

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 303
Educational Programs & Innovation Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: December 13, 2012

Place: Board Room – Commodore Campus

Time: 12:30 – 5:00 pm

Welcome

Superintendent Faith Chapel asked folks to individually jot down their hopes and potential concerns for the committee. Once this reflection was completed, she asked committee members to discuss those reflections with their table partners. Ms. Chapel explained it was important to have a clear sense of what committee members expected of the committee work. Following the small group reflections, committee members shared their thoughts with the group. Comments included: a) There be a solid and credible process developed that can be shared with others (how they arrived at the process for stimulating innovation); b) Don't make the process so cumbersome that it creates obstacles to innovation; c) Think about which innovations should be folded into the process, and which should be allowed to happen on their own in the classrooms; d) If innovation happens independently, how do you know if it works, and how do you scale it for larger use; e) How to measure the impact of innovation – retrospectively?; f) Need to share knowledge about innovation; and g) Making sure there are innovations for students that struggle. Other suggestions included: a) Think “outside the box;” b) Don't just create “new for new's sake;” c) Make it equitable (all students); d) Make sure the timeframe for innovation is reasonable; f) Ensure a confidence in the process so people are willing to take risks and there is a tolerance for failure; and g) Develop one or two innovations to move forward at the conclusion of the committee process. Ms. Chapel summarized the comments noting was clear the committee, within the timeframe established, wanted specific and tangible outcomes. The committee has the desire to find a balance between encouraging innovation and avoiding becoming cumbersome as the process is developed. It is also important the committee is not a “rubber stamp” but that there are new ideas brought forward by the committee. Many comments underscored the need for equity as innovations are developed.

Group Discussion: Committee Purpose & Tasks

Ms. Chapel talked about the two things the committee has been charged with: 1) delineate a process for programmatic or innovative change, and 2) considering research and trends, come up with at least two items to bring forward. She underscored these items have to be manageable. As discussed at the last meeting, committee members identified key trends in world languages, differentiation, critical thinking, social skills, and technology. Ms. Chapel noted the topic for this meeting was World Language based in part on a pilot program already implemented in the district, and that it needs to be embedded in a broader conversation as identified by the committee. In addition, the committee needs to identify one or two other ideas as they “bubble to the surface” that the committee agrees to study, research models, develop related strategies, and understand district implications. The second is developing a process (for programmatic or innovative change). Ms. Chapel noted multiple strategies were involved in both of these committee tasks, with some better addressed by the large group to provide multiple perspectives and opinions. Other strategies can be more efficiently addressed by a smaller subcommittee. Group members briefly discussed the “back stories” involved in some innovations, possible barriers to innovations (with public schools) such a resource allocations, and the maturing of a desire for improvement by the school board, district staff, and the community. Ms. Chapel added one of the powerful things about bringing stakeholders together was the acknowledgment that schools are public institutions, and conditions are very

different than the private sector. There is a broad spectrum of people with different expectations all of which has to be considered in a democratic way, and that can be messy. That is why it is important to have the forum for these kinds of ideas and topics. Group members added that data should be used when considering change, and while folks don't have control over big changes mandated by the state while innovation at the local level is something the committee can control. Another idea was that innovation comes from the classroom. One example of this philosophy was Odyssey's earth science unit on soil using the Commodore gardens. This type of innovation may work for some, but not everyone needs to develop a garden to teach earth science. Finally, it was noted that culture is a very powerful factor in change.

Group Discussion:

District Processes to Support Innovation: Current Processes & Considerations for Change

Ms. Chapel distributed the minutes from the November 29th K-6 Educational Programs & Innovations Committee meeting. She asked committee members to revisit the ideas discussed at the previous meeting. One of the outcomes would be to define specific ideas generated by the large group that could be moved into a subcommittee in order to create more actionable steps. In addition, folks were asked to consider some of the processes that could be put into place to encourage innovation. Ms. Chapel asked committee members to move into four small discussion groups to expand on the ideas brought forward at the last meeting.

