

# Hillcrest High School – School Community Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 9, 2019, 5:00pm

Hillcrest High School Administrative Conference Room (A103)

Attendance: Mr. Leavitt, HHS Principal; Ms. Brenda McCann, HHS Assistant Principal; Dr. Jan Hansen, HHS Assistant Principal, Ms. Nicole Huff, HHS Lead Counselor; Mr. John Olsen, HHS IB Coordinator; Mr. Brant Thomsen, SCC President/Parent; Mr. Amir Zaid, Parent; Ms. Stacey Timmerman, Parent; Ms. Karen Conder, PTSA President/Parent; Ms. Julie Cluff, Parent; Mr. Jason Dong, Parent, Mr. R.J. Graham.

Meeting began at 5 pm on October 9, 2019 -

## Agenda Items:

### 1. SCC Training Report

- a. Final training session will be held tomorrow, October 10.

\*Mr. Thomsen reminded of the final training dates that everyone needs to attend.

### 2. APP Program Discussion

- a. How effective is it?

\*Ms. McCann reviewed what APP is – Academic Prep Period that meets after 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> period, 40 minutes per day. It is a time for students to re-take tests, make up assignments, and work on homework.

- b. Suggestions for improvement.

\*Ms. Timmerman indicated she loves APP. It is better for her son since he has not adjusted well to high school. APP has given him that time to get organized, retake tests, and get help from teachers so she has seen it even more valuable for him than her daughters.

\*Ms. McCann provided a PowerPoint regarding the electronic hall pass used in APP and all day. She also indicated that in the future, parents will be able to go onto the app and see where their students have been during the day and get an auto report. Mr. Leavitt hopes this will go into effect before winter break.

\*Ms. Conder wanted to know if the app can allow teachers to limit how many students can leave for whatever reason such as bathroom breaks. Ms. McCann indicated yes.

\*Mr. Olsen indicated this is a time for NHS and IB tutors to come in to classrooms to help.

\*Mr. Thomsen likes the improvements. His son, who just graduated, indicated sometimes he did not know where to go, so that the app now seems to streamline and help with this problem.

\*Ms. Conder was concerned about setting some guidelines for those students who do not have anything to do during APP. Mr. Leavitt indicated that unless a student has a 4.0, they always have something to do – and even those high GPA students could be working on scholarships, study for upcoming exams, etc.

\*Parents, in general, liked how APP is going.

\*Mr. Leavitt talked about changes that may happen next year regarding APP. Students will be able to choose teachers during APP to alleviate some of the issues we had with the Master Schedule. It could equalize conference periods so that we do not have other periods with scheduling issues. He asked about the issues of mixing grades together and the only concern from parents is supervision.

\*It was decided and voted on to not have APP on the November agenda.

### 3. BLT-CSIP

#### a. Read ideas from Community Council members.

\*Mr. Zaid asked about our graduation rate. Mr. Leavitt indicated that we may hit 85% this year that last year was 83%. Minimum of 24 credits to graduate

\*Ms. Timmerman: **Student Academic Growth** – Create classroom climate that provides opportunity for success to all students. This can be done through increased rigor, academic expectations and teacher guided support for all learning styles to meet increased expectations. Student success can also be met when teachers check for understanding frequently and allow opportunities for students to gain mastery through follow up to assessments and other measurable activities. **Intended classroom instruction of student behavior and school expectations** – Create a school culture of kindness and unity through embracing the unique social, economic, and ethnic diversity found at Hillcrest High School. Creating an environment where kids feel safe and successful can boost student attendance and graduation rates. **Teacher effectiveness in the classroom** – Effective teachers look at the individual learner and provide multiple opportunities for success in the classroom. Effective teachers set high expectations while providing clear step by step instruction and goals as well as, additional opportunities to gain mastery. These opportunities can take place during APP, before and after school, and can include additional teacher guidance and/or opportunities to increase mastery through revisions and retakes.

