

**Naples High/Middle School SAC
Meeting Minutes
11/01/11**

Members Present	Position	Representation
[REDACTED]	Chair	Parent
[REDACTED]	Vice-Chair	Parent
[REDACTED]	Secretary	Teacher
[REDACTED]	Representative	Parent
[REDACTED]	Representative	Parent
[REDACTED]	Representative	Teacher
[REDACTED]	Representative	Teacher
[REDACTED]	Representative	Teacher
[REDACTED]	Representative	Student
[REDACTED]	Union	Teacher
Captain Gray	Base Commander	
Sandy Daniels	Principal	
David Martin	Assistant Principal	
[REDACTED]	School Liaison Officer	

Community Members Present: [REDACTED]

Meeting called to order at approximately 4:00 PM.

1. Welcome. Chair [REDACTED] thanked everyone from coming as volunteers do not hear that enough. [REDACTED] and the new volunteer [REDACTED] are the professional educators present that fulfill the committee's mandated four parent members and four teacher members. Additionally, [REDACTED] is present as the union representative. [REDACTED], the vice president of the student council, is present as the student representative. [REDACTED], the school nurse, is present as the chairperson for the wellness committee.

2. Review and approval of previous meeting minutes. The minutes are posted on the website. [REDACTED] asked where they are posted. The minutes, agenda, end of year report PowerPoint are posted on the NHS internet website (<http://www.napl-hs.eu.dodea.edu>) under "Community."

3. Old Business

a. Nomination and election of SAC representatives to Installation Advisory Committee (IAC) (1 teacher, 1 parent)

(1) Chair: In accordance with DoD directives, we are trying to get the IAC underway so that the IAC can discuss physical plant issues that potentially distract the SAC's from its focus on curriculum and instruction. The goal is to get the concerns addressed in the appropriate venue. Additionally, the IAC can assist the base commander make a case for fiscal issues. [REDACTED] volunteered as a parent representative. [REDACTED] volunteered as a teacher representative. The nominations were approved with an unanimous vote of the committee.

b. Bylaws search report

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(1) ██████ requested the bylaws from Rota and the request was declined. The elementary school does have some but we are looking for high school bylaws. Sandy Daniels suggested we continue calling. ██████ will continue the search. The chair table the issue until the following meeting.

c. Report from 2011-12 NHS SAC Goals and Objectives Sub-committee (*Please see the full subcommittee report at the end of this document.*)

(1) CSI process engagement. ██████ discussed the overall objectives and recommendations generated by the sub-committee, stating that the meeting was very productive with the ██████, ██████, ██████, ██████ and ██████ participating.

(2) The sub-committee recommended an overall goal for the year is for the SAC to focus on improved communication. For example, parents desire access to the daily bulletin and an interactive calendar on the website. Additionally, minutes from various school committees could be posted. A Facebook page was proposed as one way to enhance communications with the community. Also a town hall style meeting for the community at large to address concerns. The general question was asked about how does the school make sure that students access the daily bulletins?

(a) Concerns with the uniform use of Gradespeed were discussed. For example, some teachers do not post grades in a timely manner reducing the parents ability to influence the student's performance. Also, parents expressed a desire to see more detailed assignment information.

(b) ██████ brought up *Edmodo* as a safer option than Facebook. ██████ stated that it is an easier way to share handouts and have students turn in assignments. *Webly* is also another way mentioned by ██████.

(c) ██████: How do we guide communications so that all teachers know the options that they have available to them? ██████ suggested that there are links on the webpage for the resources that are available to students.

(d) ██████: We need to push up to the district that a better webpage template is required. The German district has a much better template and, therefore, the web experience is much better – an experience that improves the school's image. However, this issue is beyond the scope of the local authorities as website architecture is mandated.

(e) Sandra Daniels: We cannot currently have an interactive calendar. Right now teachers are solving problems on their own and it is confusing for the parents to not have a common portal.

