

Parent Advisory Meeting January 4, 2016 5:00pm

In Attendance: Charlene Hess, Jane Lagerquist, Kimberly Adelsman, Maura Hackenmueller, Katherine Scheil, Mary Corrigan, Karyn Carlson, Mina Lee, Eugene Crawshaw, Angela Whited, Mari Bergerson

1. Welcome and Roll Call (Jane)
 - a. USPA Mission – Interaction between Parents and Administration in an informal setting to discuss particular events and issues, thoughts, and perspectives in a positive and proactive manner.
 - b. Represent not only our family but other families. Provide time for all parents in the group to respond.
 - c. Need someone to take minutes.
 - d. Agenda Additions
2. New Topics
 - a. School of Rhetoric Information Night: 1/11 in Exhibition Hall from 6:30 – 8:00
Topics to be discussed:
 1. School of Rhetoric Course Guide, scheduling process for the 2016-2017 school year, which pertains to all current 8th-11th grade students and their parents.
 2. Graduation Requirements
 3. Course registration/scheduling timeline
 4. Extracurricular, social, and scholastic opportunities
 5. College process

Discussion:

- Students that do not attend Nova Classical are welcome to attend, but the target audience is Nova students. Parents are encouraged to come with their students.
 - Much of this education night will be placed on course registration.
 - Jen will be presenting an overview of SoR: expectations, requirements.
 - They will also try to assemble a panel of students to talk model a seminar
 - If parents have questions regarding Nova's athletic program, they will be given Chris Rovn's contact information.
 - Nova is 4-6 weeks ahead of the game compared with last year
 - 2015 was the 1st time Nova went with electronic registration and scheduling
 - We want to involve parents in the course registration process
 - 8th graders will be able to plan out their entire 4 years at Nova. 9th - 11th graders will plan out what they have left.
 - Once students complete their registration, parents will need to login and approve the courses they registered for.
 - All students are enrolled in "Naviance". Naviance is a program that serves as a nationwide college planning tool.
 - Parents can login to the Infinite Campus parent portal to see their child's progress: what assignments are missing, in progress, or completed.
 - Volunteer hours are not available in the parent portal, however they are available via the Infinite Campus.
- b. Major Work Calendar
[Serves as a record for all major exams, papers, projects, and events for the upper school]
 - All no-homework nights have been cancelled. In answer to this, we will make accommodations for homework to be done at school or for an additional day to do the work if your parents attended a Parent Ed night.

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- Any students affected by a school event can arrange to have an extra day for homework completion.
 - All teachers must refer to the Major Work Calendar when planning their exam schedule. This is a first come, first serve calendar. There can only be two exams scheduled for a grade on any given day. Teachers must adjust their schedules accordingly.
 - Teachers have also used the Infinite Campus Portal to create their class schedules, including exams and papers. This is fine, but they have to enter their information into the Major Work Calendar in order for their exam date(s) to be confirmed and seen by other teachers.
 - Exams, projects, papers must be entered into the MWC two weeks in advance.
- c. SoL/SoR Concert Night, especially time between end of school and 5:40
- The Winter Concert proved to be a liability nightmare with unsupervised kids running around the building, grounds, and area businesses from the time school adjourned to the time when kids needed to be concert ready.
 - Discussed possible solutions to this:
 - Assign staff members to mandatory homework club from 4:00-5:00
 - Open the kitchen up for a meal between 5:00 and 5:40
 - There will be homework, but perhaps no Major Work or Exams the next day?
 - Institute a 'Low-Homework' night for the School of Grammar
- d. Academic Excellence and cellphone policy
- Cell phones policy. The board is currently working on a cell phone policy. The board recognizes the importance of having a cell phone, but the use of cell phones needs to be monitored.
 - Problems with cell phones:
 - Facebook offers a platform for cyberbullying and other inappropriate behaviors
 - There are now broadcast apps that allow kids to broadcast their classes live without teacher knowledge.
 - Kids are congregating around cell phones during passing periods which creates a bottleneck in the hallway and less likely to talk to each other.
 - They imposed ACT testing procedure/protocol during finals week last year which proved to be a success.
 - Mari invited a Police Sergeant to come to Nova to observe a lock down. (Side note: In the past, all drills had been announced at Nova which negates the purpose of the drill. Drills will no longer be announced at Nova.) His observation on how to improve safety standards in school were: 1. Eliminate Facebook (there's way too much room for cyberbullying and other inappropriate behavior). 2. Eliminate cell phones in school.
- e. Updates from the previous meeting
1. Infinite campus syllabus information
 - Missing assignments. Parents have been receiving a missing assignment report on Thursday. Parents have asked if there is a way to not receive the same missing assignments over and over again. The school can select a specific date range for the report. We will need to continue this discussion so that we can utilize this reporting tool with maximum benefit. This report serves as a tracking system with RTI (Response to Intervention). Not all teachers are posting assignments two weeks out.

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Parents need to keep in mind that not all teachers will have assignments for any given time period.

- Teacher websites, quizlet, and syllabi: Teachers have been provided with a 'how-to' that explains how to link their own websites to Infinite Campus.

2. Science Department (grades 5-12) aligning curriculum, textbooks, etc.

- Science curriculum (5th-12th) is going through a review, revise, and refine process.
- AP courses will not be affected by this process because their curriculum is dictated by AP and the College Board.
- Biology: The search has been narrowed down to 3 textbooks. A decision will be made within the next month. This textbook will be implemented starting 2016-2017 school year.
- Biology: Due to larger class sizes, there will need to be four sections of Biology (2016-2017). This is in process because having four sections will affect other classes.
- MN state standards are being revised as well.
- Alignment is to align Nova's curriculum with the test standards. The difficulty that Nova has is that the test standard (taken in 8th grade) addresses topics that Nova students learn in 6th grade. Nova students aren't performing well on the standardized tests because of this misalignment. The science textbooks will cover Earth Science, Life Science, and Physical Science and will spiral deeper into each topic through 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.
- Biology will continue to be taught in 9th grade. Not all 9th graders coming in to Nova are ready for Biology, so they are considering adding a section of physical science for 9th graders.
- Physics is not a state requirement. It is considered a college preparatory course and accelerated.
- Textbooks are determined based on the Lexile Measure for each grade level. Nova's Lexile Measure is higher than the average school because it is college preparatory. As Nova grows, students are not able to comprehend the textbooks at that higher Lexile Measure. The challenge is to find different texts with lower Lexile Measures that students can comprehend without compromising the content. The Lexile measure is determined by the amount of academic vocabulary within a phrase. Science textbooks by nature are going to have higher Lexile Measures than other textbooks.
- Meaningful writing curriculum is ongoing and is being refined all the time for all subjects at Nova.

3. Upcoming Events

- a. EA appreciation week 1/11-1/15
 - Please write a note of encouragement to our wonderful EAs!
- b. Black and White Dance 1/23
 - There will be open gym. We will need 4 adult supervisors to help with this. Two adults on each side of the curtain would be preferable.
 - 2016-17: All dances will be on Friday nights rather than Saturday. It's too much to ask of teachers to give up their entire weekend to chaperone a dance.
- c. Snow Days week 2/1-2/5
 - There may be a game conflict
- d. 8th grade Decade Show Performance, Great Room, 5pm, March 4
 - Not much is known about this event. Is it a legacy event?

4. Past Events

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- a. Winter Break Treats, Ugly Sweater Day
 - Winter treats went well.
 - Could we have Winter break treats for SoR and SoL later in week? Between exams? Possibly during house?