



School Community Council Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2017

In Attendance:

Mark Whitaker	Lisa Gallagher	Heather Morgan
Ryan Nield	Brittini Smith	Amber Gardiner
Jose Carrillo	Sherry Kramer	Michelle Bagley
Marie Pavich	Rachel Hoffman	Jaime Ward

Excused: Amber Bonner, Kara Edwards, Joyce Harrison, Misty Purser

SCC Co-Chair Heather Morgan conducted the meeting and welcomed the committee members. A motion was made by Mark Whitaker to approve the minutes from the December SCC meeting. The motion was seconded by Amber Gardiner; all were in favor and the motion was unanimously carried.

Principal Mark Whitaker spoke to the committee members regarding grading practices. He is most interested in real, authentic learning, and assessments that accurately measure that learning, which is then reflected in letter grades. Over the past few years, we have focused as a faculty on instruction. Mark would now like to focus on quality assessments, which could lead to changes in grading policies and philosophies.

The historical purpose of education was to sort and select. Students who achieved high grades would most likely continue on to college, while those who did not excel academically were pointed in the direction of trade schools if they wished to continue their education after high school. Now, the purpose of education is to ensure that every student is prepared for college or a career. Failure is not an option anymore. Failing a class now means remediation of credit, retaking tests to achieve a passing grade, doing packets, taking an online course, etc.

Grading practices remain somewhat unexamined. Students are given all reasonable and practical opportunities to master a concept, and grades should reflect that mastery. As of now, we have no uniform grading or assessment policy. These policies are left up to teachers.

Grades have become a barrier to authentic learning. Students often don't really care about the learning, they only care about the grade they will get. Our end game is authentic learning.

Last year, Mark and 3 English teachers traveled to Seattle for a Solution Tree grading workshop. The presenter, Tom Shimmer, is a standards-reference based grading advocate (1, 2, 3, 4 instead of 100% grading scale). Mark is talking with Mr. Shimmer to see if he can come and speak to our MRJH teachers during our March professional development day. His engagement fee is the same amount as was spent to send Mark and three teachers to Seattle. Bringing Mr. Shimmer to MRJH means that all of our teachers can participate in the discussion instead of a select few. Mark asked the other schools in the Lone Peak cluster if they wanted to share in the cost and participate in the workshop with us, none were interested.

Standard-reference based grading practices have been instituted in our Spanish, English, and some Science and CTE classes. Our math department is interested in the concept but would like more information before making a change.

All committee members present were in favor of proceeding to secure Tom Shimmer as a guest speaker at our next professional development day. We will vote at our next meeting to re-allocate funds to pay for Mr. Shimmer.

Principal Mark Whitaker next spoke about ideas for next year. School Trustlands money must be spent on areas of greatest need within our school. In the past, these areas for MRJH have included class size reduction targeted mainly toward Math and English, ZAP and Achievement Center.

Mark will communicate with teachers and request their input regarding areas of greatest need for next year. Mark will gather honor roll, grade, and SAGE data and at the next SCC meeting we will work on making final budget allocations. Ten percent can be used for security.

The members were thanked for their attendance and participation. Members who have items they wish added to next month's agenda, please email them to Mr. Whitaker, Heather Morgan, Lisa Gallagher, or Shelly May. With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled SCC meeting on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. in the Mountain Ridge Junior High Media Center.