

## **Winthrop School Council Mtg Notes 10/1/24**

**Attended:** Meghan Ganley, Kristen Johnson, Amy Lowe, Kimberly Mavroides, Meg Smith, Amy Sullivan

### **Council Membership**

Music teacher Laurie Colitti will also be joining the council this year, so we will have parity between staff and parent representatives (rep Christina Donehew was not in attendance, but is a continuing member). We brainstormed ideas for the community representative seat, which could go to a small business owner, a grandparent, or other interested parties. M. Ganley volunteered to reach out to the Council on Aging, to help establish intergenerational connections. Another suggestion was Umesh Bhuj, owner of Zumi's, who is active in the environmental space and may enjoy connecting with the work of the Green Team. Other ideas included finding someone from the Ipswich Museum, the Ipswich Historical Commission, or the Ipswich Human Rights Commission.

The group also reviewed the School Council and Open Meeting Law guidelines.

### **School Improvement Plan 2024-2026**

Amy Sullivan will present the SIP to the school committee on November 21. It will include list of things we accomplished last year, as well as how we are moving forward with priority goals and activities.

### **Goal 1 - Meeting the Needs of All Students**

- Strong progress so far with intervention templates. Secured grant funding for a Professional Learning Community (\$2500 from IEF). Used it to purchase a number of supplemental resources. Over the summer, teachers created an MTSS/Student Support Team toolkit.
  - Feedback is that it is easy to use, digital, easy to navigate, color-coded, thorough.
  - Nicely packaged interventions that can be pulled out for individual needs/skills gaps
  - Should help reduce workload burden on reading/math specialists to some extent; may help as first step before going to the specialists. Can track progress and see if it's working quickly enough, etc.
  - Big time-saver for classroom teacher too – don't have to do the data entry (the MTSS team does) and also don't have to spend time researching an intervention for a student, when they are now shelf-ready
  - Upgraded data storage of assessment data so it's easy to pull up by student
- Hired a new literacy coach to help with rollout of new ELA program, Wit & Wisdom (more on this below).
- De-Escalation & Responsive Classroom: CPI/de-escalation training with whole staff
  - Trauma-informed sensitivity course – 8 week course starting late October– 26 teachers across district will attend. Includes 5 in-person trainings, 3

asynchronous. Got a grant for all of those educators to attend – covers the whole cost.

- STEM Learning - Closed cycle
- Comprehensive health standards – Amy Sullivan would like to talk to Dr Wagner about how they should report out on that at the district level. Still work in progress.
- This year, we will focus on the district-wide dyslexia action plan. Staff went to a dyslexia institute over the summer and can consider rolling out to rest of school and build on that knowledge.

## **Goal 2 – Innovative Learning Environments**

- Explored specialists' joint/collaborative programming
  - Drums Alive (PE and music)
  - High Street Studios coming in and connecting with science curriculum (movement, force, energy, physics)
  - Mrs. Grenier's projects
  - Green Team– Harvest of the Month, composting (tie-ins with health and science)
- Support teachers with models – take from above
- Investigate and begin to implement ways for students to own their learning
  - Looked into portfolios
  - Have students know the essential Q and the outcome – backward design
  - What would you like to show your parents that you learned? Event? Showcase night?
  - Underscore that current programs have this embedded too – in math when they give answers, they have to explain their reasoning. W&W has rubrics for self-assessing their performance in Socratic circle, for example. Also a fluency rubric – check off feedback with partner.
  - Riff off new IEP – how students now have a voice and share their own goals

## **Goal 3 – Build repertoire of resources for multi-language learner population**

- Now have newcomer curriculum and packages. Inclusion support.
- W&W has a multi-lingual resource supplement
- Family liaisons from the refugee program have been helpful
- Have re-designed EL teacher model. They push-in during W&W. “Walls down” approach when there is a critical mass of newcomers.
- Language phone lines - administration can access live interpreters now

## **Goal 4 - Intentional instruction**

- Include examples from what we said above about responsive classroom
- Became a No Place for Hate school – led by Katherine Morris
- Kindness Committee
- Caring Theme 2024
- Mrs G – new social worker/school adjustment counselor embedding into classrooms too
- MindApp curriculum 4<sup>th</sup> grade

## **New Goals**

Consider adding attendance to the SIP as another goal, particularly with challenging rates for some high-needs populations. Mrs G might specialize in this.

### **Other Curriculum-Related Topics**

**Wit & Wisdom (W&W):** Amy Sullivan to put something in the Winthrop Weekly about modules; grid with links. One parent noted that Molly Lacolla sent out some family resources that encourage adults to ask their children what they think and wonder.

#### **Content**

- W&W is a knowledge-based program that impacts fluency, decoding, and 5 components of science of reading
- Tons of vocabulary acquisition; grammar and punctuation for every lesson
- Teach in conjunction with Foundations (phonemic awareness). Daily for at least 20 mins; took refresher course to implement with fidelity. Building up knowledge year over year.
- Really makes students think and compare.

#### **Process**

- There was a 2 yr planning process; last year was drilling down to 2 potential curricula and doing site visits to gather information. Teachers ultimately put forward their vote/support for Wit & Wisdom.
- Had a PD day on the last day of school for teachers (last SY). Initial trainer came out to orient teachers to the materials and plans.
- Also had literacy meets for each grade level over summer.
- Another training on Oct 15<sup>th</sup> – PD Day. K-2 group and 3-5 group, as well as one in November.
- In December, geodes roll out (take-home early readers for K-2).
- Throughout year, will be using monthly curriculum meetings for W&W focus
  - Elissa Brand, literacy coach, will be developing ongoing agendas for that
- Teachers do have to prep quite a bit of material; keeping for future and using shared drives
  - Parent rep offered to help with copies & collating. Teacher rep noted they don't feel like they can delegate yet.

### **World Language**

World Language – grades 4&5 will receive one trimester of Spanish. This is because their schedules are already very busy, and the Spanish teacher is shared with Doyon.

### **MCAS**

MCAS – both achievement and growth levels are up!

- Very pleased with overall scores
- Math curriculum definitely made a difference

- Unfortunately, the state does count alt-tests as zeros, as well as medically-excused absences

## **Other Topics**

### **Theme of the Year**

The theme is Caring! We have a goal of engaging in actions to support the theme each month, to make this a living theme. Caring is about self-care, caring for the classroom, for the community, and belonging. Synergies with FRIES staff appreciation, green team caring for the environment.

- September self-care, mindfulness
- October – community care - write letters to the elderly/vets?
  - AML note: maybe move the letter-writing to November to tie-in with Vets Day and Thanksgiving?

### **Website**

Amy Sullivan is working on website updates—she wants to post School Council minutes and agendas there, but right now it won't display. The town is also changing whole website in the next couple months.

### **Future Meetings**

10/29 □ note date change to avoid election night. Meeting via ZOOM  
 12/10 via ZOOM  
 1/7 Winthrop Cafeteria  
 2/4 ZOOM  
 3/4 Winthrop Cafeteria  
 4/1 ZOOM  
 5/6 Winthrop Cafeteria  
 6/3 TBA