

High School Redesign Board Recommendations

Family Advocacy

We recommend that all students and teachers be involved in Family Advocacy groups that meet daily during a dedicated time for the following purposes.

Purpose:

- to build meaningful relationships between teacher advocates and students
- to have students advocate for themselves
- to have students develop attributes such as social skills, life skills, and good citizenship through lessons and experiences with their teacher advocates
- to provide students with ongoing guidance regarding post-secondary plans
- to establish a primary connection point (the advocate) for parents
- to monitor attendance and grades for 20-23 students per advocate
- to assist students in scheduling classes and to check graduation requirements

Changes:

Currently we meet in IRP groups of 27-30 students each. These larger numbers are due to teachers supervising clubs. With a dedicated time for Family Advocacy, all teachers will be available to participate thus bringing the numbers to 20-23 in IRP.

Freshmen will be assigned to an advocacy group. Their advocacy time will be used for the Freshman Essential Skills Program discussed below.

Students will choose their advocate at the end of their freshman year. This also gives them a year to become acquainted with some of the staff in the building.

Family Advocacy groups will be a mixture of 10th, 11th and 12th graders. Current IRP groups are grade level.

Rationale:

In the community survey, 96% of parents believe that WCHS should teach social skills, life skills, and good citizenship. In addition, 59% felt it was the job of WCHS to teach self-discipline, self-respect, and self-control.

In the free response section of the community survey, respondents added their desire for greater individualized attention to all students and increased focus on character development (community service, leadership, self-confidence, etc.). Parents want their children to reflect what they perceive as their virtues.

In our visitations of successful schools, every one included some form of Family Advocacy.

Timeline:

Program Development: April – December 2009

Staff Development: January – May 2010

Implementation: August 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

None

Freshman Essential Skills Program

We recommend that all freshmen be enrolled in an essential skills program that is part of the daily IRP.

Purpose:

to provide an advocacy group (see “Family Advocacy”) for freshmen that will help freshmen develop the necessary skill set to be successful in high school including note taking, studying and testing strategies, and time management

to provide an “I Can” check list that will help focus students on the important aspects of academics and behavior including:

- How many zeros, tardies, referrals have I had this week?
- Have I completed at least 85% of my assignments this week?
- How many classes have I attended this week?

Changes:

Currently we offer Freshman Guided Study Halls and a course titled “Orientation to Life and Careers.” The curriculum for the Freshmen Essential Skills Program would pull from both curricula.

Teachers currently teaching Freshman Guided Study Hall would instruct these courses each year. Freshmen would then choose their Family Advocacy group (IRP) for the subsequent years. The Freshman Guided Study Hall offered now is limited to 4 classes; this would be for all incoming freshmen.

This time would be used for both instruction and guided study.

Rationale:

The previously listed rationale for Family Advocacy also applies here.

Freshmen need additional assistance to make the transition from middle school to high school.

All students need time to study, seek additional help, re-test, and make up work missed during an absence.

Timeline:

Program Development: April – December 2009

Staff Development: January – May 2010

Implementation: August 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

None

Student Attributes

We recommend that student government expand its representation of the student body and that a leadership class be offered for the following purposes.

Purpose:

to give students an avenue to express their desires and become familiar with civic responsibility and the avenues that exist in the real world to voice their opinions
to provide students avenues to associate based on clubs, organizations and teams with adequate representation in student government
to offer sophomores a semester long leadership class that can help students develop life long leadership skills and that can be used as a prerequisite to obtain leadership positions within the student body

Changes:

Significant revamping of the current student government has already taken place.
A leadership class will need to be offered. Curriculum will need to be procured and subsequent teacher training will need to take place.
Students want a place to call their own such as a student union where events and meetings can be held.

Rationale:

In the free response section of the community survey respondents added their desire for increased focus on character development (community service, leadership, self-confidence, etc.).

Timeline:

Proposed Stipend: May 2009
Student Government Implementation: August 2009

Staffing and Additional Costs:

Addition of 1 Student Council Sponsor position on ECA \$1366

Service Learning

We recommend that all students have an opportunity to take part in some form of service learning during their high school experience for the following purposes.

Purpose:

- to promote learning through active participation in service experiences
- to provide opportunities for students to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- to extend learning beyond the classroom and into the community
- to foster a sense of caring for others
- to provide structured time for students to reflect by thinking, discussing, and writing about their service experiences

Changes:

- Currently specific classes include service learning components.
- Each department would work with students to develop a service learning project that is curriculum based. Collaboration between departments would be encouraged.

Rationale:

- In the community survey, 80% of respondents believed that students need to be involved in identifying a need in the community and using interdisciplinary skills and cooperation to meet that need in a project-based format.
- Service learning also speaks to character development which is a concept supported by many of the community survey questions.

Timeline:

- Program Development: April – December 2009
- Staff Development: January – May 2010
- Implementation: August 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

None

College and Career Center

We recommend that the middle school be made into a Junior/Senior College and Career Center and a position of Internship Coordinator be created for the following purposes.

