

Community Linkage Meeting

October 22, 2003

Discussion questions:

1. Given the state and federal requirements, what additions/deletions/modifications to our academic goals/standards would you as a citizen make?
2. What are the strengths of our current academic programs to meet these standards?
3. What are the gaps or improvements in our academic programs that need to be made for our students to meet these standards?
4. What other ideas should we consider as we are working on these standards/goals?

Table 1

Question 1

1. Teach basic math facts!
2. Expand before and after school reading / math programs
3. Eliminate whole language reading programs
4. Do not aim for minimum standards; reach for higher

Question 2.

1. Excellent teachers
2. Recognize area of need
3. Full-time reading specialists
4. All-Day kindergarten option
5. Before and after school reading/math programs
6. Class size

Question 3.

1. All kids reading by 2nd grade
2. Eliminate whole language
3. Invite pre-school children to grade school library reading sessions
4. Learn/teach to read for information
5. Do not reach for minimum standards of achievement; aim higher in all areas
6. Continued emphasis on spelling

Question 4.

1. Teach basic math facts.

Table 2

Question 1.

1. Create our own benchmark
2. Find a way to see how classes progress (change resources if necessary).
3. Identify individuals at risk
4. Emphasize math and science, writing
5. How about non-UW students?
6. New programs must help standards or go!

Question 2.

1. Primary and intermediate reading intervention specialists
2. Excellent music / fine arts / drama

Question 3.

1. Math! Identify gaps; ?teacher comp w/integrated?
2. Science
3. Junior High should not be a warehouse
4. ?Increase graduation requirements (more instructional time); block schedule?
5. ?Class size?
6. Computer program
7. Sophomore paper needs revision

Question 4.

1. Different teacher for different learning style (not by grade Junior high on)
2. Students that excel need more options
3. More writing at early age
4. Solicit student and college input

Table 3

Question 1.

1. Standard: Raise to 80% mastery of EALRS K-12 in Math, writing, reading, communication, science
2. Should AP participation be a measure?
3. Distribution of college placement, Jr. college vs. 4-year university

Question 2.

1. Reading at elementary level
 - smaller class size
 - reading specialists
 - accelerated reader
 - extended day activities
2. Math
 - Mimosa; manipulated; helps with real life
 - math specialist at intermediate
 - accelerated math only at Drum and Evergreen

Question 3.

1. Integrated math – POOR. Need remedial help.
2. Articulation between grade levels – better communication and tracking of children between primary-middle-junior-senior high
3. Leave behind African-American males in math
4. Disconnect between math at intermediate and junior high levels
5. Lack of daily homework in math and writing at junior high and high school
6. Block schedule doesn't give daily attention to all subjects

Question 4.

1. 180 day math tracking model – daily homework K-12; +80% mastery
2. Support homework efforts for disadvantaged students
 - study halls during day
 - afterschool homework clubs
3. Hire an inspirational math/science African-American male teacher
4. Require more reading at 8-12; one book per week; involve parents
5. Involve and communicate with parents
6. Writing required in every class!!

Table 4

Question 1.

1. “Category 6” – interest in group in external outcome measures.
2. Interest in ACT as well as SAT
3. Would like to see increase in percentage taking SATs
4. For all nationally norm-referenced testing, that UPSD outperforms national average

Question 2.

1. Individual schools take standards seriously
2. Very strong K-4 reading, writing, math resource support (specialists) and improved performance
3. 5th – 7th emphasis and resource support

Question 3:

1. 7th – 8th, 9th – 10th transition / continuity of curriculum
2. Math achievement at 10th grade and SAT
3. UW GPA discrepancy with graduating scores. What are we going to do about it?

Question 4.

1. Consider 8-12th campus with North and South campus; 8th grade wing; one oversight principal
2. Peer tutoring programs? (After school – 1 hour, catch late bus)
3. Use individual information from testing to set teacher-parent-student goal
4. Amount of time in core subjects, i.e., everyday six 1-hour classes.

Table 5 Responses

Question 1:

Establish reading benchmarks for 1st and 2nd graders

- words per minute (timed reading)
- assess in Spring & Fall (progress reports for teachers and parents)

All new students will achieve grade-level standards within 2 years

- X % improvement within Y years
- need to celebrate improvements of students (even if not meeting standards)

Also need benchmarks for other subjects for 1st and 2nd grade;

- also need regular assessment.

