

Academics Committee Agenda  
November 9, 2020  
8:00 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99511525312?pwd=ZFExbUx3QXFIS3hFSzN6bTF0OGtPZz09>

Members: Michelle Kurkoski, Maggie Burggraaff, Tom Johnston, Joell Pundsack, Emily Graveen, ~~Cheri Howe~~, Jeana Albers, Hannah Kostichka, Noah Langseth, Mariah Smith, 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~~

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

Document has been released by MDE. Some of the fields which need to be filled in are not editable, so Tom will contact them for clarification or help. Information will come out to the community soon so we can begin this work. We weren't able to complete the MCA's last spring, so some of our goals were not met. A task force will be formed to look at our goals with regards to Distance Learning/Partially In-Person Learning. It will be discussed at our December meeting.

2. Recruiting Diverse Staff Update (John) 2 minutes
  - a. Meetings will start in January
  - b. **When will the teacher and community announcement go out to invite new members? Needs to be at least December 1 (lots of time lost in December due to winter break)**
  - c. There are individuals interested in participating now - when do you want those names?

Because we need to hire a part time English teacher for second semester, Maggie was sent a tentative timeline for interviewing and hiring. The week of November 23, there will be a call for parental involvement in the interview process. Interviews will be held the week of December 14. Onboarding will be January 4-15. The position will begin on January 19. The group meeting starting on November 23 will be the "Diverse Hiring" group to continue to develop strategies (part of our SAM goals)

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

N/A

4. Tutoring program update

Tom, Kristen, Emily, Shannon, and Cody have been meeting numerous times a week to discuss this program. They would like to have one person from each department (it does not need to be a department head) join them to help make decisions about how

and which students should be recommended for this program. Currently the plan is for students who are failing or identified in our student support meetings to be first in line for tutoring. Also, teachers can recommend/refer a student for tutoring.

Tutoring is one hour a week per subject for four hours a week. They want this to begin soon. They are meeting 11/9 at 10:00 A.M.

5. Potential new elective (social studies)

Lisa Anderson would like to offer Hidden History of America - a study of marginalized groups history. This course would be offered alternating years with Sociology for grades 10-12. Michelle will forward a course description to Joell and Emily.

Proposal for a New Social Studies Elective: The Hidden History of America

This class will focus on the history of groups who have traditionally been left out of our history narrative, or otherwise marginalized in our society. It will be a chronological sequence, with an emphasis on the perspectives of African Americans, LGBTQ+, Latinx, Indigenous Peoples, and other groups. This will be a year-long class that is offered odd years, starting the 2021-2022 school year, alternating with the Sociology class. This class will be open to 10-12th grade students.

6. Enrollment update (Joell) 3 minutes

One 10th grader moved to Hawaii.

7. Scheduling update (Joell) 5 minutes  
a. 2021-22 scheduling process

Joell will send out the teacher forms for 21-22 classes by Wednesday. These should be completed by December 7th.

AP teachers should decide by 11/20 what they are offering for next year so that families can plan.

8. Teacher recommendation to withdraw and advance a student in the next progression class during the school year.
- a. The following questions need to be answered, specifically regarding for math and Spanish courses:
  - b. When recommending a student advance to the next level class during the school

- year what is the criteria (student behind and not on track to graduate, certain percentage in the class, etc.)
- c. Last day to make the recommendation
  - d. Should a grade be added to the student's transcript (with no GPA calc) for the class the student is withdrawing from or transfer the grade at the time of withdrawal to the new class?
    - i. MSA always had the student take a placement exam and the student needed to meet the criteria set for the exam (for example, 80% would indicate the student knows the content and can move to the next level) but we are not doing this anymore. And since we are not following the procedure we always had, the above questions need to be answered to be consistent and equitable to all students.
  - e. Taking courses out of sequence
    - i. What is the process?
    - ii. Approval?

What should these procedures be?

In the past, if a student wanted to skip the remainder of a year and move to the next level, a placement exam was used.

For Spanish they do not move anyone in the middle of the year. Sometimes at the beginning of the year a new student may be advanced with teacher recommendation and a placement test. Sometimes after a year of Spanish and extra summer work, students can take a placement test to skip a level.

For band students, Wendell has a number of students who would be better suited in an advanced band and others who would benefit from being in a lower band. He is interested in how this might work. Procedures could be created and brought to the Academic committee for discussion.

It would be helpful if every department had procedures for how to move ahead in classes.

Science did discuss this, and they will not allow the students to take courses out of sequence.

A procedure would provide equity. The deadlines for all classes should be the same. This will help with transcripts. Overall guidelines need to be in place. This allows for transparency and understanding of this process.

For math students this year, because of a curriculum change, some students were allowed to move up in the math sequence. The Math Department feels that tests are not always the best way to determine if a student can handle the course curriculum. The department is working on determining procedures for students to move ahead that are not just test based.

9. Behavior Issues

- a. What is the process and has everyone been trained?
- b. Is it adequate?

