

Midland Public Schools

## **Curriculum and Special Services (CaSS) Study Committee Minutes**

Tuesday, September 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: John Kaminski (chair), Carl Ellinger, Kathy Ellison, Yvonne Gorton and Gary Verlinde

Meeting Location: Administration Center, Room 9

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### **International Baccalaureate Advisory Team (IBAT) Update**

#### **Review IB history and plans for future**

Kathy Ellison reminded the group that IB first was offered in 2007-08. Since then we have had four graduating classes. With 54 full diplomas earned, 889 students testing and 4,340 students involved in IB courses. The IBAT was formed last year with a charge of investigating the expansion, enhancing communications and exploring sustainable funding mechanisms. Three subcommittees (PYP, MYP, DP) are working on these goals.

#### **Primary Years Program (PYP)**

Linda Lipsitt and Lou Ann Bensinger presented the progress of the Primary Years Program subcommittee. Following last year's work, the subcommittee agreed that implementing a PYP program should be pursued. The process map outlined the proposed timeline for communication, training, implementation and the application process. In addition, the hexagon for PYP was shared. An explanation took place about the six themes which are transdisciplinary, the learner profile and the IB attitudes. The six themes include: *Who are we*, *Where we are in place and time*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves*, and *Sharing the planet*. A question and answer period followed the presentation.

#### **Middle Years Program (MYP)**

Randy Schaedig reviewed the progress of the MYP Subcommittee. Mr. Schaedig and Mr. Decker have co-chaired this committee during the past school year. The committee has researched the MYP program, hosted presentations from individuals from MYP schools, and visited districts that have implemented the MYP program. The group recognizes the value of the MYP program, but feels the program requires more detailed investigation as it includes grades 6-10, and could require some changes to how the school day is structured. The sub-committee is expanding this year to include more members as research will continue.

#### **Diploma Program (DP)**

Scott Cochran explained that the subcommittee met periodically to tackle overcoming myths and misinformation about the Diploma Program and to discuss short term and long term funding strategies. They increased internal and external communication with parents, students and staff including presentations at middle school parent nights and with middle school students as they chose their classes, talking with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students as they scheduled and polling recent graduates about the

impact of their IB classes. The committee spoke with community groups and dedicated an episode of *MPS Today!* to the IB Diploma Program. They have found that students are the best advocates for the program, particularly in talking about how the program has helped them think about their education in a deeper, more holistic, more relevant way, and how being an IB student has given them a leg up in college and career preparation.

### **Five-Year Evaluation Update**

Amy Hutchinson described how both high schools will complete a Five-Year Program evaluation for the IB Diploma Program. This is essentially a self-reflection on how we are doing with the implementation of DP. Carol Neff and Sarah Pancost, IBDP Coordinators, will oversee this process in their respective buildings. The process involves surveying all of our stakeholders and asking for input from a variety of teachers and administrators. The curriculum division will be drafting guidelines for this evaluation in the areas of testing, special needs, language and academic honesty. A final report, due by June 1, 2013, will be completed and sent to the IBO.

### **Reflections and Discussion**

Mr. Ellinger and Dr. Ellison led the CaSS committee in a discussion of the reports. Overall the subcommittee expressed positive comments for these programs which enable MPS to move toward the vision and mission statements. Data and feedback indicate that MPS students are benefitting from their experiences and are well prepared for college and career. Funding and communication will continue to be addressed.

Next CaSS meeting: October 15