

GC Middle School Curriculum Meeting Minutes May 2023

1. Google Classroom Standards
 - a. Update on this proposal; certain links available for midterms, etc.
 - i. Aligned expectations within some faculty meetings
 - ii. Term “midterm” will be replaced with Benchmark; represents a 42 minute assessment within class period, feels less invasive
2. Morning Announcements / News Club
 - a. Status update
 - b. How can the PTA support moving forward the idea of video announcements / a student club / a video catalog of electives/clubs? Possibility of a grant?
 - i. Incredible “news space” within library; expect news team running next year with additional student ideas for podcasts, etc.
 - ii. Video catalog being built by some 7th graders as a project – expect easy functionality and lots of information
 - iii. Given large grant requested for MS auditorium and current new library, no new grants proposed at this time
3. Transition for 8th Grade to 9th Grade
 - a. Can information be communicated early and often?
 - i. Report card grade requirements for Honors, AP, etc.
 - ii. Overview of High School course offerings / paths (ie: Math, Sciences, etc – may be more of High School topic)
 - iii. Requirements will be communicated early but not in 6th grade, etc; desire for students to be in the moment at MS
 - iv. Meeting with 8th grade students mid-year
 - v. HS course offerings – really a HS topic; perhaps new district website will address ease of accessing information; HS does a winter and summer tour
4. Learning Space / Library Update
 - i. Outstanding new library facility includes maker space, STEAM opportunities, new design, conference rooms and “news suite”
 - ii. Additional learning space on 2nd floor is about ready for use – multifunctional for working groups, STEAM, Exploratory, team meetings, etc. Possibilities of use seem endless
5. Writing for 8th graders - perhaps incorporate assignments to have higher usage of English lab
 - a. May be moot topic – English Lab
 - i. Disappointed to see English lab go but wasn't being utilized

- b. Concern stems from 9th grade English Honors where students seem to struggle in beginning
 - i. Ms. Kaufman's research being activated into classrooms at all levels starting on 2023-24
 - ii. Expect more diagnostic writing assessments and on demand writing
 - iii. English grades probably high for MS students and may not portray accurate reflection of ability so will continue to address district-wide literacy concerns
 - iv. 8th grade English meant to prepare students for 9th grade English; not English Honors (which may be appropriate for a smaller group of students)
 - v. Reading – some concern expressed that the number of books seems low during the school year.
Response: The actual number of books may be fewer but the quantity of actual reading done is higher given the various genres and texts covered across multiple classes

- 6. School Safety – thorough information shared at Board of Education meeting
 - i. Will continue with more lockdown drills; earlier occurrences in the year not coming up with students

- 7. Acknowledgement of Student Accomplishments
 - a. Came up in broader curriculum meeting – perhaps a letter home to students about 85 or improvement as “job well done”
 - b. Not true “Honor Roll”
 - i. Idea well received and hopefully able to implement 2023-24

- 8. Other Points Discussed / Highlights to Share
 - i. Locker clean out – discussed possibility of a student club taking ownership of recycling extra supplies during this time
 - ii. 2023-24 plan to review master schedule for following year to study whether changes need to be made
 - iii. Positive response from last summer's “Think Tank” on social media; perhaps another topic warrants such an effort – TBD
 - iv. Attendance – a little low this past year. Does that reflect mental state? School avoidance? Will look at deeper and be less flexible with days missed
 - v. Summer work is recommendation except 8th grade which is required text. Striking a balance between keeping the cobwebs out and enjoying the summer
 - vi. Earth Science and Algebra number of students growing and want to ensure the students taking these classes should be taking them given they have long-reaching implications of HS transcript, ability and mental stress