

Academics Committee Agenda

September 14, 2020

8:00 A.M.-9:00 A.M.

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/95750661005?pwd=Y0d2NzdnUTNEWnBUenF4aGVjdWU5UT09>

Members: Michelle Kurkoski, Maggie Burggraaff, Tom Johnston, Joell Pundsack, Emily Graveen, Cheri Howe, Jeana Albers, Hannah Kostichka, Noah Langseth, Teresa Ward, Kirstin Knutson, Tara Richert, Noelle Haland, Kassie Larson, Wendell Sletten, John Gawarecki, Jennifer Heydt-Nelson, Angie Haverland, Rob Krueger, Jennifer Bartle, Paula Akakpo, David Pushparaj John, Jill Findlay, Courtney Gregar, Mariah Smith, Shannon Froberg, Ken LaCasse, Paula Akakpo

1. BOD committee review update

Our BOD description is still accurate.

2. WBWF Updates (Tom) 3 minutes - are there updates this month?

No updates.

3. Recruiting Diverse Staff Update (John) 2 minutes - are there updates this month?

No updates. There are no planned meetings. The goals the task force was created to work on were completed.

There was added language to job openings and more places were added to recruit more diverse staff. We are in a heavily competitive world when marketing to a diverse staff. It becomes difficult to attract these potential employees. We are taking the "grow your own" path. That doesn't mean we will not pursue other areas to hire diverse staff.

This group will meet again during the second semester.

4. Supplemental Online Learning Update (Emily) 3 minutes - are there updates this month?

Emily has learned that summer classes are now free for high school students to take. Emily will reach out to departments in December or January to discuss next year's courses and what summer courses will fulfill missing credit needs.

5. Enrollment update (Joell) 3 minutes
 - a. Withdrawal discussion

Two high school students and one middle school student are withdrawing from MSA. Two are citing they want an in-person experience. One cited wanting more support.

6. Scheduling update (Joell) 5 minutes
 - a. Rosters
 - i. Issue with overload - can those classes happen?
 - b. Transportation

November is a key month to make these decisions as the BOD will need to make a decision about the second semester.

Sections and transportation will be very difficult to configure. The earlier we begin this process, the better.

First, we need the numbers of families who will be choosing Distance Learning for the entire year even if we have an opportunity to implement Hybrid Learning. We need to develop a way to allow families to let us know if they will be committing to distance learning for the year.

Currently there are 428 classes. Twenty-one of them would be over capacity with 6 foot social distancing. This is at 50% capacity.

Measurements were determined by six foot distancing required by MDH, not the 50% capacity based on the fire marshals recommendations. The actual capacity is looking at a six foot separation between students in classrooms and includes teachers and EAs. Some classrooms may need to be rearranged. This is less than ideal. This is based off of actual classrooms. Potentially overflow spaces could be used for some of these larger sections.

Another important element to figure out is movement in the hallways.

Joell has heard back from transportation. According to policy, 833 is not required to provide transportation on Fridays because they are not providing transportation for 833 on these days. They would like to know in November if we will be needing

transportation, so then, they can begin setting up bussing for these students.

The goal is to hire someone for the second semester to cover the ELA classes that are currently being covered by a substitute and another teacher. The goal is to hire someone for the second semester at a .66 position. This posting should go up soon so we are prepared ahead of time.

7. Covid-19 Group liaison update (Noelle) 5 minutes

This task force would like to incorporate a flex day/asynchronous day once a week. A subgroup is trying to figure out how to potentially have optional in person small group learning experiences on these Fridays as well as trying to figure out how hybrid learning would work at MSA, hallways, room capacities, etc.

A survey was sent to the staff last Wednesday, but a large number of the staff is waiting for clarification before taking the survey. The staff is confused about the difference between asynchronous and flex. This needs to be cleared up before asking what their preferences are. This needs to be completed as soon as today.

The notes from these meetings will be shared with the staff, moving forward. John will also send out a staff invite to upcoming meetings.

Review and discussion of September surveys

- a. Parent survey
- b. Student survey
- c. Teacher survey
- d. Next steps

Are there ways to make this information actionable?

The questions that are being asked may need to be changed because these answers will vary between middle school and high school. A lot of questions are not specific enough in order for us to make decisions about anything.

COVID Liaison team will add members, this will have more people vetting these questions.

Our data is skewed because of a lack of definitions.

8. Department updates (DL issues/questions/successes)
 - a. Science class transcripts (adding Honors indicator) (Jeana)

Jeana would like to look into implementing Biology and Chemistry as honors courses. Is there a procedure for this? These kids deserve this opportunity to have honors on their transcript. It may not just be science who wants to offer honors courses.

Emily will check to see if this is a possibility. There may need to be an alternative for students as they cannot be forced to take an advanced course. For example, you cannot only offer an AP option for a course, and this may be the same in regards to honors courses. Currently, on student transcripts, Emily indicates that we do not have honors courses. However, the school profile lets them know our classes are advanced. When kids transfer into another school do they look at the title or the course description? Could Jeana add the advanced nature of her course to her course descriptions?

Unless we are barred by the state, we should make this change. This should be looked into to see if it is still the case that you can/can't offer this.

Jeana will begin her research by emailing Eugene Piccolo to ask a few questions.

Modified transcripts will need to be altered as well.

Investigation will be done before the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Will be November 9, 2020 8:00 A.M.

Next meeting Items:

- How are teachers feeling about hybrid learning? If a large number of teachers are uncomfortable about working on campus, it would throw away all of the work towards hybrid planning. There were staff members who said they were unwilling to be on campus before school started. This survey has not been taken by the staff again. This could pit teachers against parents, and it could be a staffing issue. We should figure this out now as it cannot wait more than a day or two. If the staff is asked in the next day or two, there are concerns that other questions are not yet answered in order for them to make a solid decision (ie: safety and guidelines for being on campus). Possibly, department chairs would need to figure out how to handle this situation if teachers are unwilling to come in. We need to know ASAP if teachers would be

present for hybrid scenarios. In some cases, the teacher is still at home. This could change teachers' decisions.

- Look at hybrid learning in other districts to see how it works to see what we can do. Can we teach synchronous digital teaching during hybrid? Teachers are not in the building, but kids are with a substitute or an EA. In most cases, during hybrid learning the curriculum is greatly lessened. Getting more information from 833 would be a start. There are parents of East Ridge students who are unhappy with the communication around hybrid. Had they known, they would have done distance. They are planning on distance for the next trimester.
- Can we even be open? Do our buildings allow for students to be in the building. MDH will not come out on site. They do not do onsite visits. They will do a virtual meeting over the phone. We need their guidance. Currently, if we don't get a change with the six foot distancing in the hallways, we cannot meet. Students standing in the parking lot while we change classes is not a viable option. Any staff/students need to know safety protocols.
- It would be good to know what we are doing by conferences.