(f) ██████: Two issues: 1) access for students and parents and 2) the presentation to the community and incoming families.

(g) Waller: We accept this communications goal and agree to explore it with the Educational Technologist (ET) who could not attend the meeting as scheduled due to illness.

(3) SAC would like to have a tour of the school. Idea was welcomed by Ms. Daniels.

(4) The SAC expressed a strong desire to continue lobbying for the weighting of grades for honors courses.

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(a) Sandy Daniels: In response to the NMHS SAC's concerns raised to the Area and District Advisory Committees over the past several years, the DoDDs consistently reiterates that grades for honors courses will not be weighted. However, a letter from the school detailing this process is included in the record of each student who participates in honors courses so that colleges understand when a student is taking the most challenging courses. The only honors courses offered by the DoDDs are for honors history and literature for freshmen and sophomores. All other honors courses were eliminated as they were not "certified" and the academic rigor could not be reliably established.

(b) Sandy Daniels on Gatekeeping: As there are not enough resources to provide three levels for each subject (basic, honors, advanced placement), students who desire a more challenging curriculum are offered the choice of taking AP courses. There is no pre-requisite for enrolling in AP courses, for giving all children a chance to succeed is the reason not to have "gatekeeping" or tracking for AP classes. The risk is that having a classroom with a full range of students may slow the pace of classes, reducing the effectiveness for the more advanced students. Teachers must expend effort "scaffolding" to bring students up to the level of the class. The question was asked about what happens to the students who are already prepared? In response, Ms. Daniels stated that the answer, the opinion, depends on what side of the fence you are on but, in any case, the DoDDs does not gatekeep. A College Board-trained teacher can meet the needs of both the advanced students and for those who need more assistance. As far as addressing the needs of middle school students who desire advanced curriculum, the school offers middle school students the opportunity to participate in high school foreign language and math. ██████████ asked if student were enrolling in virtual school classes to avoid a slowed-down class.

(c) Sandy Daniels: Virtual school is only available for students who must take courses that do not fit into the available schedule.

(5) ██████████ mentioned the disconnect between the score on the AP class and the score on the AP exam. Both Ms. Daniels and ██████████ noted that the question of course performance vs. exam performance must be carefully addressed as it may be interpreted as a personnel issue, an issue that is beyond the purview of the SAC. Other DoDDs schools, such as Vincenza MHS, posts AP exam performance metrics as part of their CSI process. However, AP exam performance for schools is not available to the public; these statistics are only available to school administrators. Both the chair and vice-chair confirmed that the SAC had no interest in looking at AP scores vs. course grades at the class level, but is interested in taking a holistic look at AP exam performance. For example, the school advertises the number of AP courses offered and the number of students taking AP courses, so the question of the school's performance in the AP exam is relevant. Additionally, perceived mis-match between AP course grades and AP exam results was addressed in a response by the AAC in 2008. Ms. Daniels stated that significant changes were made in response to the issues raised in 2008 and she would be happy to address them at the next meeting. The score discrepancy issue was tabled so Ms. Daniels can prepare an appropriate response.

(6) ██████████ asked how the result of the CSI math prompts would be used with individual students.

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(a) [REDACTED]: The results are intended to more globally inform instruction rather than lead a teacher to intervene with an individual student.

(b) Sandy Daniels briefly described the prompt process. The school's goal is to get the prompts out to the parents to promote discussion of mathematics.

(c) David Martin explained the process of using research-based interventions and doing mid-testing to see if the instruction requires adjusted. [REDACTED] states she would like an update report on Math/CSI at each SAC meeting.

(7) With respect to the newly issued absentee policy, could absences be authorized for family trips like they are for sports absences?

(a) David Martin: There will be a story about the new attendance policy in the Panorama. There is record keeping accountability for students, parents and teachers.

