

Minutes from Goal #2 Strategic Plan
Rigorous Curriculum

Decided to break our discussion into two parts to help write strategies: Regarding rigor - What do we do for students who are already proficient or advanced? What do we do for students who are not yet proficient?

Part I: Accelerated Learning (not necessarily acceleration/rate of learning, rather the depth and focus on concept based learning processes that increase rigor for most children in support of the 21st Century Skill Set).

A. IB

- Can we make a decision today about what to support here? YES
- Discussion:
 - DO has already authorized 14 more people to be sent for training this summer in Colorado, the way it was presented as an emerging strategy (commitment)
 - Why start with MYP? – explanation (core of our student body PK-12, not as much research/data for PYP at this time, high school interest?, 5 elementary schools (difficulty to start)-can transition
 - Should we recommend further consideration of implementation of PYP, DP?
 - Concerns expressed regarding investment/interest in PYP and DP – need to include these in our plan
 - Whatever we do- we must do it right/with integrity – this will take time
 - College recognition of IB v. AP classes/credits
 - Generate composition of 2.1 strategy

2.1 Aggressively pursue International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) training and certification, while simultaneously exploring the Primary Years Program (PYP) and Diploma Program (DP).

Further Discussion: Can we further implement our DI program alongside implementation of MYP? Believe the answer is YES.

B. GATE

- IB would help serve these students
- This is a special group of students – we would still need GATE
- How do Gifted programs co-exist with IB? (Sarah will check and report back)
- Issues surrounding transitioning from elementary GATE to Middle School GATE, to HS GATE – needs some further attention
- Challenges of south valley elementary schools (Hailey, Bellevue, Woodside)
 - Three schools for 1 service provider

- Students bussed to Hailey
- Different offerings/extensions at each school because of time/resource limitations
- Male v. female ratio

* Do we consider a GATE facilitator at each school?

Position could be renamed – serve identified GATE students, as well as enrichment groups to target advanced students at each elementary school. Also consider middle school services and high school services (losing students over time) GATE/Advanced level courses at the HS are provided based on the number of students interested in these courses

- Include the word “continuum” in strategy
- Nearly 90% of students are proficient in our district
- Teaching to the “middle” isn’t really the middle in some of our schools
- Intervention groups for all ranges provided at Woodside currently
- It is all about growth for every child – no matter their starting point
- First reaction is to require MORE, not different
- Don’t waste the 80% (proficient) to over focus on the 20% (not proficient)
- Inverted bell curve – no middle range (we have high, higher, and low)
- Sports car analogy – built to go fast – but pulling cart of heavy rocks

How do we fix it? A redesign of our school system is necessary. Tracking – way it was applied in past - prejudicial results. Pendulum swung back so hard to ensure all students receive same curriculum.

Goal: Keep the sports car flying – get the others up to speed (part of their day)

Don’t want diluted curriculum for lower level students

This idea worth further discussion.

2.2 DRAFT (continuum?)

Provide enrichment learning services at every school that address the educational needs of advanced level students overseen by a GATE facilitator

Other Advancement Opportunities

AP – We don’t compare to other districts re: number of AP offerings (our students have less interest) – why are our students somehow unmotivated?

Maybe: Trimester – decreases number of electives for students, students hear how hard they are/don’t pass afterward, weighted grade issues, etc.

YES – we need a strategy to address this issue (next meeting)

Counseling? – being addressed (goal #1) – (Angie find out if College Counselor addressed in #1 – report back)

Other Rigor Options

AVID, CFES, NEU, SIOP/GLAD, Best Practice, PASS Program, College mindset programs at elementary level (ex: Woodside's program)

Add to our list for consideration:

All Day Kindergarten?

Extended School Day?

Extended School Year?

Math Initiative – ex: Courses offered at secondary level?

We will also need to address:

Assessment

Individual Learning Plans

Math Initiative

For Consideration:

January 26 – AVID all day training in Boise (opportunity for us to join in on)

Feedback from Julia on AVID – email survey results

Look at GATE programs

Next meeting date:

January 21st

Matt will send out next meeting agenda

AVID 101 (Advancement Via Individual Determination)

- AVID is an in-school academic support program for grades 4-12 that prepares students for college eligibility and success.
- AVID is for all students, but it targets those in the academic middle.
- AVID places academically average students in advanced classes.
- AVID levels the playing field for minority, low-income and other students without a college-going tradition in their families.
- AVID is implemented on a school-wide and district-wide basis.
- AVID has a proven track record for bringing out the best in students and closing the achievement gap.
- AVID is at work in over 2,700 middle and high schools in 39 states and 15 countries.

