvement groups.
 - v. Registration (not addressed)
- b. WHS SIC Committee sign-up sheet: virtually all members have signed up for a committee
 - c. Student Recognition: Morgan Massey was recognized as Razor of the Month and for being crowned as the homecoming queen.

5. Committee Chair Reports

- a. Membership Recruitment and Retention: Dora Leonard reported that there have been some community members suggested as part of our community outreach. Mr. Chavez from the SWU School of Business was suggested as an appointed member. Mr. Garrett would like to meet Dr. Raul Chavez before appointing him. **The committee will invite Dr. Chavez to the next SIC meeting as a guest. Mrs. Julie-ann Shannon with Grace's closet was recommended and Mr. Garrett agreed to appoint her to SIC.**
- b. Family Event: Tricia Burgess has set January 19, 2017 with Kathy Whitmire coming to speak. We would like to serve food from 5-5:45 with the speaker from 6-7pm then Open House time from 7-8pm for parents/families to meet with teachers/classrooms. We need sponsors for providing food and/or funding. Please send suggestions to Tricia. It was suggested that a menu be determined prior to seeking sponsors. There is the possibility that the student SIC members will create a separate program for students.
- c. Publicity: Jessica Duke and Laura Estes (Information from this committee was emailed out to SIC members after the meeting.)
- d. Teacher Appreciation/Professional Development: Lorilei Swanson (Information from this committee was emailed out to SIC members after the meeting.)
- e. Data Collection: Bruce MacLachlan (surveys completed by SIC members during the meeting)
- f. ***New*** Parent Engagement: (not addressed during meeting)

6. Principal's Report:

- Steve Garrett shared that last week the area schools were able to raise over \$3,000 for Townville Elementary School. He is very proud of student efforts in suicide awareness and breast cancer prevention.
- Mr. Garrett shared information regarding the staggered late start time.
 - The school would be open for students who needed to be here by 7:20. There would be the possibility of study halls, early bird classes, computer labs, etc. for those students to attend.
 - Release time would increase the school day by 20 minutes, from 8:45-3:40.
 - Transportation would be able to be at the school closer to the actual dismissal time.
 - Q: Where are the changes in the schedule going to occur so that the start of the day can be 8:45 but end at 3:40? A: Sometime will be trimmed from announcements, Razor and five minutes from instructional blocks.
 - Q: Has there been any research done on the percentage of students who will continue to be at school at the original time? A: It will help a lot of students without causing harm to any student. It will help parents/students who have to drop off children/siblings at elementary and middle schools. Too early to conduct research because it is in discussion phase.
 - Q: What are the actual benefits of the late start time? A: transportation issues, family drop offs at multiple schools, benefit to high school students will not be driving to school in the dark, extra sleep for students, time before school for extra help/group meetings.
- Mr. Garrett shared information on block scheduling versus the A/B schedule.
 - A/B block has 8 classes with 4 each day on alternating days. Traditional block schedule has 4 classes per day for a semester and 4 the next semester.
 - A benefit of the block schedule is that major courses can be divided over two semesters so that students could potentially have only two core classes per semester.
 - Q: How does testing affect students in the block schedule? A: EOCs would be given at the end of the semesters. AP exams are given in May. State testing would continue to be at the end of the school year. Mr. Garrett shared that they are requesting that we move to an everyday schedule, not a true 4x4 block schedule.
- Mr. Garrett also shared that there is a shortage of substitute teachers. **Please encourage anyone who is interested to sign up as a substitute teacher for the district.**

7. Public Comment and discussion: A parent expressed concern about the football field not being cleared after the homecoming game for a scheduled marching band performance. Mr. Garrett responded that he addressed the concern and requested that he be contacted immediately if the concern arises again.

8. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 9am.