

Blue Ridge Middle School (BRMS)
 Heterogeneous Grouping Steering Committee
 Meeting Minutes



Date: October 9, 2012

We believe the purpose of implementing heterogeneous class methodologies in English 8 is to produce increased levels of achievement for all learners and enhance the positive climate of English 8 classrooms at Blue Ridge Middle School.

Members present: Matt Bolen, BRMS Assistant Principal - Chairman; Brion Bell, BRMS Principal; Karin Nixon, BRMS 7th Grade Dean; Allyson White, BRMS 8th Grade English Teacher/Subject Area Lead Teacher (SALT); : Pat Kinney, PhD., Consultant, former Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland and former Director of the National Child Care Center; Theresa Rosette, BRMS Parent and current PTO President; and Karen Dillon, past BRMS PTO President

Agenda Item:	Notes:
Community Questions/Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Rosette reports no new questions/comments. • Mrs. Dillon reported the following two questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How is the heterogeneous grouping being monitored? ○ Will data be presented? • Mr. Bell and Mrs. White report no specific questions /comments addressed to the school. • The BRMS website includes a contact section. Community members with questions/comments for the steering committee are encouraged to submit them.
Reading and Writing 8 SOL Data	<p>2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Reading & Writing SOL data were discussed. Results are posted on the BRMS website.</p> <p>The 8th grade English department is encouraged by gains in the consistent control percentages for composing, written expression, and usage-mechanics. Consistent control indicates that student performance is proficient most of the time. These specific categories represent essential skills for all English students and relate directly to the writing portion of the SOL Writing Test. Whereas the overall score includes the multiple choice editing section.</p>

English 8 Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Prompt Development: Based on SAT style questioning with a passage to read followed by instruction to take a stance. • Administration of Pre-test: Administered 9/19 in all 8th grade English classes. • Writing Diagnostic Rubric: Mr. Kursman, Mrs. Walker, and Mrs. White created the rubric above SOL standards. The challenging rubric they developed is based on the PSAT/SAT model. The SOL is not an expanded rubric; it is not a growth modeled test. How do we know that highly skilled students entering 8th grade are growing? SOL's don't necessarily answer this. This brings in the value of the expanded rubric developed by the 8th grade English department for the Writing Diagnostic. • Essay Scoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anchor paper designated to establish what represents a 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. ○ Teachers scored an individual class then same tests blindly scored by a different assessor. Looking for scores with .7 of one another's assessment. • Sampling of students for data: One hundred (100) students were randomly selected. Pre and post diagnostic scores for these students will be analyzed. • Various studies related to the self-fulfilling prophecy (as it relates to student performance) were discussed. • Mrs. White will bring student samples of the diagnostic prompt to the next meeting along with sample assignments/assessments. • The possibility of posting anchor papers of student work on the website along with the rubric was discussed. • Information regarding the writing diagnostic is posted on the Heterogeneous Classes page of the BRMS website. <p>Note: The English 8 writing diagnostic is a snapshot of performance - a portfolio will also be utilized to track growth over time.</p>
Website Update	To be discussed at next meeting.
Next Meeting	November 1, 2012 @ 10:30 a.m.