Do these procedures need to be changed for Distance Learning or Partially In-Person Learning? A refresher would be nice for the staff. And a discussion of what tweaks need to be made, if any, would be helpful, too.

This has not been covered a lot with this year's new staff; however, they are not all new to MSA.

This can be included in the near future as a training module. PBIS can bring some of these procedures back to the teachers.

10. Covid-19 Group liaison update (Noelle) 15 minutes

This group last met on 10/27. The next meeting is 11/10 at 4:30 P.M.

There was a lot of discussion about what we would ask parents about a Partially In-Person Plan. The goal was to gather information from the MSA community first, in order to give a recommendation to the BOD. This will allow for BOD members to make a decision with the most accurate information about getting their interest in meeting in person.

It is important to note that 833 and 834 will be going full distance starting next week.

What would the model PI-P look like for students at home? The staff is meeting about this on Wednesday this week, and there have been two orders from the governor about days and time.

Due to the Governor's new Executive Orders, there are items MSA must begin to incorporate into their planning. By 11/30 we have to incorporate 30 minutes a day for teacher prep time. It is also recommended that when teachers are teaching in person, Distance Learning is asynchronous. There may be SPED/504 needs that need to be met in person. And, there are additional days that have been granted for planning and transition days that do not deter from student contact hours. Basically, they are leaving it up to individual school districts to make the call. The regional support team is available to help with the approach, but they are looking at what is happening at your school level. We do not have data for numbers of students with COVID on campus, so there is not a lot they can help us with.

11. Review and discussion of October surveys (do we have the results yet? John, will you re-share with the group just in case any of us cannot find them in our emails?)

There are a total of 541 students at MSA, of which 26 are full time PSEO students.

So there are 515 students who could participate in Partially In-Person Learning.

269 = Number of students who choose Distance Learning. There are an additional 38 students who did not complete the form, and they will be put into Distance Learning as well. This means about 60% of students would be in Distance Learning regardless of what the BOD decides.

210 = Number of students who chose Partially In-Person Learning.

**PSEO students are included in the total number of students. However they are not included in the number of students who chose DL or PIP.**

12. Department updates (DL issues/questions/successes)
  - a. How are we really getting this information?
  - b. Do we need to update the surveys - create a group with teachers to draft questions that will address issues?
13. Department updates to teaching info online (add to department meeting agendas for November?)

Teachers would appreciate some input on the types of questions that are asked in the surveys. There is data they are looking for that isn't being gathered with the questions that are being asked. John will provide commenting access to the documents on which the questions are located. Nobody needs another meeting added to their schedule, so this may alleviate this from happening.

14. Update on honors indication on transcript this month?

Eugene said the law does not specifically say what kind of wording is needed on the transcripts. Doing this for all courses could be a problem if students cannot pass. You are putting barriers in their way for passing courses if there is not another option for the course.

If we call it honors, there is no change to the actual curriculum. However, it does change the perception of the course. This also confuses the idea of what a modified class is. A modification is individual to a student. It can be significantly different from one student to the next.

This could open us up to legal issues because it appears you are not being equitable with course offerings. If we have students who are not meeting standards, it could be asked why they didn't take regular biology. We need to offer alternative options for students. That is what is equitable. Calling all of one course honors could be opening ourselves up to problems.

Even though these classes are already at an honors level, naming this on a transcript causes confusion if a student needs modifications. Then a regular course (not honors)

would appear to be a modified curriculum. It's not that the class is honors, but if someone was to contest that modification, then they can contest they could have passed a regular level course.

Modifying puts something on their transcript that says they could not handle the regular curriculum. Then the question becomes, could they have handled the regular curriculum? Should a regular curriculum class be called modified? That is not fair to a student.

The recommendation is that for an honors indication, you should still offer general coursework. We put ourselves at risk unless we can further delineate courses.

Questions to be answered:

- What is the difference between gen and honors bio and AP bio?
- How are students placed in these classes?

We need more time to evaluate.

Having honors on the transcripts is a credit our students deserve; however, there are other pieces to be considered. We would be offering ourselves up to a liability. It is complicated.

We will revisit this in January.

15. Hybrid - how to determine a common definition of what it is and how teachers will teach in the MSA model? From other teacher friends...
  - a. EX 1 = Teacher teaching in-person to one group, home group has a similar lesson that is adjusted as needed for home, a different lesson for those who are only DL  
\*\*teacher has three things prepared for each course each day\*\*
  - b. EX 2 = teacher teaching in-person, home students are also online with the class via Zoom. There is a different lesson for those who are only DL \*\*teacher has two things prepared for each course they teach
  - c. NOTE: these two examples are in larger districts where the teacher has one or two preps.
  - d. How does hybrid look if the teacher is not present in-building? Are all students doing DL/online learning (with some in-building and some at home at the same time)?
    - i. Emailed at 9:25 am on 10-30 to ask for the calling of a teacher task force to review and brainstorm what the teaching element of a hybrid plan would be.

Next Meeting: Will be December 14, 2020

Next meeting Items: