

Highline CHOICE Steering Committee Minutes | November 5, 2014 6:30pm

In Attendance:

Frank Cantwell (principal)
Hannah Roswell (student)
Linda Elmore (parent)
Isabel Gomez (parent)
Litzzy Hernandez-Gomez (student)
Kristie Powers (teacher)
Ann Eng (parent)
Joan Sandberg (parent)
Mike Sita (principal)
Alexa Wayman (counselor)
Justin Trondson (parent)
Denise Hemingway (parent)

Agenda:

- Introductions
- Process
 - Other Items
 - Meetings
- Application Process
 - Open House
- Fridays/Friday Home Study Pass
- Handbook
- Vision
 - Grow
 - Courses
 - Languages
- PTSA vs. PSO
- Advisories
- Off-Site Electives
- Teacher Selection
- Sports---Ultimate Frisbee
- Results---Document
- Special Education (added 11.5)
- Interview Process (added 11.5)

Mike Sita's Introduction: CHOICE is growing rapidly and we want to utilize and strengthen our parent partnership as we redevelop and conceptualize the general direction of our school.

Frank Cantwell's Introduction: Any organization moving forward needs to think about the direction of growth, needs to be managed instead of just happening. Otherwise, you face chaos. Additionally, state standards are getting more challenging and graduation will be more and more difficult to reach. Our agenda is not just for tonight, it's for the rest of the year to direct our Steering Committee meetings.

What are our priorities for discussion in this meeting?

Application

Mission, Vision, Goals

PTSA vs. PSO

Our Discussion:

We looked at recently redesigned application. First round of applications will be due the last weekday of the month in January 2015. From all of these applications, we will interview this first round of applicants, make decisions and let everyone know. The second round of applications will be due the last day of the month in February, same process. The third round will be the last day of the month in March, and so on.

Modifications to Application (Suggestions):

- Under Section 3, we would like the question "do you have a sibling at CHOICE?" (Kristie) --- **agreed upon by our committee**
- A principal/administrator recommendation form. (Cantwell) ---not agreed upon by the committee

--the problem with this is what if the principal doesn't know the individual student (Ann)

--So make it optional? (Cantwell)

--Often we get feedback from schools that the recommendation form is a burden for teachers in sending schools (Sita)

- Remove the administrator paragraph from the application. --- **agreed upon by the committee.**
- Middle school and High school applications separate?
- Addendum to explain the teacher recommendation for home school students (we don't want the parent completing the recommendation...or do we?). We need to know academic progress of students, so maybe the parent is the best judge of that.

- We may need a whole other page to assess home school academic level.
--- **agreed upon by the committee.**

Modifications to the Process (Suggestions):

- What to do with Math?
 - How do we gauge the level of students coming in? This needs to be explored.
- We would like to explore the interview process in the next meeting.

On Publicity:

- CHOICE OPEN HOUSE: Dec. 11 at 6:30pm
- We will do site visits with students like we did last year to all the in-district sending schools.
- We will also send out post card invites by Dec. 1 mailed home to all 5th and 6th grade visits.

Friday Home Study Passes

Right now, we have most students coming in the 7th and 8th grade students.

We cannot do new instruction this day.

The options are:

- Restructure and invite all students on Friday.
- Keep Home Study passes and use this day for more intentional and targeted interventions, including the use of peer tutors.

We need more parent input on this.

PTSA vs. PSO:

We will be adding 6th grade, our school will get larger just based on this addition, let alone our rapid growth in the other classes.

PSO is a self-governed organization, there isn't a prescribed hierarchy or a set of guidelines for electing the board.

PTSA, on the other hand, is a national organization with set standards and regulations. There is a board at the state level that will work with schools to set up their PTSA, write their bylaws/charters, etcetera.

We have grown to a point where we need to investigate other models than what we have, which is too closed off to the greater school community in its self-governing nature.

Denise Hemingway speaks from PTSA experience: If we were a PTSA, we would have to collect dues, parents would be able to deduct charitable contributions to PTSA, we would elect the board, there would be greater transparency.

Roswell speaks from PTO experience: when they switched from PTA to PTO, parents were much happier. Everyone is more willing to walk into a PTO room than PTA because they feel more welcome. There is PTO support on the web for any questions. They don't have to have a president, they have a "leader," someone who is in charge, and they have to have a treasurer. Beyond that, they can create their own guidelines. Website: PTOtoday.com

We are open to all ideas, we need:

- More structure and organization
- More transparency
- Some kind of national network we can go to for guidance and clarity

Denise is invited to the Bow Lake PTO Meeting with Roswell.

Next Step: Parent Steering Committee group will do some research and look at other models.

On the Handbook:

Minor logistical changes will be made obviously. We need the Steering Committee for the bigger philosophical issues.

Reviewing the CHOICE Mission Statement:

Come back to our next Steering Committee with any suggested changes you can think of for the Mission Statement.

Ann, Greenberg, and Alexa will work on the mission statement.

Academic Programs:

On-Site vs. Off-Site Electives – this needs to be looked at as we grow larger and more students are on campus in the afternoons.

Running Start and PSSC: Alexa wants to determine when the best time to offer an information night is. There is an April deadline for Running Start.

According to the committee: January is the best time for the first Info Night, then another one in March or April.

Alexa will write a blurb for Career Start to add to the Handbook (new college program).

Alexa and Kristie will collaborate on inviting guests from the colleges to speak to parents and students.

Attendance Policy needs to be revised. Standards-Based philosophy that the district is moving towards means that we won't deny credit based on absences, so the table on this should be deleted in the handbook (p. 13). ---this needs more thought.

Next Meeting Date: 6pm on November 19, 2015