

Minutes of Gate Advisory Committee

Friday, September 24, 2015 8:30-10:30a.m.

- 1) Welcome and Introductions, Dr. Brett Geithman
 - Minutes to be taken by parent volunteer.
 - Dr. Geithman to forward minutes to all GATE families.
 - Parent introductions.
 - The Gate Advisory Committee (GAC) is a leadership team comprised of Administrators, Teachers and Parent Reps.
 - Approval of the minutes from May 29, 2015 meeting. Scott Holcomb made the motion to approve. Marlene _____ seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.
- 2) Introduction of the GATE Subcommittee, Dr. Brett Geithman
 - Subcommittee Members
 1. Grand View Scott Jensen scottjensenmb@gmail.com
 2. MBMS Hilary Mahan hilarymahan@me.com
 3. MCHS Ellen Chao echao45@yahoo.com
 4. Pacific Jeri Vick jeri_vick@yahoo.com
 5. Pennekamp Katherine Dugdale kdugdale@perkinscoie.com
 6. Robinson Jeff Yeh jyeh@nylashoes.com
 7. Meadows Roger Spencer roger90266@yahoo.com
 - These subcommittee members are tasked with the gathering of parent input on the future of MBUSD's GATE program at their site and will in turn report back to parents the discussions of the subcommittee.
 - MBUSD's GATE Program was last updated in 2008 and was meant to be a five year plan.
 - The first meeting of the subcommittee will take place in October.
- 3) Odyssey of the Mind, Andrea Custer
 - It was announced that Pacific would be hosting an informational meeting for Odyssey of the Mind on October 7 at 6:30pm.
 - It is a program that promotes collaboration, teamwork and creativity.
 - There is a competition in February that involves both planned and spontaneous problem solving.
- 4) A parent asked if MBUSD had looked at what the top scoring districts in California were doing with regard to Common Core and CGI. Dr. Geithman explained that the districts varied, that most of the top scoring districts had adopted some form of CGI prior to MBUSD.
- 5) Advanced Placement (AP) and CAASPP Data
 - It is a goal of MBUSD to increase the number of students who take AP exams.
 - 2009 to 2015 saw an increase of 380 students (5%) pass AP tests. 75% passed in 2009 and 80% passed in 2015.
 - In 2015, fewer students took the liberal arts AP exams, but there was a higher pass rate.
 - Many more STEM class AP exams were taken with a 10% increase in pass rate.
 - Mira Costa AP pass rate is excellent when compared with California and US pass rates, with the exception of Micro Economics and Calculus AB, which were below California and US pass rates.
 - MBUSD's goal is to allow more access to AP classes and for exam pass rates to continue to increase.
- 6) A parent asked if the district is prepared to staff high-demand courses as the student population size varies from year to year.
 - Dr. Geithman explained that the district was prepared to make staffing adjustments for high demand courses if a certain level of student interest is met.
 - A parent from MCHS explained that independent study is also an option in certain circumstances.
 - Parental concerns over timing of zero period were expressed.
 - Parents at MBMS expressed concern over their students having to choose between music or STEM if they don't do zero period.

- 7) California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Data, Dr. Brett Geithman
- This test is the new standards test, which is based on Common Core. California chose the Smarter Balance test.
 - The test is computer based and adaptive. The scale of the depth of knowledge is 1-4. It is not known how far beyond the grade level the test goes.
 - The old API was a cross-sectional score; the new API will include a growth component.
 - Grades 5,8,10 took the old paper/pencil science test. The new science test will be rolled out in 2018/19.
 - The state has declared that MCHS is on Program Improvement Year 2 based on the number of students who opted out of the exam. 95% of students must take the exam, which we did not meet at MCHS. The opt out is being blamed on timing (too close to AP exams) and students signing the opt out form without parental consent.
 - More Chrome books are needed for testing.
 - In 2015, 81% of MBUSD students met or exceeded standards for English Language Arts on the Smarter Balance test. 71% of students met or exceeded standards for Math. While 81%-85% of elementary students met or exceeded standards in math, 62%-68% of students met or exceeded standards in math at the middle school level.
 - What are the high performing districts doing? 92% of elementary schools are engaging in CGI Professional Development. La Canada has no plans to adopt a textbook, but might still be using one. Other districts are using textbooks as a resource.
- 8) Differentiation, Grouping, and Tracking – what is it? Dr. Brett Geithman
- Students may be grouped within a class
 - Parents asked why not track kids High/Medium/Low. Dr. Geithman explained that fluid track is imperative.
 - A parent asked if students are doing well at the elementary level, why change what is working. Dr. Geithman explained that studies show that CGI in elementary school leads to better middle school learning.
 - Questions were raised as to the importance of explaining math vs. acquiring conceptual knowledge.
 - A parent asked if children will be penalized for getting the right answer without articulating how they arrived at the answer. It was explained that the goal for the future is no.
- 9) Meeting adjourned 10:30.