Question 2:

1. Reading specialists K-9; Math specialists at intermediate schools
2. Summer school achievement academy
3. Collaboration at primary/intermediates (curriculum / assessments)
4. Yearly report to school board by each school
5. Strong staff / very professional
6. Variety of programs to meet student needs
 - co-curricular (strong and inclusive)
 - requires min. GPA to participate (incentive to do well)
7. Curriculum (“We go for rigor”) thorough review
8. Sophomore English Project
9. AP program at CHS
10. Effective Instruction Program
11. Small class size

Question 3:

1. intervention/remediation must start sooner than 3rd grade reading
 - assess sooner so adjustment / improvement can occur
2. lower class size at intermediate (and sophomore English; AP classes)
3. Must deal with disparity (male/female; ethnicity)
4. CJH Block schedule (kids too active for longer classes)
5. CHS block schedule (loss of teaching time)
6. More intense for writing
 - need better way to evaluate writing at intermediates/CJH/CHS

7. Need better continuity between intermediates/CJH/CHS
-more conversations across grade levels
8. Increase resources at libraries (impacts ability to meet standards)
9. Writing style changes between intermediates/CJH
-need writing continuum K-12; Identify what each grade level needs to do to prepare students for 10th grade project.
10. Need to emphasize Math k-12 (higher level math)

Question 4.

1. Family communication issues (k-12)
-how to improve communication from school to parents?
-need to provide more options / help to parents
-need to bolster parents—positive input – celebrate family success
-find ways to communicate so parents accept input
2. look at additional ways to evaluate students (beyond standardized tests)
-does this honestly evaluate students?
3. Grades at CHS may not accurately reflect actual work performance, i.e., grade inflation.
4. May need to increase credits required to graduate.
5. How can technology be used to help.

Table 6

Question 1.

1. Set higher standards for math and reading K-12
2. Return to traditional math program. IMP is too difficult for many students. Flexibility of switching tracks needs to be available for students who aren't successful in their current assignment;
3. Math placement test (aptitude) for math track, especially new students

Question 2.

1. We are methodical in how we develop and align our academic programs from grade to grade;
2. Reading specialist additions are SUPER!

Question 3.

1. Transition from intermediate to JH is difficult
2. Monitoring of academic performance of students who have late arrival / early dismissal needs to be done; No LA or ED for students who need more instructional time.
3. Achievement gaps must be in the foremost thoughts of the Board and Admin. Team;
4. Time on task. Does block schedule need to be reviewed?
5. English needs to be taught every semester.
6. Are AP offerings adequate? Scheduling is a concern for student wanting to take multiple AP classes.

Question 4.

1. Trade-offs must be considered, i.e., taking AP courses will limit number of electives. Students who need remedial help might not be allowed to take a lot of electives.
2. Students who don't meet the standards should not be permitted to take less than a full load.

Table 7

Question 1.

1. Focus on smaller class size K-3
2. Clarify comprehension component and reading standard at 3rd grade level
3. Data collection on college graduates.

Question 2.

1. Appreciate 90 minute block for individual assistance;
2. Achievement Academy!! Used data to focus intervention!
3. Great Science program –More of it!!

Question 3.

1. Evaluate [whether we are] effectively using 90-minute blocks in secondary education.
2. Above-average learners (not Challenge program) are not pushed.
3. Public speaking – need more instruction and practice.
4. Do we have data to support the integrated math program?
5. More effective writing

Question 4.

1. More critical thinking at all grade levels.
2. Strengthen pre-K and community outreach.
3. More interaction with non-fiction at K-4 level
4. Staff development / assistance for at-risk or students struggling academically.

Table 8

Question 1.

1. Identify, track and support / assess remedial learners (not special ed, but those performing below grade level.
2. Block schedule—payoff vs. cost; junior high / high school choices
3. 8th Grade science WASL curriculum

Question 2.

1. Several offerings:
(a) paras (b) sped help (c) tutoring CJH/CHS
(d) MESA (e) ROTC (f) Arts (g) exceeding state standards
(h) Instructor longevity (I) community involvement

Question 3.

1. African-American males in Math;
2. MATH
-IMP? Keep, modify or kill
-Maintaining math choices
 - a. assessment paired with choice
 - b. current research for different levels
3. Block schedule
- Core teaching time
4. Free tutoring
-MESA
-library time, paras

Question 4.

1. Address cheating, plagiarism from K-12 (promoted by integrated math)
2. Grading on daily work:
-completion not content – Needs to change!
-collected AND read
3. Student accountability
4. Core classes
-Also offer elective (enrichment) after school
-send out well rounded students

Table 9

Question 1 .

1. District comprehensive math curriculum review
2. Analyze data to determine disparity between level of performance on 4th and 7th grade WASL.
3. Direct reading instruction needed beyond 4th Grade
4. Resources needed for students to improve reading performance beyond primary grades
5. Is the current testing schedule providing us with the information we need to improve performance?
 - incongruencies? (e.g., ITBS/WASL)
 - is it helpful to consider adding / analyzing district-created assessments?

