

Minutes of the Leadership Council Meeting 12/3/2009

Only one student and one teacher were in attendance, so a quorum was not achieved. Katie Courey, Edith Brozosky, Dwayne Byndloss, Annie Johnston and Yvonne Arellano therefore became a data subcommittee and analyzed the surveys we received from sophomores and juniors in science. The data will be discussed and used as we identify the problem we want to address, and the root causes of that problem at our January meeting.

Survey Questions:

The first three were open-ended questions:

- 1) Describe a science lesson that really grabbed your interest? (Motivation)
- 2) What is the most difficult part of science class for you? (Challenge)
- 3) Describe a science lesson that taught you something you will use in the future? (Usefulness)

Overall, the most motivating curriculum mentioned was related to labs or hands-on activities. 37 of 42 11th grade surveys mentioned some form of hands on activity, and the most commonly mentioned were the smells unit and the fire/color unit. Usefulness was also highly correlated with the motivational activities.

Challenges appeared to fall into three categories –

- a) the challenges involved in learning the subject of science, such as the specific vocabulary, the periodic table, scientific symbols, and concepts like covalent bonding
- b) the challenges involved in organizing oneself to manage the workload, homework, time; organization and study skills. Included in this, and specifically important in science, was memorization.
- c) the challenges involved in working with a large group of often noisy students.

Questions: the reasons WHY students found science or the class difficult often were not clear. How much do each of the issues affect students (difficulty of curriculum, distractions, lack of extra support, lack of self-motivations)

4) If the mandatory after-school science “lab” period is no longer available, would you attend a voluntary after school science support class if CP Academy made it available?

10th grade: 16 yes (39%); 11 sometimes; 14 no

11th grade: 21 yes (50%); 12 sometimes; 9 no

Total: 37 yes (44%); 23 sometimes; 23 no

Overall 72% would use it sometimes or regularly.

Comment: Majority of tenth graders base interest in attending on extra credit or to make up points. More 11th graders were clearly interested in the support class.

Question: are students more likely to use it if they have lower grades? Could we make it targeted for students with lower grades (as it is now)?

What would a support class entail?

5) If you were able to choose between a science class that emphasizes health careers and a “regular” science class that emphasizes all aspects of science, which would you choose?

10th grade: 76% health; 24% regular (32/42)

11th grade: 63% health; 37% regular (25/40)

Overall 70% preferred an emphasis on health careers in science.

Questions: Why did students choose that option? Is this a career preference, or based on presumptions about the work load, or what?

6) If you were able to choose in your senior year between a regular BEST class with a senior project of your own design and a year-long off campus class taught at Fast Response Medical School that would prepare you to get EMT certification, which would you choose?

10th grade 19/39 (49%); 20/39 (51%)

11th grade 22/40 (55%) EMT; 16/40 (40%) BEST; 2/40 (5%) either

Strong support for this class.

Question: Would that interest be lower if the requirements for the class are spelled out?

7) Honors Anatomy Senior Year?

10th grade: Yes 23 (52%); No 16 (36%); Maybe 5 (11%)

11th grade: Yes 15 (39%); No 20 (53%); Maybe 3 (8%)

Questions: Do 10th graders have a less-realistic view of the senior year and the number of honors classes they will be dealing with than juniors?