

*Minutes of the SSEA Central Coordinating Committee Meeting
Shasta Learning Center
May 16, 2007
3:30 P.M.*

In attendance:

Mike Stuart, Superintendent
Chris Adams, Principal (Educational Services)
Jim Newell, Principal (Alternative Ed.)
Charlie Crannell, SSEA (FHS)
Tom Roberts, SSEA (EHS)

Clay Erro, SSEA (EHS)
Eric Levy, SSEA (FHS)
Jackie Bell, SSEA (SHS)
Barbara Allpress, ESP (SHS)
Marslette Ford (Recorder)

Datawise Test Grade Posted on AERIES

Mr. Roberts relayed that some teachers are concerned about posting a Datawise test grade on AERIES, fearing it will be used to evaluate their work. They also feel they didn't receive sufficient notification from administration on this matter.

Mr. Adams provided a chronological timeline of meetings during which the Datawise grade book feature was discussed: 11/07/06 – presented to Department Chairs, 12/6/06 – all teachers invited to a demonstration (25 teachers attended, predominantly Social Science), and 4/18/07 - again with Department Chairs. At no time during these meetings did anyone object to the test, and any concerns about the test were addressed and clarified. He stressed that the District is seeking to create longitudinal data for comparison purposes only. The data will be used for intervention purposes, based upon the outcome.

Mr. Stuart said teacher evaluation is not the intent and hopes this assurance will alleviate those fears. Teachers can collaborate better on best practices when they review another standard, and get a better perspective when they look at the curriculum and do their own self assessment. This is what the District is after, not to evaluate staff. Teachers have control of the grade and can count the test as a zero if they choose. This test does not take the place of the final exam. He wants to see how the process goes this year and if problems occur, it will be discussed at a CCC meeting next year.

Mr. Roberts agreed that the information provided by Mr. Adams clearly indicates that this was a collaborative effort and staff was invited to participate. The information provided by Mr. Stuart and Mr. Adams clarifies the following: 1) The Datawise grade is in no way designed to evaluate staff; rather it is a tool designed to help each teacher do a better job; 2) Each teacher has the option whether to use the grade or not; and, 3) There is a window period for giving the test, it does not have to be conducted the same day as the final exams.

Mr. Levy pointed out that one of the answers on the test is incorrect. He was asked to inform the Department Chairs of that fact.

Senior Projects

Mr. Roberts reported that one teacher had a concern with Mr. Stuart's stern reaction to the presentation on Senior Projects at the May 8 Board meeting, and asked if there is a political move through parents and community members to save the projects.

Mr. Stuart meant for his response to be stern because, at the time the request was made to make a Board presentation, he was assured it was to be an informational presentation only and would not include any political statements. He was very surprised by the parent's comment encouraging the Board to continue the senior projects at FHS, as well as the letter distributed to the Board from EHS staff addressing why the projects should not be done away with at EHS. Mr. Stuart had not spoken with the Board on this subject prior to the Board meeting, as he had not anticipated any type of political move at the meeting.

Mr. Stuart said the original intent of the senior projects was to make the students challenge themselves to prepare for college or other post high school opportunities. Instead, the activity has evolved into a report on occupations or hobbies. The projects should consist of a lengthy research paper, including comparisons & contrasts, a synthesis and evaluative judgments. Mr. Stuart feels if the projects are to continue they need to be “beefed-up” to meet these requirements. Whether or not to continue the projects is a site decision that needs to be worked out with staff and parents.

Mr. Crannell suggested including a special notation on the diplomas of students who complete a college level thesis paper. Mr. Stuart directed him to bring this up with the Department Chairs.

College Connection

Mr. Roberts asked about the discrepancy in the number of students from the comprehensive sites enrolled in the fall 2007 semester at College Connection (EHS = 9, FHS = 28 and SHS = 45).

Mr. Stuart relayed information he received from College Connection that the numbers were based on student choice. He also learned that SHS counselors have been advocating for College Connection and more students from SHS applied this year. Another factor could be economics, as the drive to Shasta College is much farther for EHS students.

CCC Meetings & Contract Article 16

Mr. Roberts reviewed the intent of the CCC meetings was to discuss non-bargaining topics of mutual concern between staff and administration. Staff has concerns that, at times, the CCC reps have been directed back to Site administration to deal with the issue, which has resulted in frustration.

Mr. Stuart said Site Principals need to be given the first opportunity to respond to site issues. He thinks the CCC is a great committee and provides an excellent venue for discussion, however his philosophy is not to micro-manage the sites. If a particular issue has been ongoing between staff and the Site Principal, then he would deal with the situation, however some issues discussed between the Superintendent and the Principal may not be suitable for open discussion at CCC.

Mr. Levy believes that clearing up an issue in CCC for one school site can prevent the same problem from occurring at another site.

Mr. Erro added that communication at the CCC meetings is valuable to staff and is important in maintaining open relationships.

Mr. Crannell believes the fact that staff is coming to CCC reps indicates there may be a need for more communication with site administration.

Keys – Walk-on Staff

Mr. Roberts is concerned that temporary staff may have too much influence and access to areas because they are issued keys.

Mr. Erro thinks that walk-on staff members need to be aware of the District’s philosophy on the big issues and have the same responsibility to attend coach meetings in order to hear those issues.

Extended Leaves of Absence

Mr. Roberts asked how long the leaves of absence would continue for SUHSD staff teaching at U-Prep, and is concerned about setting a precedent.

Mr. Stuart reported the SUHSD Board agreed to grant leaves to those teaching at U-Prep until the school has a senior class (next year). He added that the District has already set precedent for staff teaching at College Connection. He agrees there should be a time limit, however each leave depends on the circumstances specific to each request.

