

Redwood High School

Department Chair Council

Minutes of the May 5, 2010 DCC Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. Present: LaSandra White, Erik Berkowitz, Steve Hettleman, Dave Plescia, Nancy Malcolm, Julianne Schrick, David Goldsmith, Jennifer Harris, Skip Lovelady, Nancy Neu, Chris Gilmore, Ann Jaime, Greg Stevens, and Fran Bozdech. Student: Arthur Mansbach. Guest: Cory DeMars. Minutes taken by Jean Leutwyler.

Minutes of 4/7/10 DCC Meeting (N. Neu)

Minutes from the 4/7/10 meeting were approved as submitted.

Summer School (L. White and C. DeMars)

Cory DeMars distributed a handout listing summer school programs and tentative course offerings. He mentioned that P.E. has been cut from summer school and if a student needs P.E. to graduate, it will be provided on an independent study basis. The second page of the handout lists the classrooms that are proposed to be used in summer school. If a Redwood teacher has to move out of his/her classroom to accommodate summer school, that teacher will be paid \$40 per hour for packing and moving.

Redwood's transition program is being evaluated and it is under consideration to have a transition/readiness program right before school begins in August rather than during summer school. Drake does a week and a half transition/readiness program in August and Tam does a two week transition/readiness program in June and one week in August.

There will be three ways in which students will be able to fulfill the computer proficiency requirement. First, a student can take Introduction to Computers and pass all five sections of the test. Secondly, a student may take an hour and half workshop followed by hour and half of testing and pass the exam. And lastly, students can sign up to take the computer challenge exam and pass each section of the exam. Students may apply online for the workshop and challenge exam.

Dave Plescia and Tara Taupier are sharing the Assistant Principal position in summer school. Steve Hettleman will be distributing English textbooks and Julianne Schrick will distribute math books.

STAR Waivers (N. Neu)

STAR testing went smoothly this year. There were fifteen waivers. Administration follows up each waiver request with a telephone call to the parents. Steve Butler is working on the report showing the API 2009 scores. Redwood's API score increased by thirty-five points from 2006 to 2009, however Redwood's ranking has fallen from the 32nd to the 39th position in the state.

Acalanes High School always ranks high on STAR scores and Nancy Neu spoke to an administrator at Acalanes to find out what they do to encourage their students to do well on STAR tests. The STAR scores appear on the students' transcripts and the teachers and administrators are vigilant about stressing the importance of STAR testing. Ann Jaime mentioned that the parent population of Acalanes expects high scores on all kinds of tests, STAR, AP, etc.

LaSandra said that Redwood's staff and teachers did a great job of organizing and administering STAR testing. The PTSA provided the funds for the snacks that were furnished.

Schedules (N. Neu)

Nancy Neu talked about the building of next year's master schedule. We begin by rolling over this year's schedule and then make changes. Teachers were given a form on which to state any special scheduling requests for the 2010-2011 school year. The department chairs will provide Nancy with a grid showing teachers, classes and conference periods.

APEX (N. Neu)

APEX is a computer program that is being used at San Andreas and piloted at Tam. At San Andreas, if a student is using APEX, a teacher is available to provide instruction and guidance and to review worksheets and tests. Students may be handpicked to use this program if, for example, they enroll in school late in the semester, are on a home hospital study program or have come from a school on a type of block schedule where they take only one subject each semester.

Aaron Simon has looked at the math curriculum. He said that Algebra P1 students would need some guidance using the APEX

Algebra program and that the APEX Pre Calculus course was better suited to online study. Pru Starr said the English curriculum was good and was encouraged by the quality of APEX.

Redwood will pilot APEX with fifteen seats. Students may be handpicked to use this program if they enroll in school late in the semester or are on a home hospital study program. Counselors will work with the administration to determine which students may fit the profile to use APEX. APEX will not replace the independent study teacher at Redwood. Chris Gilmore said that APEX is not suitable for special education students. Fran Bozdech mentioned that APEX is college preparatory and does have "meat" to it.

The Board voted at their April 27th meeting not to offer summer school in 2011. Students can retake courses during the school year; however that may not be a viable alternative for all students who need summer school.

Principles of Learning (N. Neu)

Nancy Neu reminded staff that on the January 25th Staff Development Day, staff members met in alphabetical groups to brainstorm what the Mission Statement would look like in their classroom. It was planned that the staff as a whole would meet during the March Staff Development Day to develop their findings into common themes. Nancy Neu waived Redwood's opportunity to contribute, as it came at a time when students and staff were dealing with a tragic event. Tam and Drake came up with principles of learning sentences. David Sondheim will discuss principles of learning at the next staff meeting.

Date of Graduation (S. Lovelady)

Skip advocated for having graduation on Thursday, June 9th, 2011, the day after all classes will have finished. Skip suggested asking the Director of Facilities and the leadership team if this would be a possible logistically. If graduation is held on June 9th, finals will have to begin the week before graduation. It was suggested that department chairs check in with their staff members to see if they support having graduation the day after school ends. Nancy Neu said she would need to check with the District administration about this being a possibility.

Announcements:

On May 17, the next staff development day, the first half of the day will be spent scoring portfolios and the second half of the day will be back at the home site.

The rally on May 20th will be held before lunch.

It appears that the Classroom 2020 will be in room 182 and the computer lab will move to room 158.

MCOE will have a class for autistic high school students housed on the Redwood campus for the 2010-2011 school year. Fran wondered what the impact will be on general education and if any of the autistic students will be enrolled regular classes.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.