

SIT Minutes NBHS  
October 8, 2013

Present: Emily Gill, Jill Castelloe, Teresa Edwards, Natalie Ball, Ben Graham, Jean Blackburn, Tammy Ramsey, Kim Moffatt, Gerald Parker, Cheryl Heninger, Cyndi Mackiernan, Samantha Sircey, Jackie Newman  
Replacement: Natalie Ball for Gage Cassada (FFA students)

1. Special guest: Jill Castelloe, dropout prevention specialist

- \*Each school is scored “A-F”, on state website. Buncombe County dropout rate, as well as the four year cohort, is decreasing compared to the state.
- \*NBHS dropout for the past year is 26; the goal for 2013-2014 year is 20 students or less.
- \*Unlawful absences are those greater than 10 per semester. This essentially means that students did not bring a note.
- \* Students drop out of school because of a domino effect: they are not engaged and this leads to attendance issues.

Dropout Prevention tactics in use currently:

- a. K-12 effort, not just 16 years old or greater.
- b. At NBHS
  - \*committee meets every Wednesday and looks at individual cases, considering attendance, mental health, etc. Participants are principals, counselors, school nurse, drop out prevention specialist, and school social worker.
  - \*The Attendance Waiver Committee and other subcommittees were formed to break down the cases into more manageable chunks.
  - \*NBHS has the highest dropout rate in the county for AP students! Strange!?!)
  - \*A new list of identified 9<sup>th</sup> grade students is formed each school year, and the goal is to remove these students from the list as they progress towards graduation.
  - \* Home visits are sometimes successful; some parents are hard-pressed to cooperate
  - \*Attendance: ASL (Attendance Study Lab) have been decreased to 16 days this semester. Less opportunity to “play the system”.
  - \* June and July – search and recover to find students with issues related to dropout rates. These students are hand scheduled to accommodate learning needs. Other options are Community High School and Middle College at AB Tech. Barriers include admission requirements for CHS and transportation to Middle College.
  - \*Counselor referral form: teachers should specifically address what has been done in the classroom. This helps counselors determine if CHS is a good “fit” for the student
  - \*Schedules are changed if a student has failed and is with that teacher again for the third time. Student may be moved to Course Recovery, Twilight school, etc.,
  - \*Course recovery is for students who have failed two or more classes and need to get back on track to graduate.
  - \*Twilight school is spring semester only, grant funded, face-to-face class that is being repeated or an online course at night.
  - \*Mini-mester is basically summer school (28 days) and students can graduate with a ceremony in August or underclassmen can “catch up”.
  - \*Summer school is for attendance only.

\*Work co-op credit: the job counts as a fifth period, which helps get students on track to graduate. Typically no credit is given unless other 4 classes are passed. \*The Child Welfare League gives a student \$35 to pass class and maintain success.

\* GED attainment: Funding is cut, new harder program is being implemented, therefore less students are attempting and/or completing the GED program

#### Issues that effect drop-out

\* Students who qualify for IEP for 504 and are not tested.

\*Truancy law – after 10 days missed, parents state that in good faith they are trying to change attendance issues; if absences continue, then truancy may be charged.

#### What can teachers do

\*Parent conferences: very important in NB district

\*Emphasize the good things that are happening with individual students as well as the school environment itself.

Freshmen academies exist at Erwin, Enka and TCR, but with a host of problems. May not be useful at NBHS.

## 2. Library business: quick discussion

The Library would like to institute a new sign-in policy, which would involve some teacher co-operation. We have faced several incidents this year where the office is looking for students and they have come to the library, some with notes, some just tagging along with students with notes. We are thinking of a sign-in and sign-out system, which means every student coming to the library, not associated with a class, for more than picking up computers would need to have a note. Still working on the logistics for our end, but should have a plan ready by Tuesday to present if there will be time. Otherwise, we would like to be on the agenda as soon as there is time available.

Cyndi gave handout regarding use of media center by students. The Media Center is requesting students have a sign in/out policy to decrease random wandering in the hall. This idea needs to go to departments for suggestions, then will be discussed at next SIT meeting.

Agenda 10-22-13

We will look at re-evaluating our committees, with discussion of

- a. what do we have
- b. who is on them
- c. what is the purpose of the committee