

NIXON SITE COUNCIL MEETING: May 4, 2009

REVIEW OF APRIL MINUTES: Ruth Ann Daines

2009-2010 SITE COUNCIL MEMBERS AND NEW CHAIR: We only have one candidate statement and site council should encourage anyone who might be willing to submit a statement and to do so. Hopefully we will have the statements available at International night for English learner

NIXON'S SINGLE PLAN FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: In the past , site council has not been overly involved in setting goals for the single plan. Mary Pat would like to submit a preliminary plan for Site council approval, have site council review (and modify, if necessary) the plan in June, and then finalize the plan in summer when the results of standardized tests arrive.

Mary Pat researched the relation of "Non Proficient" scores to students who are English Learners or who have an identified learning disability. Of the 78 non proficient scores at Nixon, 50 were earned by students who are ELA or RSP students. Mary Pat also analyzed the ethnic break down of the 28 remaining students and found no unusual distribution toward any one ethnic group. The data suggests that Nixon school is doing a very good job addressing the needs of the under performing students. The point was made that summer school for ELA students would be very helpful. The district does not offer a summer school option for ELA students and Mary Pat could suggest that as a good possibility to help enrich the ELA students. It was also suggested that it might be helpful to look at how long our ELA kids have been here.

The district strategic initiative A1: Improve curricular system and instructional practices that challenge every student. The question was asked whether teachers felt that they could use a "differentiation/individualized education" support system. It was agreed that the staff would be open to and grateful for a support system to enhance their efforts at differentiation. Mary Pat suggested that perhaps Nixon school should send a delegation of teachers to the Cal. Association for the Gifted Conference. It would be helpful for Nixon teachers to be able to share with one another what they are doing as far as differentiation is concerned, and share materials. We may also need to look at the way we can make the most of our DRA results. It would be great to provide additional support to teachers for teachers to be able to utilize the DRA data more effectively.

Nixon school is doing a geat job of teaching science. Perhaps we could look at the connection between science and language arts. The comment was made that when teachers have training at the district level on science, they consistently give feedback that they would like to increase the connection between science and other curricula.

For district strategic initiative A2.4: “Support K12 development of requisite academic skills and personal habits of mind required for college/post-secondary success” Our “lifeskills” curriculum addresses many of these academic skills and personal habits. Nixon would like to explore the idea of breaking down the various components of this skill for different grade levels.

Initiative A3.1 “Continue and enhance efforts to address social, emotional, physical and character ed needs of students” Our lifeskills program is addressing many of these elements effectively. The point was made that parents would appreciate a “physical safety” component for the students as this has not been addressed at Nixon (in a direct way) recently. We would also like to more fully explore the physical education relationship to mental performance. There is a program out of San Diego called Spark which emphasizes movement and activity. We will likely explore and experiment for next year.

The comment was made that some students do not have enough time to finish their lunches. Mary Pat will check in with upper grade lunch duty people to see what is happening. Teachers and lunch duty personnel could encourage students to eat during lunch. We might investigate the idea of sitting by class. We will first try to encourage them to eat, and then move on to more invasive strategies if necessary.

Initiative A.3.2 “Examine particular needs of students performing below grade level and improve support.” Mary Pat has been having individual meetings with teachers by grade levels to assess every student and then following up in February to check in on progress.

Initiative A3.3 “Examine ...that serve as barriers to the achievement of underrepresented minority students to improve climate and foster respect, inclusion and high expectations for diverse student groups.” Perhaps the most important thing we could do would be to enlarge our translation to include ALL documents which go home.

Initiative A3.4 “Enhance early intervention” We have a number of items in place, and Mary Pat feels quite good about this one. The one area that we might want to look at would be the area of academic language development. This is a gauge used for children coming in to school regarding their vocabulary. It is not taught, however, in a traditional vocab fashion, but is more taught in context with teachers identifying words and what they mean within the context of conversation or instruction.

In conclusion, unless directed otherwise by the district, we will likely modify our Single Plan to be a little less broad and to be more intentional and directed in our goals for next year. We will also encourage the PTA to enlarge the mini fund accounts for our teachers.

