

Citizen's Advisory Committee

U-High *ISU* *Metcalf*

Meeting Minutes

September 08, 2009 7pm – 8:45 pm

University High Library

Call to Order:

Dr. Bob Dean called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Attendees:

Dr. Bob Dean, Bob Piker, Kevin Eack, Karen Irvin, Ken Fansler, Michelle Hardman, Jan Murphy, Eric Ruud, Valerie Wilder, Judi Doubet, Dr. Amy Fritson-Coffman, Dr. Jeff Hill, Joan Hill, Mark Adams.

Introductions and acknowledgement of visitors:

Dr. Hill and Dr. Coffman provided updates for U-High and Metcalf respectively.

Minutes:

Prior regular meetings are posted on the web at: <http://www.uhigh.ilstu.edu/cac/index.htm>

Guest Presentations:

University High School – Dr. Jeff Hill

U-High was recognized as one of the top high schools in the country for the second year in a row based upon scores on advanced placement tests. We continue to encourage our students to enroll in advanced placement courses.

We have three teachers who are seeking National Board Certification this year. We currently have 10 National Board Certified teachers which is approximately 1/5 of the teachers at U-High. The Lab Schools provide financial incentives for attaining National Board Certification.

Composite ACT score for last year's Senior Class was 25.5 – the highest of all the downstate schools and a great accomplishment for our students

Laptop Initiative:

This is the fourth year of the laptop program at University High School. We currently have 600 computers in the school (mainly laptops). Twelve classrooms are fully equipped with laptops providing students with one-to-one access. The success of this initiative is largely due to the professional development opportunities offered to teachers. New technology is wonderful, but effective use of technology takes a lot of teacher time and effort.

The school is currently reviewing the possibility of launching a one-to-one Netbook program where each student would have his or her own Netbook. We are assessing the advantages / risks / equipment options. There is a blog on the U-High Web site for the Netbook pilot (it's informative and entertaining).

Note: A Netbook is a mini-laptop. It can do almost everything a laptop can do, but is much smaller.

Identifying the “Essential Qualities of a U-High Graduate”:

U-High is developing a document outlining the “Essential Qualities of a U-High Graduate”. For more information, please visit the U-High website where both parents and students can provide input.

Facility Improvements:

Roof Replacement complete (largest roof on campus)

Stroud began, asbestos has been abated and the space has been emptied. The design work is nearly completed and will go out for bid soon

Gymnasium floor repairs will begin soon (the floor was damaged by roof leaks)

Gymnasium heating will be updated and air conditioning will be added

Redesign of the classroom spaces

Moving away from traditional desks and towards more collaborative work tables

More team/group work with technology

Question for U-High/Jeff Hill:

1. How does U-High attract and retain teacher candidates?

We have very deep candidate pools. Last search for foreign language yielded a pool of 25 teachers with a wide range of teaching experience. Attractors include: ISU community, quality students, positive teaching environment, parent involvement, range of professional opportunities, and available technology and support.

Metcalf School Overview – Dr. Amy Fritson Coffman

Updated Website:

The Metcalf Website has been redesigned – take a look at all the updates!

Facility Updates:

Added 12 new smart boards, a new math lab, and a new Mac Lab.

Library Renovation:

Library Renovation photos can be seen on the library Web site...it's wonderful and includes new carpet, updated furniture, fresh paint, refinished bookshelves.

A boy's restroom is being added off the hallway near the Metcalf pool.

Professional Development:

Teachers are continuously involved in professional development activities to improve their teaching skills. We offered professional development courses over the summer and were extremely pleased to have had 116 attendees as this was voluntary and unpaid.

Response to Intervention:

Planned last year and this summer

Developed a unique plan that will work for Metcalf

Individual student assessments are conducted three times per year

Provide multiple interventions based upon student need

The focus is on reading this year; math next year

Curriculum Mapping:

The Metcalf staff has been working for four years to fully map our K-8 curriculum. This helps the staff identify curriculum duplication or holes in the curriculum.

