

Classical High School SIT Minutes

The meeting took place September 27, 2011, 7:30 A.M. in the Library.

ATTENDEES: **Parents:** Paul Keough, Michelle McKenzie, Christine Rayner, Lauren Zurier; **Faculty/Admin:** Scott Barr, Paula Caron, Michael Colannino, Ellen Conroy, Ellen Holm, Steven Jackson, Richard Larkin, Brad Macksoud, Richard Santurri, Lou Toro, Michael Werth; **Students:** Harlyn Juarez

- **MINUTES:** The minutes of September 13, 2011 were unanimously approved with the following corrections: Christina Toro has decided to join the SIT next year rather than this year; Christine Rayner has joined the SIT to represent 02907; and Jody Rich is a member of the SIT but is unable to be present at the current meeting.
- **PARENTAL COMPACT:** The parental compact is an agreement between the parents, the school and the teacher, and is a Title I requirement. We need to draft one suitable to Classical. Christine Rayner said she can obtain a copy of the contract used at Paul Cuffee Charter School for review, and Ms. Conroy says she can circulate a copy of the contract used at E-Cubed as well. Any proposed parental contract should be reviewed by both the CHSCA and the faculty for approval. We would like to have a draft circulating by December 1 so that enforcement can begin with the new calendar year.
- **PARENT ENGAGEMENT:** Mr. Barr announced that we have obtained a staggered schedule for the NECAP and PSAT testing during which school will start at 10:15 a.m. for students not being tested (and 11:15 a.m. on the day the PSAT's are administered). A rotating schedule will be used on each of the testing days to ensure adequate academic instructional time in all subjects during the testing period. Students who need to arrive before 10:15 a.m. although they are not being tested may do so and will be monitored in a study-hall type of setting. It would be helpful to post the rationale for the staggered schedule (lack of proctors, disruption of class instruction in classes in which multiple grades of students are enrolled, as noted in the minutes of Sept. 13, 2011) on the Classical web site and circulate it to parents via email.
- **AP EXEMPTION POLICY:** A new AP exemption policy was employed during the 2010-11 academic year, under which students with a B-minus average in an AP class (and who also met other requirements listed in the policy) could be exempted from the final in the AP class if they took the AP exam in May. As a result of the policy, Classical doubled the number of students taking the exams; meanwhile, the percentage of students achieving at least a "3" on the AP exam (the minimum score usually required for college credit) declined by less than 10 percentage points (from 79.6% to 70.1%). Encouraging more students to take and do well on the tests ultimately saves students money when they enter college. Thirty percent of the students taking the test met the criteria for having the cost of the test totally met by a state grant (which totaled \$28,000). Everyone on the faculty complied with the policy last year and Mr. Barr only received one faculty complaint. Nevertheless, Mr. Larkin brought to the SIT's attention that one teacher on the faculty believes that the SIT does not have the power to adopt or enforce an AP exemption policy because, under state law (GL § 16-53.1-3), that power is delegated to the school board. During the discussion that ensued, Mr. Barr pointed out that, based on his experience as school board president in Lincoln, the statute cited by the faculty member does not pertain to what the SIT is doing regarding AP policies, which instead fits squarely within the SIT's charge to work on improving student achievement. Harlan Juarez noted that from students' perspective the administration should not wait too long to finalize whatever the AP policy is going to be, because students need to know what the policy is in order to have the incentive to maintain the requisite grade point average. Discussions between administration and faculty, and administration and school board, will need to occur to resolve the issue.
- **NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 7:30 a.m. All are invited.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Zurier