

Teaching and Learning Committee
March 23, 2023
9:30 – 11:00am

Present: Arie Drewes, Robin Jacobowitz, Kathy Sellitti, Cathy Collins, Dr. Padalino, Beth Bonville, Steven Spicer

Dr. Collins Call to Order – 9:33am

- I. **Q2 Data Meeting:** Our agendas have been full and the original plan for the year was altered by time-sensitive topics, leaving no time to discuss Q2 data. After some discussion we added new meeting, April 19 at 9:30, to review Q2 data.
- II. **Minutes:** Feb9, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
- III. **Restorative Practices and Discipline:** report from Ms. Bonville.

The goal of this presentation was to share discipline data from secondary schools and ask whether discipline practices were applied to demographic subgroups disproportionate to their representation in our district.

Before getting to the question of disproportionality, the committee discussed challenges with collecting data, and suggested improvements.

A key issue is that reporting practices need to be consistent and for this to happen, categories need to be well-defined. We discussed specific examples of what current categories for both Discipline and Restorative Practices need to be merged, eliminated, or added. Ms. Bonville shared revisions to data categories that have been made so far, and she will continue this work as she meets with principals. The goal is that for next academic year, we will have standardized recording categories and reporting practices in place so we can effectively track discipline in the district.

In our discussion of discipline categories the issue arose of clarifying the category of privilege restriction in particular– i.e., students that cannot participate in extra activities. The committee discussed the need to define this precisely, and reiterated that Board has spoken in the past about the importance of not restricting recess.

We also discussed the need to revise the Jefferson code and make sure definitions and categories of data collection are consistent with Code of Conduct.

We then discussed data we do have—which is focused on detention, in-school suspension (ISS), and out-of-school suspension (OSS). Data show that disproportionality exists: students of color receive proportionally more detention, ISS, and OSS. This pattern occurs across all schools, and all disciplinary actions.

As this is concerning, we spent ample time discussing both the nature of the data (which influences interpretation), and responses by the district to address the disproportionality. Regarding the nature of the data: because data we examined focused on disciplinary actions, not

individual students, it is unclear the degree to which individual students receiving multiple disciplinary actions may contribute to the patterns. It is also unclear whether students are referred more frequently by some staff members more than others. In both cases, discerning these nuances can help target solutions such as additional support/training.

We discussed the fact that SEL practices have been around a while – how can our approach to SEL help elementary students become less inclined to need disciplinary action in later years? Emphasizing restorative practices, too, at elementary level can equip students with skills to negotiate conflict and potentially prevent behaviors that may warrant disciplinary actions as they grow older.

Steps moving forward: The committee agreed that everyone in the schools should be informed about restorative practices, trauma informed approaches, and that staff training needs to happen frequently and consistently. The topic of revising the Jefferson Code arose again as well, and should be addressed. Refining data collection and analysis will allow us to better tailor our solutions.

IV. Scheduling Data: report from Ms. Bonville.

The scheduling process was revised for middle schools last year in an effort to increase access to electives (studio arts, music, entrepreneur courses, accelerated math, etc) for all students. The demographic breakdown from this past year relative to 2019-2020 did not show compelling evidence that changing the scheduling approach improved access. However, we did not have data for special ed students, one group of students for which we hoped altering the scheduling process would increase representation in electives. We also discussed opportunities exist outside classes, e.g. BEAM Programs are at middle schools (Bridge to Enter Advanced Math) – to help 6th graders move to the accelerated classes in 7th.

V. Honors: report from Ms. Bonville.

Continued our discussion of increased access by getting an update on the Honors program. For the first time, students may self-select to enroll in honors for SS and ELA. Students have up to 7 weeks to move to 9R if honors-level work does not seem like a good fit. Presentations were made to parents at middle schools on the new honors enrollment strategies; principals and guidance team have been communicating to students directly.

The goal of removing prior criteria for entry in to Honors was to create access – so success will be measured accordingly. For instance, we will have to create additional honors sections (estimated two classes) to accommodate number of opt-ins next year, which suggests that prior criteria were a barrier for many students. We also discussed that moving forward, it will be necessary to see whether enrollment in Honors classes increased for all demographic subgroups.

Meeting adjourned 11:16.

Next meeting April 19 2023
Meagher Board Room at 9:30
Key agenda item: Q2 data

