



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

Date: May 22, 2013

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; and Karen Dillon, former BRMS PTO President. **Not in attendance:** Pat Kinney, PhD., Consultant, former Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland and former Director of the National Child Care Center.

Agenda Item:	Notes:
Community Questions & Comments	<p>Karen Dillon received feedback from a few parents who wish to remain anonymous. She will forward the information to Mr. Bell.</p> <p>Summary of feedback: Do not expand to other areas - continue program as is with 8th grade English.</p>
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)	<p>The 8th grade English teachers - Eric Kursman, Virginia Walker, and Allyson White - have been selected to present at the Annual Convention for the National Council of Teachers of English which will be held in November in Boston. Their presentation will discuss the benefits of heterogeneous grouping, strategies for differentiating in the English class, data about Blue Ridge's program collected during the 2012-2013 school year, and information about the ways that Blue Ridge has used community input to refine the heterogeneous classes program.</p> <p>Theresa Rosette requested information about the presentation be shared with the community. Allyson White will write up the information and forward it to Mrs. Rosette (Bulldog Bytes) and Karen Dillon (Valley Voice) who will send it out via e-mail.</p>

<p>Student Work Samples</p>	<p>Samples of work for 3 students on the "Diagnostic Essay Comparison" assignment was reviewed by the committee. All students were able to identify areas of growth by comparing and contrasting their writing on Diagnostic Essay 1 with the Midyear Diagnostic in the areas of introduction, thesis, elaboration, voice, tone, conclusion, and mechanics.</p> <p>Student 1 (academic) - progressed from a 2 (Diagnostic Essay 1) to a 3 (Midyear Diagnostic)</p> <p>Student 2 (academic) - progressed from a 2.7 (Diagnostic Essay 1) to a 4 (Midyear Diagnostic)</p> <p>Student 3 (honors) - progressed from a 4 (Diagnostic Essay 1) to a 4.5 (Midyear Diagnostic)</p>
<p>Student survey draft</p>	<p>A survey will be given to all 8th graders of their experience in the heterogeneous class.</p> <p>The committee provided feedback on the draft; Karin Nixon & Allyson White will make changes to the survey based on the feedback and send it out to the committee for final approval</p> <p>The survey will be administered through resource. A random sampling of 10% of 7th grade students will also take a survey to provide data for comparison.</p>

<p>Communication with the community</p>	<p>Mr. Bell suggested placing information about the plan to continue 8th grade heterogeneous English classes in the end of year June Newsletter to share not only with rising English 8 but with the community to raise awareness of the program. The information will include a link the heterogeneous class information on the BRMS website.</p> <p>Include: Writing Diagnostic Data, SOL scores</p> <p>SOL information: (Based on preliminary calculations by Mrs. White of Mr. Kursman, Mrs. Walker & Mrs. White's classes.)</p> <p>98.6% Passed the Written expression 97.6% Passed in the usage and mechanics</p> <p>55.3% Above Standards Composing and Written Expression 65.6% Above Standards in Usage and Mechanics 50.2% of 8th grade students proficient 27.3% of 8th grade students with the highest possible score on the written paper</p>
<p>Steering Committee Looking Forward to 2013-2014</p>	<p>The committee plans to reconvene during the first quarter to determine the goals of the committee and determine the frequency/number of meetings next year.</p> <p>Theresa Rosette is resigning from the committee; the committee will ask a rising 8th grade parent to fill the vacancy. Karen Dillon has some ideas for parents to invite and will forward to Mr. Bolen.</p> <p>Pat Kinney will work with the English 8 teachers to revise community concerns for the website</p> <p>Next year's committee needs to look forward to the Staff Development Model for teacher training in grade 6 & 7 English.</p>