

Essential Qualities of a U-High Graduate Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 8, 2011

2:00-3:00pm – Room 212

Committee members present: Kim Rojas (Chair), Dusty Burk, Vickie Graziano, Laura Erickson, Steve Evans

The committee members discussed what the main goal was for implementing the Essential Qualities and how we will develop a process that aims toward reaching the main goal. The following ideas came out of the discussion:

- The Essential Qualities should become a main part of the culture at U-High
 - The Essential Qualities will be introduced and repeatedly discussed during students' first year at U-High in the Freshman Program
 - We must have both teacher and student buy-in to make this really work and to become an integral part of who we are as a faculty and student body. This means that the portfolio needs to be a process that is seen as a valid way to show whether or not a student possesses the Essential Qualities and the benefits must be worth going through the process as well. This also means that the extra work the teachers will need to put into this process (helping the students during the portfolio compilation as well as evaluating the portfolio) needs to be kept within reasonable expectations.
 - Students and teachers need to be aware of the benefits of going through the Essential Qualities portfolio process. Teacher mentors will be responsible for educating students during their group time at the beginning of the year, as well as when/if they meet with students individually. Benefits include, but are not limited to:
 - Teacher recommendations
 - College applications and essays
 - Scholarship essays
 - College community service requirements
 - Special recognition at the Spring Awards Assembly and Graduation
 - We want the Essential Qualities portfolio process to be something that eventually could be completed by every student graduating from U-High
- Portfolio creation and submission

- The committee is looking into using the portfolio tool in Skyward so the students can build their portfolio during their years at U-High is an area that will always be available to them as well as to their teacher mentor.
 - Students will be given the instructions, examples of artifacts, and evaluation criteria beginning their Freshman year so they know exactly what needs to be included in the portfolio. The teacher mentors are responsible for answering any questions a student may have while building their portfolio.
 - Final portfolio submission should be approved by the teacher mentor. Should students also have to turn in a hard copy of the portfolio to their teacher mentor?
 - Students will sign up early in the Spring semester if they plan on presenting their portfolio so the amount of portfolios to be evaluated can be anticipated and evenly distributed among the teacher review panels for later in the semester.
- Portfolio evaluation
 - The committee is still researching and discussing how each student's portfolio will be evaluated. We are currently working with the idea that a student could turn in the portfolio in the Spring of their junior or senior year, and that they need to be present to defend/explain their portfolio to the panel of teachers. The idea of students being able to go through the portfolio process their junior year is so that they have already earned the distinction by the time they are applying for colleges and scholarships the first semester of their senior year.
 - Teachers will be split up into groups of 4-5 to serve on a portfolio review panel. All of the submitted portfolio entries will be divided evenly among the review panels.
 - There will have to be time set aside during the school day (Schedule E?) for teacher review panels to evaluate the portfolios assigned to their group and for students to present their work to the panel
 - A teacher mentor should not be a part of evaluating the portfolio of any student he or she has mentored

Our goal for next semester is to begin putting together the portfolio instructions and evaluation criteria. Once we have a better understanding of the procedure behind the submission and evaluation of the portfolios, we will be able to make more decisions regarding the teacher responsibility and time commitment involved in the Essential Qualities process.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly Rojas (Chair)