\*Ms. Conder: The two topics that would be top priorities for me are increasing a culture of kindness and increasing teachers' response to frequent checks on understanding and assessing. Developing a culture of kindness would help lessen the anxiety many students are feeling these days. It would help students feel more connected to teachers and other students. It would help students feel safer and calmer. If students were not so anxious, they would be more able to focus on their studies and could potentially understand the material better and would have the energy and focus to participate more in their learning and the result would be better outcomes. Through frequent checks on understanding, teachers can be aware of students that are struggling and need assistance. An important part of this process is learning from mistakes. Teachers need to give students the opportunity to figure out what went wrong

on assignments and assessments and correct errors. Currently there is a wide range of how mistakes are addressed to different classrooms. Some teachers give students only one chance on a test and that's it. Nor corrections or retakes. Other teachers allow students to take the test over and over until they have mastered the material. Still other teachers allow students to correct their mistakes for partial credit. The best learning opportunities come through learning from our mistakes.

b. Discuss priorities and recommendations.

\*Mr. Olsen mentioned that everything that was mentioned from the parents are things "we" as teachers are working on.

\*Mr. Zaid – Regarding test retakes, we must prepare students for college, but that retakes are good if they have some limitations as to the amount given.

\*Both Ms. Timmerman and Ms. Conder mentioned how test retakes have been most beneficial for students.

\*Mr. Dong mentioned that even though kids are busy, even our top students' fail exams and that retakes are so important.

\*Mr. Leavitt – CSIP, Land Trust, etc. as part of the school improvement plan – We have been doing the same thing for the last 4-5 years. In BLT, teachers has strategies, but not a clear drive. HHS has not met the State average on standardized tests. Therefore the goals are: HHS will reach the State average on standardized tests as we are only 3-5% away. One of the goals is to achieve a school wide disclosure. This also means a variety of tests and test on what matters. Teachers will allow retests, but no more than 2 per test. Teachers will give a minimum of 3 assessments and a final per quarter – this will mean that these assessments will count as 70% of student grades next year and possibly 80% the following year, thus aligning to the standardized tests. If we look at tests, "we" can help teachers in the PLC process where teacher sharing is transparent. THOUGHTS???

\*Mr. Thomsen is concerned if assignments don't have weight, then why would students want to do them. If students do not do the assignments, then they will not do well on assessments. Mr. Leavitt answered by indicating the three schools in the State have the highest scores on standardized tests and they utilize the 90% assessment/10% assignment ratio. The analogy of a game where learning drive increases if they learn how to study. HHS ratio of 70/30 next year and 80/20 the following year is where we should go. The important idea is that retakes would be required. This will also include AP and IB classes, but not CE courses as they are designated to follow the rules of SLCC. There would also be grade modification for students on and IEP or ELL students.

\*Mr. Dong is concerned of students falling behind. Mr. Leavitt indicated that he wants all students to be prepared with expectations. Currently HHS does not have a clear enough target so we must prepare students in the classroom to meet the expectations of our goals. Mr. Leavitt mentioned the changes at Union Middle School and how they implemented this process, now their scores are 10% above the State average.

\*Ms. Timmerman pointed out the variety of tests and how she feels that is important. Mr. Leavitt would like to move that HHS could move toward this, but it will take time.

\*Mr. Leavitt moved to attach this item on to the agenda for additional discussion November – it was seconded.

#### 4. Construction and Parking

##### a. Parking lot and pick-up/drop-off issues or concerns

\*Mr. Leavitt – no changes, I think parking is better. Drop offs is what it is.

##### b. Construction impacts and updates

\*The athletic area is on time and will open up in March 2020. The road that leads off of 7<sup>th</sup> may be opening February 1.

#### 5. Memorabilia Report

##### a. Members of the Hillcrest High Alumni Association will provide a status report.

\*Craig Conder, President of the Alumni Association – The association started a year ago. Regarding Hillcrest nostalgia from 1963 – 2020, everything is being cataloged and decisions are being made as to what to move over to the new building. Regarding the scholarship fund – working on sponsors and these scholarships are given to students who may not be able to go to college without financial help, and may not receive other scholarships. Three were given out last year and all three students are attending college at SLCC. \$4500 total in scholarships – each student received \$1500 each. Please join the FB and Instagram group. The biggest challenge is getting the word out.

\*Items that will make it to the new school: senior bench, mosaic husky in the floor by the auditorium, and some of the trophies, some of the class gifts. They would, however, like feedback.

#### 6. Other Items

##### a. Next meeting will be on November 20, 2019, as we return to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday schedule.

\*Maybe add some items from the SCC training such as the safety plan and the mental health umbrella.

\*Mr. Leavitt shared his appreciation for SCC members.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm on October 9, 2019