Ex: What are first graders learning in math

- o Goal 1 – Enter all data electronically through Curriculum Mapper Website
- o Goal 2 – Align science goals and objectives K-8
- o Goal 3 – Improved writing program (Improved ISAT scores as well)
Write a structured paragraph - Saw about a 40% gain last year by focusing on the writing style for tests
- o Goal 4: Allow teachers to spend time watching each other teach writing workshops – “gift exchange”

Technology Plan:

Technology has been a big push for the last several years.

Our new technology coordinator has brought a lot of new ideas to the school.

Blackboard has been added for the teachers and students and is proving to be a great tool.

All teachers have access to personal blogs, another communication tool for teachers.

Several classrooms are using Smart Boards.

General Questions for Metcalf/Amy Friston-Coffman:

1. How did you measure the 40% improvements for writing?
Year to year ISAT testing
2. How many students apply to the school each year?
500 Applications
36 siblings (majority are Metcalf siblings)
24 open spots
3. The State Legislature recently sent out mandate on security – How are the new security improvements playing out in the Lab Schools?
Jeff Hill: We practice emergency situations in the Lab Schools with ISU police involved. We have also gone through a couple of tabletop exercises with other emergency responders in the community. We are very comfortable with our system now, especially with the added emphasis on security and with the security equipment upgrades in both schools over the last two years.
Amy Friston- Coffman: Every classroom has emergency kits. We also practice emergency drills and our subs are trained to respond.
Robert Dean: We benefit from being involved in security work at both the K-12 and university levels. Bob is routinely invited to meet with campus colleagues who oversee University security initiatives.

CAC Overview & By-Laws: Same as last year.

Election of Officers:

Secretary – Michelle Hardman has been elected to continue as Secretary
Committee Chair – Ken Fansler has been elected as the Committee Chair
Vice Chair – Kevin Eack has been elected to serve as the Vice Chair

Legislative Issues:

Generally, the CAC tries to schedule an annual open forum for Lab School parents to meet with our legislators. This is a critical piece since the Lab Schools are dependent upon legislation that is unique to them. Unless Legislation specifically states Laboratory Schools, the Illinois State University Lab Schools will not be included in the legislation. This pertains to grants opportunities as well as State requirements.

Eric Ruud is the Legislative Chair for the CAC. Communications with State Representative Dan Brady's and Senator Bill Brady's offices are underway for scheduling an open forum sometime in October. Both legislators will have 15 to 20 minutes to talk about issues (what's going on in Springfield, etc). The role of CAC is to communicate the open forum to our families. More information to come!

Those Who Excel:

This program is currently on hold because it currently has been cut from the State budget for the year. The State is looking for a donor to support the program for the 2009-2010 school year.

Technology:

We have a very rich set of resources for the Lab Schools to build a strong technology program by learning from the ISU contacts.

Report from Administrative Representative Bob Dean

Fifth grade writing scores from last year are the only low scores on the test. It seems to be a curricular issue related to how we teach writing versus how the state tests writing.

General Questions to Bob Dean:

1. How do we compare to the other schools in town?
Parents can view scores for Unit 5 and District 87 schools on line if they would like to compare scores. Generally, we should see high scores in a community like Bloomington-Normal. All of the community schools are consistently strong.
2. What determines the number of Lab School student openings each year?
Population is determined by the legislature and is capped by State law at 1,000 students. This figure does not include out of district special education students. Generally there are 600 students at U-High and 400 at Metcalf.
3. What are the new transportation regulations?
For safety reasons, cannot use passenger vans over 10 persons by State law. Also, it becomes a budget issue for taking trips as we need to rent more vans or buses. Buses are much more expensive than vans.
4. How are the Lab School preparing for the flu season?
Previously, the Center for Disease Control was going to dictate school closings, but schools are now asked to make the decision locally. The University is preparing for possible outbreaks across campus and the school's nurse continually receives updates from various health agencies. It is important to remember the three C's – cover, clean, and contain (cover your mouth, clean and wash your hands, and contain your illness – stay home when sick).

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

2009-2010 Meeting Dates: November 10, January 12, March 16, May 11