

January 14, 2020 - Instructional Practices Committee
2:45-4:15

Rick begins by reviewing the agenda and assigning process observer (Amanda), note taker (Lauren) and board writer (Yolanda).

Amanda explains the questions presented to this committee from the Grading and Assessment Subcommittee. They are looking for feedback from the steering committee in order to hone in on the aspects of grading and assessment that the subcommittee should focus on. Where do we want the committee to make its decisions from? Equally from all stakeholders? How much leeway does the subcommittee have? They are looking for more specific guiding points. The final question from the subcommittee is "What are we afraid of?" This

Lauren reports out that the weighting discussion was interesting and included feedback from student focus groups. This includes how students approach course selection and the why behind taking AP and Honors courses. The committee is investigating the inequities of our current weighting system. The next student focus groups will include a cross section of students who take 1 or no weighted courses. The committee is also going to be gathering staff feedback for the next steps in the discussion. Tiered weighting systems are being considered. Cooper shares the feeling of a safety net of taking a weighted course in regard to GPA. The committee is also expressing the need for increased communication with parents and students about course selection, balance, etc.

Jen expresses that it would be important to look at how accelerated is defined. How much is considered enough in order to be accelerated. Rick expresses that he hears students talking about these committees and is glad that they are a part of the conversation. Holly speaks to the not academically confident student who may be hesitant to take a weighted course without the weight.

Rick moves the discussion forward by asking the committee to begin thinking about deadlines for the subcommittees.

Rick discusses the draft proposal from the Top Ten Subcommittee. The subcommittee recommends eliminating the Top Ten ranking practice. They feel that it needs to be replaced with a more equitable and inclusive practice. This should begin with the class of 2022 but no later than the class of 2024. Academic integrity was an important part of this discussion. Holly expresses that she feels there would be pushback if this began with sophomores.

Suggestions include a Latin honors system (top 10%). There could also be a GPA threshold that students could be made aware of in advance. Amanda explains that this is a set goal for the students and is not competition to "beat" another student's GPA. Stacey expresses that she is not seeing inclusive in this proposal. Yolanda also emphasizes that this still has the final grade as the end goal. Rick explains that we can take other programs and recognize them as well. Amanda goes on to discuss the Core Values - we could have a designation, cord, etc as a

student completes senior projects, etc. The committee did not feel it was their place to say what the replacement will be - it is the steering committee's decision. Theresa compiled data that helped the committee see that eliminating the top ten will not have a tremendous impact on student records/competitive college acceptance. Holly mentions the recognitions that exist for sports and other opportunities in the school. Honoring the students academically who do well beyond the top 10 is important.

Another suggestion is in lieu of valedictorian and salutatorian up to three speakers would be chosen for graduation. A future committee for implementation could review processes for this selection. From here the recommendation goes to policy which then goes to the school board.

Holly asks how the final recommendations will be made - steering committee, policy, etc. Rick says the steering committee will determine the recommendations. Amanda asks if the proposal to eliminate the top 10 will go to the board then the committee will decide on the replacement? Rick responds yes. Amanda suggests that with the elimination that we inform the school board and community that we are replacing it with another form of recognition.

Rick poses the question of whether this should be a presentation to the school board. Krista expresses that a presentation should be made to the board and community which would then be followed by the policy committee. Although numbers are good, the expertise and opinions are valuable factors in this presentation as well. Rick feels that the replacement system will need to take into consideration the weighting committees recommendation.

Timeline on presentation - NEASC report will be in February to the BOE. March is heavy with meetings. The presentation will most likely be slated for April. The committee discusses beginning this change with the current freshman class (2023). Holly mentions that by implementing the change it may spark discussions at home regarding balance and workload.

Rick asks for the committee to meet regularly to discuss the replacement in order to be ready for April. The weighting subcommittee will need to have a recommendation in time for this presentation.

Lauren talks about the perception of weighting and the question of "fairness" that keeps coming up in subcommittee conversation.

Competency based grading in NH is discussed. The state of NH indicated that grades needed to be tied to competencies. Some schools shifted to competency/standards based grading. Holly asks the question of whether the committee/community will want to consider competency based grading. Rick explains that the community would need to own a shift like that.

Rick wraps up the meeting by discussing future dates for our next meeting.

Next Meeting: February 4, 2020 at 2:45