Question 2.

1. Reading specialists , at intermediate level especially.
2. Class size reduction at primary level – carry forward to intermediates.
3. Focus on early literacy interventions.

Question 3.

1. How do we know if the district-adopted curriculum is being taught in classrooms?
 - intervention for weak links
 - bringing new teachers on board with curriculum
2. Is the adopted curriculum research-based?
3. What is being done for remediation at intermediate / secondary?
4. UW figures – GAP
 - How are we evaluating reasons and strategies for closing the gap?
5. Positive results with lower class size at primary – close gap at intermediates

Question 4:

1. How will we address AYP issues, specifically regarding special ed, ELL?
2. Educate staff and community regarding AYP and what it means for USPD
3. Grade inflation, especially at high school
4. How do we address diversity issues – we need a plan
5. Educate our community about the changing “face” of USPD
6. Involving parents as partners in the educational process
7. Consistent curriculum alignment K-12; scope and sequence and research-based!

Table 10

Question 1.

1. Math emphasis should be equal to reading emphasis in grades 1-3.
2. Uniforms might increase academic performance by less distractions.
3. Equal amount of time given to creation science as to evolutionary science.

Question 2.

1. Reading specialists in the elementary school
2. Lower class sizes
3. Students teachers add support
4. Practical experiments – hands-on science

Question 3.

1. Writing should be consistently taught every year.
2. Emphasis should be given on handwriting and spelling – from lower levels.
3. More global education at earlier grades
4. Cultural education taught from early grades on

Question 4.

1. Can schedules be rearranged to have better use of time so more math and English can be taught?
2. Raise level of math curriculum to a higher level.
3. Introduce language at an earlier age because they learn it more easily and have more time to do it.
4. School assemblies (like Sunset) develop a sense of community and a sense of achievement.
5. Continue /encourage to set higher standards than the WASL.

Table 11

Question 1.

1. More specific standards.
2. More WASL-like tests at other grade levels.
3. Higher standards / increased rigor
4. Goal language too vague.

Question 2:

1. Instructors are well-trained
2. Instructors care for students
3. Community
4. Size of district creates cohesiveness
5. Offer a rich variety of programs
-co-curricular enhance academic
6. Offering remedial math, reading
7. Honors / Challenge opportunities

Question 3.

1. The block schedule reduces the time students spend in core subject areas
2. Increase the use of common language
3. Lack of continuity of secondary curriculum
4. Smaller learning communities

Question 4.

1. More memorization (develop brain)
2. More rigor in reading, writing, math

Table 12

Question 1.

1. Definition / clarification of criteria re: “all children will read by 3rd grade.” (How measured, at what level?)
2. Commitment to high standards for students while acknowledging and attending to individual differences.
3. Reinforce concept of “Parents as Partners.”

Question 2.

1. While strength is evident in meeting standards, what are our intentions to exceed them (ex. What %age?)
2. Specialists (reading, math)
3. Experiences teachers and professional staff development opportunities
4. Class size

Question 3.

1. Clearly articulated curriculum (K-12) district –wide, standardization
2. Research-based innovations and strategies for instruction and assessment.
3. Analysis of data re: disparate groups of students
4. Feasibility of entry-level assessment (new students, all students)

Question 4.

1. How will we fund...
2. How will we staff...
3. How will we assess...
Our commitment to these district standards?
4. Emphasis on learning; avoid making the WASL a “monster.” Incorporate learnings into daily teaching (for WASL).

Table 13

Question 1.

1. Flush the WASL (too subjective)
2. Focus goals to improvement in SAT scores
3. Compare changes in scores from 3rd to 10th and adjust goals accordingly
4. Need to develop plan for special ed. Students who fail at 10th grade.

Question 2.

1. Grade level breakout is excellent (i.e., K-4, 5-7, 8-9, 10-12)
2. Looping of teachers
3. Very qualified teachers
4. Presence of reading specialists at K-9 levels
5. Sophomore project

Question 3.

1. Lack of coordination between CJH/CHS; correlation needs to be more direct in all academic areas (math seems to be a major gap).
2. Need to reprioritize class selection to assure core skills are adequately offered and not lower in priority than some electives.
3. Need to focus efforts on writing skills to more closely align with college levels.

Question 4.

1. Consider changing the hours of operation at the high school (body clock)
2. Revisit or at least consider changing block schedule at CJH / CHS
3. Conduct outside visits or peer reviews with other districts

Assure that out-of-district students are really accepted based on legitimate criteria (address, etc.) or consider not allowing out-of-district students, allowing internal students priority in class selection.