(b) Sandy Daniels: Up until this year there has been no accountability for student absences. There are several examples from the past of families taking extended trips during the school year. Upon return, the parents were upset at the inability of the school to provide adequate instruction. The attendance policy, however vague, is DoDDS's attempt to provide accountability for school attendance and end abuse. After the first five unexcused absences, the student's performance is discussed in student support meetings. At seven unexcused absences, parents are called in to meet with the administration and teachers. Eventually, the sponsor's command will be notified. Excessive absences could lead to a FAP report only if they are noted in combination with other issues. Sports trips are separate, for they involve a sanctioned school event – an event where students should be provided the opportunity to complete assigned schoolwork.

(8) Improved communications

(a) Website – covered in section 3.c.2.

(b) GradeSpeed – Sandy Daniels: 426 students are signed up for Gradespeed access.

(c) Town hall meetings – Sandy Daniels: Last fall and spring there were town hall meetings with 200 plus in attendance. She would like a town hall to address attendance policy and CSI.

(9) Wellness committee

(a) [REDACTED]: It appears that prior wellness committees have tackled the cafeteria. 7th graders are not allowed to purchase cappuccinos. In the past we have examined Aviano's wellness checklist with information about tackling fundraising with unhealthy choices.

(10) Volunteerism – tabled until December

(11) Accelerated learning opportunities – addressed in 3.c.4.

(12) Attendance policy – Town hall meeting will address.

4. New Business

a. Administration topics – *may be included as part of the Goals and Objectives discussion*

(1) Attendance policy – addressed in 3.c.7.

(2) Public access to personally identifiable information (limits on website postings) – ET not available due to illness.

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- b. SAC topics
 - (1) Academic year transition problem identification and resolution-tabled until December.
 - (2) Advance Placement (AP) course performance
 - (3) Final exam policies
- 5. New items for next meeting
 - a. [REDACTED] – in order to be productive, issues must be addressed to the administration in a coherent fashion. A good question generates a good answer. The desired format for addressing SAC issues is:
 - (1) Hear a concern
 - (2) Formulate the important questions to administration
 - (3) Administration provided appropriate time to generate a well thought out response
 - b. [REDACTED]: Parent led healthy options on base-such as a dance -quick cheap options.
- 6. Adjournment 6:05

SAC Goals and Objectives for the SY 2011-12

- Communication-*this was considered the primary concern*
 - How can the school improve communication with parents?
 - Of special concern is the lack of information on the school website. Parents would like to see links to items such as the Daily Bulletin, an updated calendar, minutes from the various school committees, school newsletters, etc.
 - Can the school establish a facebook page to broadcast important information? Options on facebook do allow for pages to be established that don't allow commentary which would make the job of overseeing the page less time consuming.
 - A town hall style meeting would be a valuable opportunity for parents to voice common concerns and the school to offer feedback to a wide audience.
 - How can the school improve communication with the students?
 - Do the students read the smart boards and are the teachers consistently displaying them?
 - What are the requirements for use of GradeSpeed by teachers?
 - There is concern that some teachers wait too long to post grades and/or do not post assignments in time to help parents intervene when a negative trend develops.
 - Can there be greater use of Gradespeed for posting of assignments, including documents, web links and resources?
 - The SAC members would like a tour of the school.
 - How can the Naples MS/HS SAC get more information about the issues being discussed by the District and Area Advisory Councils?
- Advanced Placement/Honors courses
 - Is the Virtual High School an advisable path for Honors and AP classes?
 - Should there be benchmark requirements (grades/test scores/prerequisite classes) for a student to be placed in an Honors or AP class?
 - Should students be required to meet a minimum standard to remain in Honors or AP classes?
 - Continue to push the issue of recognizing weighted grades for Honors classes.
 - If there is no weighted grade for an Honors class and it is not used as an indicator for success in AP then what is the incentive for a student to enroll in Honors classes?
- Continuous School Improvement (CSI)/Accreditation process
 - What are the specific goals for CSI?
 - How are those goals measured?
 - What happens if those goals aren't being met?
 - The SAC would like regular updates on CSI

