

## EIHS Site Council Meeting – April 8, 2014

**Present:** Donn Osterlund, Rebecca Hammons, Peggy Farris, Jessica Schabtach, Lisa Albrecht, Joanne Heidel, Wade Powell, Steve Smith, Janell Schoellhorn, Brad Schoellhorn and Carey Killen

### Reports

**Students:** We're getting the seminar problems worked out, which is good. We met with Student Government at Chapala, which is the location where the IHS Celebration will be (Oakway Center) – and got kinks worked out about how to ask for support from restaurants, etc. Students also participated in a leadership session led by Jennifer Gellar.

**Parents:** Trying to get parents more engaged – we had some new freshmen parents, for whom it would be great to give a year-by-year overview of the four years of IHS.

**Staff:** Eurasian Conference, led by Wade Powell, went smoothly in setup and in the running of the day. The students engaged highly, and came up with more amendments on treaties than ever before, and issues came up that more fully engaged the “little countries” than before. It worked really well – even when we narrowly averted a faux nuclear war after lunch. Ms Heidel reports seeing more student excitement and enthusiasm about it the Monday after the conference than ever before. Another nice change was to have small numbers of students in each country, so that each student in each country had more to do. Overall, it was fun!

**Taped Orals Registration** is opening up this week. Diploma Candidates and students who want to Certificate Test should all register.

**Graduation:** Auditions for Graduation and Farewell Assembly Performances are next week. We have just about full sign up sheets for auditions – very exciting!

**CAS Fair Help** (Janell): We have the CAS Fair coming up on this Thursday. What can we do to assist? We still need students to help with setup and takedown. Of course they can get CAS hours for that. There will be 26 organizations present. We are hoping for as much turnout as last year. It's so wonderful to see students make the connections that they do here. Students who want to volunteer to help setup and take down should come 6-8:30. Students who want to help should contact [IHSCHSFair@aol.com](mailto:IHSCHSFair@aol.com), as per the email that Lynne Given sent out.

**Seminar Assessment:** Steve opened a discussion by letting us know that we are evaluating our seminar model, and looking at feedback for how we can improve upon the model and adjust to bumps in the road we've had this year. Some of the issues have had to do with the scheduling and use of time – do we use Wednesdays more often to engage and meet with students? How do we form an appropriate balance between independent study and support? How do we view/use/improve upon our use of Managebac? How do we better prepare students for the Extended Essay? This kind of seminar evaluation will be the focus of our staff development on May 9<sup>th</sup>. At our professional development before Spring Break,

- **Wade:** every year that we make a change, it takes 2-3 years for us to fully adjust to it. For example, we are realizing that we now need to backtrack to sophomore year and add more practice for this kind of independent study in the sophomore year.

- **Selena:** It would be good to have an opportunity for juniors to talk to seniors who have already written their essays about the extended essay. It would be a good use of seminar time. Also, it was hard having a teacher who was only there in the mornings because it's hard to have a lot of contact with them.
- **Brad:** This year felt rushed, and as if students and teachers alike didn't always know what they were doing. Also, with the new schedule, seminar often went on the back burner, behind other concerns. In response to Steve's question: would it be better if it met every Wednesday? Yes – it would feel more like a real class. In response to Wade's question about every trimester or only the first – yes, meeting every Wed. for only the first trimester would probably get us on track enough that we wouldn't need to do so after that.
- **Donn:** How much would it help to have a free period? Student response – that free period wasn't particularly used for seminar last year. So directly related to seminar, not really a problem, but perhaps it would be good in general.
- **Steve:** we will continue to look at this on May 9<sup>th</sup>, and also hope that next year will be an improvement over this year – at least because we will all have done it before, and hopefully in other ways as well.

### **Policy Review:**

- **Districtwide Attendance Policy** – This Spring, we will be following it more closely, and the district will be clarifying the policy as well.
- **IB Policy – Honesty and Integrity:** What we have handed out is the policy that we submitted to IB for our school. A different issue, perhaps, is that of how we as individual teachers address the issue of students cheating, for example in a test environment. Should all teachers have the same policy? Or are consequences for plagiarism up to the individual teachers? Culture and communication: how do we want to communicate expectations about honesty and integrity to our students and to our community? How do we develop a culture that holds students accountable and that also makes students feel that academic integrity is the right thing to do?
  - **Joanne:** We need to help sort out the differences between plagiarism and collaboration. How do we teach collaboration that is ethical, rather than in a fuzzy area in re: to integrity?
  - **Wade:** What if everyone's name always has to be on the assignment?
  - **Carey:** Some parts of some IB assessments are also collaborative, and so specifying in writing to students where the expectations are to be collaborative and where they are to be individual would be useful.
  - **Donn:** Honor codes work better in voluntary scenarios than in open admission scenarios. So, how do we help students understand a serious transgression of honesty, esp. when students are doing cost-benefit analysis of saying OK, I'm risking a zero on an individual assignment. Kids/peers would probably help us most here.
  - **Steve** asking students – how rampant is plagiarism among students?

- **Selena** – collaboration issue rings true. Sometimes it is unclear when collaboration is allowed and when the assignment has to be individual.
- **Brad** – turnitin.com does deter a fair number of people from doing that kind of thing, due to the awareness that a teacher will find out. But Brad also seconds Selena in saying that clarifying when an assignment is collaborative and when individual would help.
- **Jessica** – so some kind of a contract between teachers and students?

**Lucy McWhirter:** visiting to introduce **The Race to Nowhere** work on education that she and Lloyd Madden have been working on together. Lucy first addressed the competition and stress that students, teachers, parents, etc. are going through, and then transitioned to **The Race to Nowhere**. It is a group inspired by a documentary made by a woman in California, addressing the enormous stress that students are feeling in schools. Lloyd and Lucy's work is start of a new push to have conversations about education – what is working, or not working, and what have other places tried, and would we want to try that – Our first event is from 7-8:30 on 4/30 at Lane County Behavioral Health, 2411 MLK. Topics might include anything related to pressure or stress involved with school and education. People interested in participating should call Lucy, at 541-206-8304.

**Wade:** it seems like there is no give, no place to relax in students' schedules.

**Rebecca** expressed concern about how much sports schedules are also wiping students out.

**Lucy** validated both concerns, and said that this **Race to Nowhere** meeting will probably start forming groups around these kinds of concerns. It is important to have these conversations.

**Carey** suggests that it would be good for students to understand an approximate number of hours of homework will accompany each school/program/option they sign up for, so that they are aware of the consequences on sleep, taking care of themselves and eating and so on of the schedules that they choose, and so they can learn to make choices based on the reality of a 24 hour day.

**Donn** – to understand that school is where we focus on academics, and being all things to all people really isn't what we assess – and if students find a true passion, perhaps they don't feel like they need to load up on so many activities, but it's hard when students perceive that colleges want them to do so much. It's a difficult path to navigate as a society.

**Jessica:** Today's article from the Washington Post, about schools also having to choose between academics and athletics as a focus, is worth reading – he was saying that of the top 100 high schools, 67 do not have football programs.