

CATA School Improvement Team Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 24th, 2011

Present: Adam Dailey, Christa Dailey, Deb Watts, Michelle Tuttle, Dale Ann Plyler, Miranda Calandro, Deb Christensen, Deb Cochran, Shari Davison, Lisa Eaton, Audrey Fowler, Elaine Holeman, Jennifer Owen, Jeff Weis, and Kamilah Deese.

Welcome and introductions were repeated due to new members in attendance.

Senior Fees:

This topic was initially discussed during our last meeting. The Daileys' stated that they have discussed the concept of senior fees with other schools to see if/how they collect senior fees – other schools have been very successful with the process. Dr. Poole's opinion is that we should consider waiting to collect these fees next year; that we should use this year to determine what other schools collect fees, how much their fees are, and what the fees are used for. At Forest Hills, Michelle Tucker (English teacher) handles the senior fees -- she can be a resource for some of this information. Dr. Poole wants to have research to back up whatever decision the SIT committee makes. He suggests that we should post this information on the website so that the public can look over the information, announce on the website when the next SIT meeting is coming up and then invite parents to attend and weigh in on the decision. We could also have an anonymous survey/vote online using Google Docs or Survey Monkey. The SIT group would make their decision and publish their vote and then the public would have an opportunity to have their say and vote as well. The sophomore parent rep asked for clarification on what senior fees are used for. The junior parent rep and Shari Davison provided clarification on the purpose of the senior fees. In the past, we have been depending upon parents and local businesses to donate to support the fees of senior activities. The concept of senior fees is to help make this program self-sufficient.

Tutoring Program

Connect-Ed message went out last week to let parents know that a tutoring program is in place. Parents were informed of days, times, and that snacks and drinks are provided. Tuesdays Biology, Wednesdays English I and II, Thursdays Algebra I (and II?) All sessions are from 8:15-8:40 am. We've been provided some money and are buying planning periods from teachers so that they can tutor students during the school day as well. Clarification was provided regarding which students should be attending these tutoring sessions. Tutoring sessions are not just for struggling students, also for students who are doing well who want to do even better. Benchmark testing is occurring this week which will help students determine if they need to attend.

Graduation Rate

Dr. Poole went to Raleigh two weeks ago to accept an award for CATA's graduation rate last year. Union county was 5th in the state for graduation rate, but our # of students was much higher than the top 4 schools. We are #1 in the 100% club! We had more than two times as many graduates as any other schools on the list (we had 175 – next highest number was 84). CATA, Weddington High, and Marvin Ridge High were all #1 on graduation lists for their cohort size numbers. (Kudos to Union County!)

Cultural Diversity Day

The 3rd annual cultural diversity day will be held this year, date to be announced. Our previous two have been a huge success. Lisa Eaton shared that the # of participants tripled from the first to second year. She is predicting that we will have even more participation from other schools this year, especially from Walter Bickett. CATA will continue to be the host school for this event.

Professional Learning Communities

Dr. Poole and several teachers (Mr. Mayhew, Mr. Bradshaw, and Ms. Lingle) went to Arkansas this past week to learn more about "professional learning communities. Ms. Gundersen has been trained previously. Professional Learning Communities is a big buzz word this year. Staff will be working on this throughout the year. More information is available on AllThingsPLC.com.

Dr. Poole's goals

On Oct 7, Dr. Poole met with Dr. Davis for his self-assessment. They decided upon 3 main goals for Dr. Poole to focus on this year:

- 1) Rewriting the school improvement plan with stakeholder input. Second semester we will be forming some teams that will have the specific goal of writing the school improvement plan for the next cycle.
- 2) Develop a systematic plan for recognition of students on a regular basis. Create a plan for achievement – have teachers write students up for positive things, not just negative things. We could focus on student improvement in the areas of grades, effort, and attitude.
- 3) Stabilize teacher turnover by open communication with staff, seeking their input on a regular basis regarding key school decisions and participating in PLC training and implementation

Question was asked regarding how much turnover occurred last year – clarification was provided that the majority of turnover last year was not teacher requested – it was due to a reshuffling of teachers by the county.

Spirit Week and Homecoming

Both were a large success last week. 100-125 students attended the homecoming dance. Kamilah (senior representative) stated the dance was larger than they planned (they planned on 50 students). They had many who came and paid at the door. Last year the dance was held on Friday night after the game, this year the dance was held on Saturday night. The change was made based on research on other schools who hold the dance on Saturday nights to allow football players and cheerleaders to attend (with a shower!).

A parent complained that Senior Citizen day was not respectful of seniors → 2 hour long phone call between the parent, Dr. Poole, and Dr. Davis. Dr. Poole will analyze the topics for spirit week next year to help ensure that they are not offensive to anyone next year. It may be that a name change is needed (i.e. “Generation Gap Day”).

Application Process Update

Dr. Poole submitted the 1st round of recommendations for the revision to the application for admission to CATA and the application process. Dr. Ellis, Dr. Little, and other members of the cabinet staff are currently looking at the plan. The lottery will be moved to June after EOG and grades have been received and screened. The revised application will be available sometime after January. This way, once a student makes the lottery, it can be a true celebration since the screening will have already taken place. Only the students who meet application standards will be put into the lottery. Students who do not qualify for the lottery will receive a letter notifying them that they did not meet the standards. This should help eliminate the frustration that students have had to deal with in the past when they have celebrated making the lottery in March/April only to be disappointed in June when they don’t get accepted due to EOG scores.

Globalization committee

The rubric is now available to see how the criterion has changed this year for International School status. Ms. Kopchick is leading this committee. Copies of this rubric have been placed in teachers’ mailboxes. Criterion is much more stringent this year. CATA was an International School last year and is hoping to retain this status this year.

November Meeting Dates/Time

Should we combine Nov and Dec meetings due to all the upcoming holidays and breaks? Dr. Poole said he was fine with missing one – if we needed to have a “homework assignment” to

take the place of one of these meetings; he was fine with that decision. Dates of the upcoming breaks were clarified for teachers and parents. The concept of a virtual meeting via Moodle was discussed. Ms. Christenson will scan the rubric for the International School and place it on Moodle for everyone to review and to help determine areas for suggestions on how CATA can earn points. The next meeting of Nov 28th at 3:45 in Media Center Conference room was planned.

Other business:

Ms. Fowler questioned that according to the handbook, students aren't allowed to wear pajamas and/or slippers to school – she had a student with “slippers” that had rubber bottoms. The student argued that they weren't slippers because they had a rubber bottom. Ms. Fowler questioned if this was allowed? Suggestions were made to allow an administrator to make that call.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made, seconded, and approved.