- The Polya Process
 - How is implementation Polya Process progressing?
 - How is the CSI committee measuring the impact of the implementation?
 - How are teachers demonstrating they are using it in the recommended way?
 - Reflection Journals
 - What are the procedures for evaluating the students' journals?
 - If a student is showing an area that needs improvement what is the lag time between when that concept is taught in class and the problem is identified in the journal?
 - How do you re-address a math concept that needs strengthened for a student?
 - Dipstick Testing
 - Is "dipstick" testing applied to all students or a sample segment?
 - If a segment—how are those students chosen?
 - How much educational time is being used for testing?
 - To get parental involvement, specific dates and times need to be advertised with sufficient advance time.
- Attendance Policy in regards to family trips.
 - How is the policy going to be implemented at Naples High?
 - If a student can miss numerous days for DODEA sponsored activities why can't students miss a reasonable amount of days for educational opportunities available on family trips?
 - Would using the academic performance standard of sports participation be advisable for allowing excused absences for family trips, given that the trips do not exceed the maximum number of 5 days per semester?



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPENDENTS SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, EUROPE
UNIT 29649, Box 7000
APO AE 09096-7000**



February 24, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR DoDDS-EUROPE AREA ADVISORY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: DoDDS-Europe Area Advisory Council Meeting

...Excerpted

Weighted Grades (Mediterranean DAC): The Naples/Lajes school advisory councils recommended that DoDEA change the current grading policy to: 1) award 0.5 weight to DoDDS honor classes; (2) accept 0.5 weight from other high schools only for the honors classes offered by DoDDS for any students entering the DoDDS system; and 3) weight honors courses retroactively to ensure that current DoDDS high school students receive credit for high school honors courses previously taken (see attached).

Dr. Bresell and Mr. Gerry responded that currently DoDEA will only calculate weighted grades for students who complete and take the requisite exams for Advanced Placement (AP) courses or for students who complete International Baccalaureate second-year higher-level courses. This question has been raised repeatedly to the Director(s) of DoDEA and has been the subject of repeated discussion and review by various advisory councils and DoDEA educators. The consistent conclusion has been articulated in 2004 and 2006 DoDEA policy guidance to schools (attached) which states, in summary, "that honors courses take many forms and there are no recognized standards to guarantee their content or academic rigor... The DoDEA policy protects students from the unfair advantage gained when a student enters a DoDEA school with a variety of weighted grades from a range of courses carrying the designation of "honors." GPAs reported on high school transcripts are often recalculated using their own internal methods by the colleges and universities because of varying standards used by high schools across the nation." Mr. Gerry added that among the issues that were studied in the course of developing this policy was the wide variation in definition of honors courses in different school systems and the unfair advantage weighting these would give to students entering DoDDS. DoDEA currently offers only two honors courses; Honors Literature-World History 9 and 10. Ms. Crosson commented that USAFE pursued this issue in the past and stated that this is no longer an active issue for USAFE. DoDEA is confident that the policy in place is fair and appropriate.

After discussion the AAC recommended that DoDEA annotate transcripts on Honors courses and that the DoDEA policy letter be shared with commanders to help schools/communities better understand the policy. Ms. Langenderfer added the recommendation that DoDEA include explanation to transcript regarding the process used by DoDEA to calculate weighted grades.

Ms. Coffield stated that many colleges want "Flat GPA's" i.e. without weights and that the college admissions offices will also disregard auxiliary courses such as PE. Dr. Sainz-Funaro moved and seconded that that DoDEA include explanation to transcript regarding the process used by DoDEA to calculate weighted grades. **Motion passed**

unanimously.



W Grades 2004
DoDEA Policy.pdf



W Grades 2006
DoDEA Policy.pdf



Med Weighted
Grades.pdf