

Community Council Minutes: December 11, 2017

Attending: Steve Hren, Matt Hoppensteadt, Margy Moreau, Heidi Wainer, Janel Arbon, JT Stroder, Josh Cameron

Minutes: Margy motioned to accept the minutes, Heidi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports – Differentiation - Superintendent Stroder s came to the meeting discuss a system he is considering to differentiate instruction. Differentiation involves tailoring instruction to meet the needs different groups within the same classroom. Spt. Stroder successfully implemented this system in 2010 in Texas. In this system students would complete an entire credit of a core class in two trimesters. At the end of their trimester, they will test. During the third trimester they will either retake class or immediately move up to the next class. If this system is implemented 7-12, students could finish their core requirements by the end of the sophomore year. After which, they could concentrate on CTE, AP or college classes. Some districts who use this system require a student service project with a portfolio, but those types of things are flexible. The goal is differentiation.

The council had a lengthy discussion about this idea. Most liked the idea of differentiation but there was a general concern about students once again ending up with a trimester break in core subjects. In the past, parents were frustrated with gaps.

Matt asked if the system required more classrooms or more teachers? No, but it requires expert schedules, built by hand. The number of classes offered would have to be adjusted each year for each group of kids. Josh expressed a concern about class sizes increasing, but thought having one less class a day would mean less burnout. Margy expressed concern about kids graduating with associates degrees who are not emotionally ready for the responsibilities of being a college upper classman. Matt brought up that concurrent enrollment classes do not transfer out of state and asked if an associate's degree would? Spt. Stroder did not know. Dr. Hren liked that remediation would be built in. Students could retake any class at any time instead of relying on credit recovery. Janel asked how this system would effect opportunities for the Regence Scholarship, which requires certain classes to be taken in a certain order during high school. Spt. Stroder was not sure. Heidi said in the past there were teachers who did not use the longer class time effectively. Josh said he could use an extra ten minutes. Matt asked about an implementation timeline. At the high school, they could implement next year, but the middle school is a question. It could be a few years. Heidi suggested they include Spanish in this program so students do not have a gap in their foreign language.

There was a concern about junior and seniors not having enough classes to take since free time leads to drugs and pregnancies. Stroder agreed saying all students should have the ability to take a full load, if they choose, or graduate early if they choose. One option is longer blocks for certain classes. For example some current CTE classes have two hour blocks, but this adds to scheduling difficulties.

Matt commented that if we are limiting student options it's a problem, if we are adding flexibility if is okay. Janel said she likes that admin is thinking outside the box to make the school district the best it can be.

Act update – This year all testing will be online and all students will take the writing portion. The test is February 27th. The rest of the kids will not have school that day. Janel asked if parents have to sign up – no, the school will sign them up. Matt suggested the school start the test later - ACT sets the time. Janel asked if there was break for lunch - Yes, but kids will not be able to leave the testing sight. They will provide snacks.

January teacher breakfast. - Janel took names of volunteers. Matt will ask Connie to reach out to her contacts for additional volunteers.