

School Committee and Student Advisory Meeting - 1/7/26

Attendance: Ms. Pitone, Ms. Lippens, Ms. Eldridge, Mr. Green, Ms. Stellman, Mayor Wilson, Mr. Biton, Dr. Ackman

Also in attendance: Superintendent Dr. Carmona, Assistant Superintendent of Academics Dr. Boston Davis, Principal Kersten, and Shannon Donnellan, SHS Social Studies teacher

Topics:

Clubs Budget

- Alicia Kersten provided some background information on clubs. Club stipends are based on negotiations.
- Students' names that there are many clubs that would like to be added but there is no stipends
- Teacher

X-Block:

Student Ideas:

- X-Block is an important time, and we would like to encourage students to come.
- Can we add community events?
 - Sports Fairs or Club Fairs could happen during this time.
- Can we incorporate clubs into x-Block

Questions from Committee Members:

- EA: It's a pretty heavy workload. Students may take off during xblock for a brain down time. Want to note this and think the sports ideas is good. References Boston Globe article about open gym during lunch. Appreciate students bring solutions to the challenges named
- LP: Curious about the original vision for x-Block. Why did we create it in our schedule? Community? College and Career Support? The conversation on this topic should be centered on the the goal. What are we trying to accomplish.
 - AK: Provides some history and context. We used to have it daily for 20 mins. Wasnt long enough to do anything – ended up being like a recess. Should be a flex block where students can get what they need based on data (eg extra math support). Some people have treated as an advisory. Some want it to be community building. Tentative plan is for 3rd quarter to form a x-block committee with students and staff to plan how we use xc-block next year. One proposal from AK was to make it pass/fail. We will move forward with making it 1.25 credit for 9th graders only. Lots of decisions to make. Want to ensure that there is a diverse representation of students on this committee. Only one hour a week and counts towards time on learning.
 - LP: What are the three things
 - AK: Community building, targeted intervention/enrichment, and advisory/homeroom

- LB: We have discussed for credit
- ES: Wondering about accessibility for students who have IEPs or other support. Inclusivity for people with different styles of learning.
 - AK: Currently everyone is assigned to a teacher. Anyone with an IEP is assigned to their liaisons.
 - RC: Part of our core values is to ensure students have access to learning. It is critical that those who don't have the skills or come in late or have a different learning style might use that time differently. In k-8 we use the time to provide extra support. Want to make sure we can use the time to support the disparate outcomes.
- AK: Support raising issues that are very central to the work that we at SHS want to do. Center student experience. Very excited.

Inclusive School Curriculum:

Student Thoughts:

- How do we make our current school curriculum more inclusive to different cultures. We have electives that focus on different ethnic groups. How do we incorporate this into required courses.
- A lot of cultures and teachings are left out. If we can make the electives required that would be great.
- CTE and exploratory – a lot of classes that are left out and making them more inclusive
- We see more music and art electives, and not a lot of people have interest in that.

Questions for Committee Members:

- LB: Are there any examples you can provide?
 - Student response: Having a reading list with authors who represent different identities. Teachers can incorporate reading that aligns to their curriculum. I've seen a lot of that missing in my courses
 - Government Politics: Intro to ethics
- LE: Would like to know specifics. Other than Art and Music.
 - Classes are very broad but focusing on certain aspects of government and law would be interesting. New electives that are not in the fine arts category. Politics, law, and cultural things.
 - AK: We have a very flexible and responsive system for electives. Provided examples of social studies – things change each year based on student and community input. Will do an electives audit. Electives fair is Jan 21 during xblock. Humanities does work very hard on culturally responsiveness. Department chairs would like this feedback.
 - LE: Maybe we can lean into clubs to align to the interests if we can't add courses

Communication

There is an issue when we are making an announcement – instagram, email, bulletin board, etc.

Questions from Committee Members:

- LB: Can Darryl Nash suggest any ideas? Thanks students for the opportunity to listen
- MJW: See great success with What's App. Used a lot as a coach.

LB Ended the meeting at 1:45pm