The AVID Student

AVID targets students in the academic middle (mainly B and C students) who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These are students who are capable of completing a rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential. Typically, they will be the first in their families to attend college, and many are from low-income or minority families. AVID pulls these students out of their unchallenging courses and puts them on the college track: acceleration instead of remediation.

The AVID Elective

For one period a day, AVID students take an elective class in which they learn organizational and study skills, work on critical thinking and receive academic help from college and high school tutors. They also participate in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem like an attainable goal. As their confidence grows, they become academically successful leaders and role models for other students.

The AVID Curriculum

The AVID curriculum is based on rigorous academic standards and was developed by middle and senior high school teachers in collaboration with college professors. It is driven by the "WICR" method, which stands for writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading. The AVID curriculum is used in AVID elective classes and in content-area classes, as well.

Results

Research indicates that the AVID system works. AVID students are more likely to take Advanced Placement (AP) classes, complete their college eligibility requirements, graduate from high school and get into four-year colleges than students who don't take AVID. Almost all AVID students who participate in the program for at least three years are accepted to college, with roughly 75% getting into four-year universities. AVID also helps ensure students, once accepted to college, possess the higher-level skills they need for college success.

Cost and Implementation

The estimated cost to implement AVID in Blaine County at either the middle or high school level is less than \$100,000 in the first year. This would cover the cost of training a team of eight teachers and staff, AVID membership fees, library materials, and tutoring. Program costs would drop to roughly \$50,000 in year two and continue to decrease in subsequent years as staff members become knowledgeable about the program.

If teacher training were initiated before the end of 2007, AVID could be implemented by the start of the 2008-2009 school year.

Additional information about AVID is available at www.avidonline.org.

International Baccalaureate 101 (IB)

The mission of the International Baccalaureate organization is to create a better world through education. IB offers three high quality programmes of international education to a worldwide community of schools. These programmes help students develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world. IB aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better, more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

IB programmes are at work in 2,094 schools across 125 countries. There are 772 IB World Schools within the US, three of which are located in Idaho—Riverstone International School (private, Boise), Lake City H.S. and Coeur d'Alene H.S. (public, Coeur d'Alene).

Diploma Programme (DP)

DP is a challenging two-year curriculum aimed at high school juniors and seniors. It leads to a qualification—the IB Diploma—that is widely recognized by the world's leading universities. DP prepares students for the rigors of college and encourages them to ask challenging questions, develop a strong sense of their own identity and culture, and develop the ability to communicate with and understand people from other cultures. The DP curriculum is comprised of six primary subject areas, plus three core requirements:

- **Theory of Knowledge:** This interdisciplinary course provides coherence by exploring the nature of knowledge across disciplines, encouraging an appreciation of other cultural perspectives
- **Extended Essay:** Offers students the opportunity to investigate a topic of individual interest, and acquaints them with the independent research and writing skills expected at the college level
- **Creativity, Action, Service:** Students are encouraged to be involved in artistic pursuits, sports, and community service work, thus fostering student's awareness and appreciation of life outside the academic arena

At some schools, IB classes are also offered on a "cafeteria-style" basis to students who are not pursuing the IB Diploma.

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

MYP is designed to help students ages 11-16 develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. The curriculum incorporates eight primary subject areas (Humanities, Technology, Languages A & B, Mathematics, Arts, Sciences, Physical Education) with components on the environment, community involvement, and human creativity. Learning how to solve problems and think critically is as important as learning facts.

Primary Years Programme (PYP)

PYP is a transdisciplinary programme for students ages 3-12 that encourages the start of life-long learning. It focuses on the total growth of the developing child, encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development. PYP draws on a wide range of research and best practices to create a relevant, engaging, and challenging educational experience for all children.

Cost and Implementation

Costs generally run \$100,000 - \$200,000 per year. (For reference, this represents less than 0.5% of the Blaine County School District's \$70 million budget.) Costs include the IB certification fee, teacher training, periodic evaluation fees, additional staffing (e.g. IB coordinator), international postage and mailing, publications, test fees, and special facilities (e.g. labs).

Programme implementation is broken down into three distinct phases which may take a total of at least three years to complete:

- **Consideration phase / Feasibility Study:** The school conducts an in-depth analysis of the IB philosophy and curriculum, and identifies the resources needed to deliver it.
- **Candidate phase / Trial Implementation:** The school puts in place all processes and resources needed to deliver the programme, including the training of teachers. The school must then implement the programme for at least one year.
- **Final Phase / School Visit:** At the end of the trial period, an IB delegation visits the school and evaluates its capacity to effectively deliver the programme. If the outcome is positive, the school becomes an authorized IB World School.

Additional information about International Baccalaureate is available at www.ibo.org.