Following the small group discussions, committee members shared their ideas in the large group setting: *First Group (Tim)* – a) Inside out process (teacher driven) vs. outside in process (parent driven); b) How do you ensure equity/uniformity and what measurements are put in place; c) Multiple measurement points and understanding causal impacts (i.e. what does a specific teacher bring to a pilot); d) Finances (time/money); and e) Transparencies and the importance of communication. *Second Group (Amy)* – a) How current innovations are shared, how those innovations grow, and ways they could be optimized; b) Monday early releases – innovations could be shared during this time (first on every agenda); c) Focused time for sharing innovation (conference style); d) Email feeds to staff about innovations; and e) Leveraging volunteer skills for innovation. *Third Group (Vicky)* – a) Often, innovation comes through classroom grants; b) Encourage better communication via grade level innovation meetings; c) Innovation lessons being juried, rewarded, and posted on the district website; d) Celebrate innovations – staff/school/district recognitions; and e) Focus on one area of innovation each year. *Fourth Group (Julie M.)* – a) Communication – between community, staff, parents regarding viable resources (amazing and rich resources in the community); b) How to get community expects to the teachers (possible forum format). One idea generated was to gather data about the innovation and ask the high school statistics students analyze the information. Another would be to use social media outlets such as twitter as a communication tool.

Ms. Chapel asked Associate Superintendent Julie Goldsmith to talk about options programs in general. Committee members were given the current district procedures for proposing and approving options programs, as well as Board Policy 2510 – Options Programs for review. Ms. Goldsmith explained about three years ago, a group of parents approached the district and the school board asking that the Odyssey Multiage Program be expanded. The school board noted procedures for proposing options programs was needed. A group of parents was brought together to develop the procedures, and after review by the school board, the final document was developed. The current document includes guiding principles for options programs, guidelines for development of those programs, and processes for submission of program proposals. Ms. Goldsmith noted two years ago, a feasibility study was done regarding the possibility of another multiage program, with the school board determining the district did not have space for the program for the 2011/12 school year. The new multiage program was started this year (2012/13) when the new Wilkes Elementary building opened. Ms. Chapel noted a couple of items had emerged since that process, such as the current procedures do not address the process for pilot programs, and what criteria would determine a pilot program. Committee members were asked to review the current

guidelines and consider additional steps to be added, deleted, or that cause concern. The group briefly discussed the background story related to the Mosaic Spanish Immersion pilot, the idea of startup funds for pilot projects, the alignment of teacher passions and interests with project proposals, and the realization that we need to be positive, knowing there can be a hiccup along the way.

Committee member Alli Krug presented an overview of pilot programs evaluation techniques that looked at a variety of data types (quantitative, qualitative, dependent variable, independent variables), and how that data is collected (quizzes, MAP tests, observations, interviews). Data collection and analysis can assist with the evaluation of pilot programs. (Ms. Krug's presentation is available on the district's website.) At the conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Chapel noted in the past, the district had not been data driven, but as the district becomes more capable (technology) it should be measuring what is being done. Following small group discussion about the current procedures, folks shared ideas about elements of those procedures to be added, deleted or revised. It was suggested a communication process be added to the procedures, as well as the use of defined data, consideration of funding impacts, and the importance of making the process open and transparent. Notes and comments were turned in for inclusion in the revision process. Ms. Chapel asked for volunteers to work on a subcommittee focused on revision of the procedures for proposing and approving options programs. Committee members can contact Kathy to join this subcommittee.

World Language: Research, Models & Considerations for Change

Ms. Chapel distributed a discussion guide regarding World Languages and asked committee members to move into small groups. In addition, Ms. Goldsmith provided a draft of a survey that will be sent out to parents to collect input on the type of World Language program they would like to see developed at the K-6 level. She asked committee members to review the information and send her their comments and suggestions. As time was limited, Ms. Chapel suggested small groups focus on the first two discussion topics – a) findings from research: cognitive development, and b) trends & models in language learning. There was not enough time for sharing comments with the whole group.

Plans for January 10th Meeting

Committee members expressed their desire to look at differentiation as their next topic for research and discussion. Ms. Chapel noted the group would review the revisions made to the procedures for proposing and approving options programs/pilots.

Next Meetings:

January 10
February 7
March 7
April 18
May 9