

Wamego High School Site Council Minutes

December 5, 2007

The December meeting of the Wamego High School Site Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. in the WHS Conference Room by co-chair Cindy Johnson.

The November minutes were approved.

Jina Kugler counselor, reported on the tests given to WHS students. The ASVAB(Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) has been added this year because it is an aptitude test, and a student's aptitudes are not as likely to vary over his/her high school years, whereas interests may vary strongly over the 4 years. The ASVAB also shows what aptitudes may be better suited to what kinds of careers. The ASAB comes with a booklet that has an interest inventory the student can self check, then can use the ASVAB results to see what area (verbal, math, etc./) the (s)he might be most successful and satisfied in as a career. There is also a whole booklet of careers so that a student may find a career choice that (s)he did not realize existed. There is also a website linked to O.NET that gives financial aid information. The ASVAB was given to all Juniors but one, and to about 20 Seniors who chose to take it. The only concern was that the military might come knock on a student's door, but schools have to give some student information to the military anyway. The person that Jina had talked to about interpreting the ASVAB was a civilian, not a military person. Eighty to ninety percent of schools use the ASVAB. The military inventory score can also be used to give the student an approximate SAT or ACT score.

All WHS Freshmen took the EXPLORER and all WHS Sophomores took the PLAN, but scores are not yet back on them. These two are shortened ACT tests and are scored at 8-9th grade level. Jina feels that Sophomore is a good class level for PLAN because, for example, if a student wants to be a veterinarian, but is not doing well in science classes or is not taking any science or math beyond the minimum requirements for graduation, then the student either needs to re-examine his/her career choice or if the student is determined to follow that career, then the student still has 2 years to pursue higher level math and science courses. Jina mentioned CORE and indicated that it is pretty well what WHS requires for graduation anyway. The "World of Work" map has shaded areas that indicate where a student's skills lie.

All Seniors (except the 20 who took ASVAB) took WORK KEYS, which assesses job skills. More work places are using WORK KEYS to determine if a student would be a good fit for a particular job. Lots of the WHS Seniors include their WORK KEYS results in their Senior Interview Day materials.

The response to a question about registered apprenticeships available to students was that the goal is for WHS to have more of these available to students. Currently the childcare program at WHS is articulated to 9 credit hours for college and it is hoped to eventually have an apprenticeship connection to Brilliant Beginnings at Manhattan or the NEKCAP Headstart in Wamego.

Jina has gone in to all Junior English classes except the accelerated class to talk with students about test results being in. Quite a few students were getting in to her office to check their results.

December 5, 2007, cont.

Much of the rest of the meeting was devoted to discussing possible options for the February Parent -Teacher conferences. Ideas follow. (Our job as Site Council is to make recommendations.)

- Special Education had had a group of people---Work Force Center, technical schools, K-State--- come in to talk to Special Ed. students and parents. Principal Donna Workman will talk to Dr. McKee to see what and who was contacted for possible sessions for February's conferences.
- Let parents go to teachers' rooms to talk about their student's progress/problems and/or to view displays...maybe open to all at a certain time that evening, reserved for discussing individual student progress at another time that evening...or maybe have open sessions early and late with the mid-time for the student progress discussions...possibly have some late sessions be a repeat of early sessions OR have student progress conferences early and late and open house type sessions midway through evening.
- Set up ASVAB, ACT, Financial aid information in the library
- Have displays in the halls, classrooms, in lower gym, in ag, woods, & tech shops
- Encourage parents to look at classes beyond those in which their student is currently enrolled...maybe have a student group doing a classroom activity during visitation time (i.e., Socratic seminar, fiesta for Spanish class, food prep practice session for culinary arts, Wamego Express preparing food, a student broadcast during time, a mini-lesson taught to parents, etc.) This might also help a student and his/her parents to decide if that class might be something (s)he would want to enroll in another year.
- Invite current 8th grade parents and their students to come have a look at WHS to help in their transition to high school next year, a non-threatening introduction to make them more comfortable coming to WHS.
- Have a schedule with room numbers and a map of what's going on when and where--- get schedule to parents before that night so that they know what to expect and can plan ahead what sessions they might want to attend. Have maps available that night.
- Organizations/clubs could have display areas and have officers or members present to promote their group.
- The REAL GAME---can you pay for the lifestyle you want with the job skills you have. Possibly have REAL GAME for Freshmen at one time, Sophomores at another, etc.
- Since some WHS students were those pre-tested and post-tested, ask Mr. Strohm, a former WHS counselor, to present his dissertation on dysfunctional thought processes that keep students from making decisions. Include ways of putting a positive spin on some of the perceptions that may contribute to the dysfunctionality (i.e. "Parents are trying to run my life" could be reinterpreted as " My parents care about me and have had experience, so maybe I should listen, but I still need to make my own decision in the end." What do I need to do to change my negative thought processes?)

- Goal setting --- What do I need to succeed?
- So as not to stress out the faculty, give teachers a choice of what to do. They may have some ideas beyond what we have thought of. Since February is an especially busy month, some teachers/coaches may have less time available to devote to doing yet another thing.

With this style of Parent-Teacher conference (going to the teacher's room), parents may not get the same opportunity to talk to all of a student's teachers...but some may come because this will be less threatening. Parent can choose to see all or none of student's teachers, but could still benefit from other sessions. Parents already know their student's grade in each class since they are e-mailed because of eligibility and February is not at the end of the quarter.

Audra Martens, USD 320 website designer, would like for Site Council minutes for all the schools to be on the website. Cindy Johnson will contact Ms. Martens about ours and other ideas we have previously discussed as website possibilities. Brenda Straub said that she still cannot unsubscribe. Mrs. Workman reported that the district is developing a DVD that highlights the schools and community with the purpose to draw people to settle here and to entice teachers to come to this district.

Mrs. Workman also shared that some teachers in Topeka are giving up their plan periods to teach a class for extra pay and to address crowding and lack of teachers available.

Beth Lange, Donna Workman, and Jina Kugler discussed the use of "Incompletes" instead of zero grades. Currently the "Incomplete" is not being used by all WHS teachers. Its use is based on action research: What do we want kids to know? How do they get it? How can we get them to do the work? Too many students are willing to play the "zero" grade game. If a student gets an "Incomplete", then (s)he has to get the work in and must continue to do it over until it is done to an acceptable level. On December 7 (this coming Friday) the English and Social Studies PLCs will be working on and discussing the use of "Incomplete". Mrs. Workman is leading an ad hoc group on the logistics of using "Incomplete". Is it good for kids? Is it what we want to do? Lange, Workman, and Kugler discussed the value of having students correct their errors.

A question arose as to whether the "Incomplete" grade system would do away with the A,B,C grade system. It could eventually; however, colleges and scholarships are still based on the idea that an A=4.0. WHS students do have to receive an A,B,C, D, or F grade at the end of this semester.

Next meeting will be the [second Wednesday](#), [JANUARY 7](#) at 5:00 p.m. in the WHS conference room.

TOPIC for discussion: Finalize February Parent-Teacher Conferences

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Blanka

