

MSA Academics Committee

Agenda

Weds., Jan. 11, 2017, 8 am, Room 12A

Present: Emily G., Bronwen W., Romelle P., Lisa A., Maggie B., Cheri H., Joelle P., John G., Romelle P., Kassie L., Barbara G., Tim T., Cortney H., Teresa W. (presenting) **Absent:** Rita W., Noelle H., Jen H-N, Hannah K., Jerry S.

Called to begin at 8:00...quick review of agenda for today.

Reminder of Academics Committee Purpose *(taken from last year's January 2016*

Academic Committee Meeting Minutes): Individual teachers and departments create the curriculum taught at MSA. This committee approves any changes to the curriculum.

Significant changes to the curriculum are approved by the BOD. The Academics Committee defines and redefines what academic excellence means for the school. The committee works with the Director and department heads to set annual academic achievement goals which are presented and approved by the BOD. This committee also works with the Director to devise clear and consistent ways to measure progress toward academic achievement goals.

1. Old Business

a. PSEO Task Force update (Lisa)

- What should students do if they want to take a class that is not required? The responsibility is on the student to follow through on completing the required paper work.
- Are we going to hold students accountable for informing us they are going PSEO by the date the state requires them (May 1) to notify their schools?
- Should we require a "rescheduling fee" for students who say they will be attending PSEO and decide not to?
- There are department decisions that may need to be made based on courses offered and taken at colleges.
- Emily will be talking with all of the students about what their responsibilities are.

b. 2017-18 Courses: Preliminary document listing class and number of sections based on projected enrollment. (Joell)

- This is pretty close to being finalized. There will be adjustments made as needed based on numbers. Middle school electives will be simply what they are to alleviate multiple schedule changes.

2. New Business

a. **ESL Program update** (Teresa)

- We have four students who currently qualify for services -1-6th grader, 2-7th graders, 1-9th grader. All four score high in speaking and listening; it is writing and reading that is the struggle for most of them.
- Teresa has the afternoons to track academics and keep an eye on courses they may be struggling with. Teresa sees them all on Friday study hall if they go to see her. She often gives up her prep period to spend time with them -- it is difficult to always be available for every student in every class due to scheduling.
- Scheduling is difficult; this is the main issue. She supports them when she can. If there isn't contact, it is more difficult to build relationships and trust.
- She needs 4-6 hours to test for each of these students. She doesn't have a place to go to do this, or know when this should happen. Joelle offered to help her find space.
- MDE might want us to have us write a description about our ELL program. She has been working with other people who work at charter schools to develop what this looks like. She would like to have a draft ready by fall for us to look at to approve.
- The process for referral also needs to be established. Right now she just looks at the forms families fill out when they come to MSA. She checks in and asks if families want services and support. They can refuse services; this is their right. Teachers may also refer students to Teresa as well.
- Right now MDE is not requiring a specific amount of service time for these students.

b. **Enrollment Questionnaire and Checklist Review** (Joell)

- Created new forms for students and parents to complete before new enrollment.
- Tuesday, March 14th will be the 6th grade Enrollment Night. She will have department heads check with their departments to see if there is someone willing to come and talk about the department.
- Making sure that parents understand that by choosing band means they will not be able to take two of the other electives offered for 6th grade. The worry was mostly about missing out on study skills class. This may be alleviated if Judy will allow 7th graders into her study skills class that is currently for 8th and 9th graders.

c. **WBWF Goal** (Romelle)

- Deciding what to do for PD, we looked at MCAs and decided reading should be our focus.