Purpose:

to offer college and dual credit courses to students instructed by adjunct professors and existing staff members
to offer internships and career related experiences in an environment with flexible scheduling
to have students placed as interns prior to the beginning of the school year by the Internship Coordinator who will also develop and implement training plans and follow up with students involved in internships

Changes:

Currently we offer several dual credit classes in the building. We also have an agreement with Ivy Tech to have 10 additional courses taught in the building next year.

Internships are monitored by faculty members in the building. This would continue in the new plan. An extended contract, however, would be required so students could be placed in internships prior to the beginning of the school year.

Work will continue with university and college partners to align present courses such as English and mathematics that are requirements for high school graduation with required courses for college degrees.

Additional courses beyond the scope of the high school curriculum will be added as students attain prerequisite credits towards associate or bachelor degrees.

Further internships and career related experiences will be added to our current offerings. These will include apprenticeships and trade schools.

The partnership with Central Nine will continue to play a vital role for trades and technical career tracks.

Rationale:

In the community survey, 94% of respondents support the development of a curriculum that stresses academic excellence while offering off-site internship opportunities. In addition 85% support students taking on-line courses and attending vocational/technical school at a site away from WCHS. Sixty-one percent of respondents support a curriculum that stresses-college level placement. Even more so, 88% believe that college-level courses should be offered to WCHS students. These are strong mandates from the community to implement a College and Career Center Center.

Timeline:

Program Development: April – December 2009

Staff Development: January – May 2010

Post Position: March 2010

Implementation: August 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

Qualified Teacher with a 20 day extended contract \$45,000-\$65,000

Post-Secondary Coordinator

We recommend the position of post-secondary coordinator be created for the following purposes.

Purpose:

- to manage the flow of information to students and parents through the advocacy program
- to instruct college-bound students how to fill out applications for college and financial aid assistance
- to provide non-college bound students with information about vocational and trade school opportunities
- to coordinate efforts between the various post-secondary institutions and WCHS
- to communicate with advocates regarding additional support, student progress and student interest/readiness

Changes:

- Currently the guidance staff handles much of the post-secondary information. A guidance person would be the logical choice to fill this role.
- The Family Advocacy Program would become the primary means for disseminating information from the coordinator to students. This will couple nicely with the advocates' role in guiding students in post-secondary choices.

Rationale:

- In the free response section of the community survey respondents requested that college-bound students be prepared to successfully apply to colleges and for financial aid assistance. In addition, they requested that non-college bound students be educated on their choices of vocational and trade schools.

Timeline:

- Develop job description by November 2009
- Post Position: March 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

- Qualified Teacher with a 10 day extended contract \$45,000-\$65,000

Professional Learning Communities

We recommend that Professional Learning Communities become part of the permanent culture of WCHS and that dedicated time be given to them on a weekly basis for the following purposes.

Purpose:

- to impact the way teachers instruct and assess students
- to allow time for teachers to align curriculum with standards and End of Course Assessments
- to allow time for teachers to analyze data from common assessments and adjust instruction and teaching strategies

Changes:

PLCs are fairly new to WCHS. This year we have been granted 15 PLC late start days. Half of them have been dedicated to the redesign process, the other half toward curriculum and assessment.

In the new flexible schedule, PLCs would meet every week in the same format offered currently. To be more effective, teachers need some training. Critical Friends is a protocol for professional development used by several schools. We would like to train our teachers to use this protocol for PLCs.

Rationale:

It is vital that we impact the area of instruction and assessment. Students have changed. Instruction and assessment need to change to match the needs of today's students.

Timeline:

Proposal of 28 PLC Wednesdays for the 2009-10 school year and beyond with yearly evaluation

Staffing and Additional Costs:

None

Flexible Schedule

We recommend that the schedule at WCHS be altered in such a way as to allow greater flexibility and dedicated time for the following purposes.

Purpose:

- to allow the advocacy group to meet daily, for students to receive extra help and retesting opportunities, and for the purpose of guided study
- to offer the Freshmen Essential Skills Program to all freshmen that will meet during the Family Advocacy time
- to allow time for the Professional Learning Communities to meet once per week in a late start format
- to lengthen periods two days a week for extended instruction, project-based assessments, and labs, all needs that a modified block schedule will meet
- to offer a separate dedicated club time to give every student an opportunity to participate
- to allow internships, career related experiences, and dual enrollment courses to be offered

Changes:

The current schedule is a 7 period rotation every day. Monday and Friday include IRP time. The new schedule will be a 7 period rotation three days per week with an advocacy time. Two days per week will be block periods. Students will go to odd or even classes as well as advocacy. One day will include PLC time in a late start format and the opposite day will include club rotations.

Rationale:

This schedule will give dedicated time to accomplish all that has been mentioned here.

Timeline:

Program Development: April – December 2009

Staff Development: January – May 2010

Implementation: August 2010

Staffing and Additional Costs:

None

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