

Site Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 7, 2018

Present: Ashley Rudolph, Mary Daub, Gina Theesfield, Jeff Carlson, Emily Fitzgerald, Edie McDonald, Laurie Hahn Ganser, Libby Dominguez, David Schladetzky, Kenji Okumura

Principal Gibbs presented year over year data of the 2017-18 Student Survey Report.

The funding allocations show that we are down \$46,296 from last year.

Budget priorities, five point scale. Site Council evaluated a series of priorities and ranked them. Principal Gibbs compiled these and ranked them in order of how strongly the group ranked them.

Discussion followed around the process of assessing the priorities. Discussion around the potential decision to have three fourth and fifth grade classrooms rather than the current four. If we buy up the fourth and fifth grade to four classes, the district will fill them up. These students will be entering Whittier in fourth and fifth grade without prior exposure to IB. Would it be better to have the students coming into Whittier in the lower grades where they can adapt to Whittier earlier on.

Committee reviewed budget proposal based on values. The proposal neglected to include the buy-up of the IB Coordinator position to 1.0 FTE. The value of the IB Coordinator is that the person is key to encouraging student to move toward higher level conceptual thinking. The IB Coordinator position does this work, around depth of knowledge, logical thinking, variables. Libby clarifies that the IB Coordinator will support fourth and fifth classes with Depth of Knowledge, given that those classes will have higher numbers next year.

If we don't have four fourth and fifth grade classes next year, those classrooms will still remain. This means that there will be a chance for the advanced learning groups to use classroom space rather than hallway space, for example. Laurie: at my school we use the concept of flexible space, to avoid that students feel like they are being pulled out because they are falling behind, but rather that all of the spaces are used by all of the students.

Average of class size in fourth and fifth grade will be 29. That seems large. If all of the fourth and fifth graders come back, then potentially we can take one of our licensed specialists or reading interventionists and move them into a classroom teacher role. Mary D: The ideal is to have the class full at the beginning of the year, to build strong community earlier in the year. When you have a revolving door of students that makes it difficult.

Kenny has even higher class sizes, as many as thirty nine in some cases. They opted not to buy up classrooms last year. Laurie: Is there a reduction in the Responsive Classroom Coach position? PG: Yes, that is the case. That person will be doing that coaching but also supporting fourth and fifth grade.

Discussion around probationary teachers. There are thirteen teachers that are in that role and they might be exceeded next year. Emily: Are we adding a math and reading interventionist next year? Principal Gibbs: If money is available we may have Deb Freeman moving into that position. Her position has been cut down to .3, so potentially she could move into that position.

Also, Amber Winter might move to Whittier next year. Warm enthusiasm from the table for that idea.

Ashley: It looks like one of the ESPs in the Spanish Language Program is being phased out? This is the first year that we have had that position. Next year, the Amity will have that support role. Amities have generally been very strong - in all of the years only one of them has gone home early.

Student Support ESPs will be reduced from 40 to 35 hours. Often in these cases, staff can make up those hours by working After School classes. Principal Gibbs: Interpreter services may also be decreased next year. That is a lot of money. I will be looking at skill sets next year and I will be trying to evaluate where we can best use our money in that area. We need to have interpreters. Interpreters also support lunch and recess. We definitely need to have multilingual people. Is it our best use of their time to have them in the lunchroom? Laurie: I'd like to point out that this Site Council doesn't represent all of our diverse communities. We may have rated interpretation a little lower for that reason. Agreement from the Principal and Committee on that point. Community has bonded with our ESP front line staff. They resolve many issues that never need to cross into the Principal's office.

A majority of students in the red are in ELL. This is part of the reason to maintain a strong ELL program. Second grade groups have not mastered their math facts. The question is why? Teachers in third grade will be facing the difficulty of trying to make up lost ground. Principal Gibbs: Sometimes students from one particular cohort have fallen behind. We have to hold one another to really high standards. Laurie: This sounds like "high challenge, high support" concept. Principal Gibbs: Exemplary teachers will be successful with ten students or thirty students. They may be exhausted but they teach with rigor.

Mary D, others: Thanks to Norma for listening to the thoughts of the committee and putting together this vision. Principal Gibbs: Yes, I have worked on listening and being responsive.

Dave: What if we did have a \$200,000 deficit, what would give? Principal Gibbs: The priorities here won't be touched. Lunch supervision and testing coordination will be first on the list for cuts. For one thing, Norma will not be sweeping the cafeteria on a Principal's salary. Mary D: Engineers are doing a great job this year. Lots of agreement from around the table.

Outreach ideas for how to increase participation in Site Council next year. Starting earlier, wider outreach through many channels.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 21, 2018.