- This PD decision is usually a step behind the current situation based on when we receive data.
- It looks like ESSA will be enforced soon, and looking at the data they want us to focus on what we need to look at math for 8th grade Asian/Pacific Islanders. It is odd for us since this group fluctuates heavily. Regardless, we still need to focus on this.
- We need to decide what we will move forward with. How will we show growth for these students is what we need to focus on for our next report. Do we look at all Pacific Islanders? Is there a common thread that can be focused on? Should we look at all kids? Specific groups? Look at data for those students. But implementation should be across the board.
- Romelle is not comfortable beginning this by February to make a difference by June. This will be a focus for next year instead. Next year the focus will be on students who receive Free and Reduced Lunch.
- Tim says we've addressed these issues because of NHS Tutoring and Extended Day Tutoring.
- Lisa asks how do we show growth?
- MDE compares different groups of students to each other, all based on the 2011 scores.
- Romelle says we still have goals for our MCA scores and ELL implementation.
- Bronwyn is going to pull data on these specific students.
- Lisa is wondering if this is only applicable to 6th, 7th, and 8th grades? Can re-teaching be done in study hall? Is there an online program we could follow? Yes on MDE.

d. **(Academic) Eligibility compilation dept. discussions** (Cheri/John)

- Adding this because department heads are here. What is expected of them at the next meeting?
- John: This was shared as a discussion point for department meetings. Is there a class that has a higher fail rate? Is there a class that students struggle in this class? Is it the content? Is it across the grade level? What is the reason this is happening? The point was to begin a conversation with departments. What can be done to help support these students?
- Does everyone get the list? Yes, everyone receives it. If Shannon can set it up to be sorted by subject area, grade level, etc., this would be more helpful for discussion. Should these students be put on child study if they aren't already? The list was used in the Building A meeting.
- Joelle is concerned about a student, who withdrew, who didn't receive support but should have been on everyone's lists. If grades need to be updated by each building meeting, then this could be a discussion. Joelle and Emily can run reports that focus on D and F students easily. If it were run on a Monday before a building meeting, it would give teachers an opportunity to see the list.

- Concern about the building meeting minutes. Student names should not appear on the minutes due to who receives the information. Can Justin make another subgroup of just licensed teachers with no “reply all” option? He will explain the difference to Romelle, and yes, he can set that up. Non-confidential information for all staff emails.

3. **Next Meeting**

- a. Agenda items for next meeting: TBD
- b. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 8 am in Room 12A. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2017. Meetings are open to the public.

PSEO TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

12/14/16

Present: Emily G., Lisa A. Jen H-N and Noelle H.

Discussion:

1. Emily shared the MSA PSEO equivalencies list (as of 2013) and courses that currently count towards MSA grad requirements from Century & Concordia. She also shared (possible) PSEO course listings and MN general education transfer curriculum requirements from Century, Concordia, Inver Hills, Metro State and UMTC.
2. We discussed current process for PSEO signups, course approvals, etc. How crucial is the MDE May 1st deadline for a student to commit yes or no to PSEO? How does that affect MSA's timeline for course scheduling? What about students who sign up for MSA courses then later drop MSA courses to take PSEO instead (which is highly problematic for MSA)?
3. For PSEO courses we don't "know well" or that aren't clearly described in course listings, we may need to review course syllabi and have departments/teachers review to see if content is in line with state standards in order to determine MSA course equivalency BEFORE giving approval to students. We are starting that process for some departments, but for any other "special" courses that students propose taking for MSA equivalent credit students may need to provide a syllabus for review and approval by MSA departments. We still need to fine-tune a process for this.
4. We discussed which categories of PSEO courses we should consider first:
 - a. US History: should US history prior to 1877 be equivalent to MSA's high school US History requirement or only as an elective? All 7th graders learn pre-Civil

War, and 11th graders learn post-Civil War. High school students who take a pre-1877 PSEO US history course miss content which is a part of MN standards. Emily says often which PSEO course is taken only has to do with which class is open. Lisa will discuss with social studies department and we will revisit next time.

- b. Art: Jen has heard of some PSEO art classes which may not have enough focus on creating hands-on art (eg. with more focus on art appreciation). Jen and Noelle will try to find syllabi for some courses at some colleges, the ones that are most popular currently (Century and Concordia).
- c. American Literature: Do you have a list of course possibilities? Do we need one?
- d. Spanish: Most of the PSEO colleges do not level-test students, and it's very tricky to say which level should get equivalent MSA credit. This needs further investigation since it's been all over the map so far which levels MSA students are told they need to take for MSA credit.