

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



Date: December 13, 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); and Theresa Rosette, BRMS Parent and current PTO President

Agenda Item:	Notes:
Community Questions & Comments	No concerns have been brought forth to the committee since the previous meeting.
Community Input Discussion	<p>At the August 22nd meeting, questions and concerns of the community were brought forth. The committee will begin addressing these questions. (See August 22, 2012 Agenda for questions.)</p> <p>Concern: <i>There is a lack of communication on the part of the school to the community about the program; a forum for concerns is not available.</i></p> <p>Response: The committee is serving as a bridge between the community and the school. It has been looking at the heterogeneous program in English 8 and will work with the school and community to look at future plans of the heterogeneous classes at Blue Ridge Middle School.</p> <p>The BRMS website contains information on the steering committee including its' meeting minutes, English 8 classes, and resources about differentiated instruction.</p> <p>Mrs. Rosette suggested and the committee agreed to put information in Bulldog Bytes to remind parents of the website and encourage feedback to the steering committee.</p>

<p>Community Input Discussion Continued</p>	<p>Mrs. White suggested providing a resource on the website of specific ways that the needs of multi-level learners at BRMS are being met (as they may differ from the general information about heterogeneous classes that is provided). Mr. Bell suggested and the committee agreed that this can be done through answers to the Parent/Community Input Questions.</p> <p>The 8th Grade English Department will look at the community questions and concerns from the August 22nd meeting during their next release day and draft answers to them. The steering committee will provide feedback at their next meeting.</p> <p>The benefits of multi-level classroom were discussed by the committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed viewpoints • Specific benefits to boys, who tend to be underrepresented in honors as a whole, and particularly honors English <p>Mr. Bolen will contact LVHS to get their numbers of academic versus honors enrollment for this year in English. The same data can be assessed again next year.</p> <p>The idea of gathering information from former BRMS students who took part in heterogeneous classes was brought forth - a survey and/or focus group format ideas were mentioned. BRMS will bring up this idea with Valley.</p> <p>The message being given to 5th grade parents was addressed. Parents of rising 6th graders receive varying responses about whether students should take honors classes. It was noted that both academic and honors programs prepare students for college. Middle school is about both academics and emotions.</p>
<p>English 8 Update</p>	<p>Grading</p> <p>English teachers have reconsidered having the "rolling rubric." Instead assignments are increasingly more complex with less scaffolding (built in supports). Challenge is built in because the most rubrics have built in a "plus one" element that goes beyond grade-level expectations to give students an idea of where to go next. For students who are performing at high levels, additional challenge is provided through individualized feedback.</p> <p>Mr. Bell or Mr. Bolen will contact Valley about getting a 9th & 10th grade assessment so that students can be exposed to this to see how much they have grown this year.</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Friday, January 11, 2013 @10:15</p> <p>At this meeting the committee will discuss the plans for the heterogeneous program next year. This needs to be determined prior to scheduling so that parents can be informed.</p>