

ACCESS Site Council
January 11, 2016 - 3:15 pm - ACCESS Library

Attending: Jonathan Dubay, Kristen Sheeran, Kelly Cutler, David Wood, Alfonso Garcia (Dezire Clark and Todd Fadel absent).

Visitors: Scholle McFarland, Mark Feldman

I. Review of high school proposal

David will meet with four principals this week for initial discussions around our proposal: Peyton Chapman (Lincoln), Carol Campbell (Grant), Juanita Valder (Franklin), and P. Callin (Madison). David is also meeting with the High School directors to get them up to speed on this proposal. He will bring Site Council members to future meetings. Goal of conversations with principals is not to ask if ACCESS program can exist, but find out where it might make most sense, with the ultimate directive to do it coming from the principal. David will reach out to MLC principal as well, to insure that she also understands who our students are (not because we think MLC could hold an ACCESS program right now).

Committee reviewed draft of ACCESS High School School Improvement Plan

. This proposal builds off School Board recommendations from 2008, 2005 needs assessment, and ACCESS model at Grant from years ago, when there was a program and curriculum. See the attached proposal. Committee also considered whether to attach the ACCESS high school student survey completed last summer - decided to make it available to principals upon request. We also talked about making literature available on the educational needs of highly gifted.

We reviewed whether we think the budget implications of the proposal are. This requires 4 courses specific for ACCESS students, plus some dedicated administrative and counseling services for those students. The AVID program is a similar model we can point to to describe how the Board is committing to meeting the high school/college prep needs of a group of kids with unique needs.

We noted the importance of talking about the unique social, emotional, and academic needs of highly gifted students, as distinct from the gifted and talented population. High schools need to understand this important distinction as well.

Need to talk about our recommendations in terms of a staged approach: our proposal addresses the acute need of students today whose needs aren't being met and it can be implemented as early as next academic year. Longer term, we encourage that PPS look into other creative and varied solutions (lab schools, other partnerships, tag high school program).

II. Next major area for Site Council

How do we evaluate the social/emotional growth of our students? And how do we know that their intellectual needs for challenge and growth are being met? Smarter Balanced cannot identify individual growth for our students. Will try to bring in an expert to talk with us about interim and diagnostic assessments for our unique population.

How do we know ACCESS is meeting their social/emotional needs? We will map out how to look at this as well.

III. Electives and Class Configurations in Second Semester

For 8th graders, science enrichment will be taught by Mr. Garcia two days a week, alongside a leadership class by MacKinnon/Harkness. The fifth day of the week will be more opportunities for grade level programming: convocation. This is in response to the need to create more time for community building, health, and counseling touch points. Idea is that leadership class will

For sixth graders, they get 4 days of PE or 4 days of science enrichment (depending on what they did last semester) and the fifth day is a convocation course like described above.

We have an uneven distribution of kids in math - worse this year than in year's path. This coupled with our growth that is makes it hard to move kids through the schedule with flexibility. Next year, David anticipates that it may be less lumpy and easier to schedule around.

ACCESS Academy Site Council
Improvement plan for ACCESS Academy High School component
January 11, 2016

Site Council Findings

Whereas, the ACCESS Academy is a program established by the Portland School Board for gifted children in grades 9-12 in the 99% percentile whose needs are not being met in other schools, and

Whereas, without appropriate educational programs, gifted students can suffer from impairment of their abilities to function well similar to those of other special needs groups, such as underachievement, depression, high levels of anxiety, resistance to authority, poor study and work habits, difficulty with social relationships, low motivation, low self esteem and substance abuse¹,

Therefore,

To follow School Board policy and better meet the needs of ACCESS high school students, the ACCESS Academy High School program requires a partnership with a host high school that re-establishes past successes and recommendations by:

- maintaining an ACCESS program that supports the Mission and Vision of ACCESS within the host high school (see Exhibit A below)
- meeting recommendations from the 2005 Needs Assessment (see Exhibit B below)
- implementing School Board recommendations from the 2008 Report and Recommendations (see Exhibit C below)
- maintaining a meaningful ACCESS cohort while integrating students into the broader host high school community
- expecting that entering Freshmen ACCESS students will be one or more years ahead in academic experience in math, science, English or world language (currently Spanish and Mandarin are available to middle-school ACCESS students)
- assessing and placing ACCESS students at the appropriate level with advanced courses and allowing access to college credit when they are ready
- meeting annually with ACCESS Site Council to facilitate appropriate program implementation and development for future years, such as establishing partnerships with higher-education programs
- providing aligned administration and counseling staff to meet the unique academic and social support needs of gifted students

Supporting Documents

Exhibit A. February, 2002: Portland Public Schools Board of Education Resolution 2148 establishes ACCESS Academy as a 1st through 12th grade program.

“Mission: The ACCESS program allows highly gifted children to thrive socially, emotionally and academically; helps them develop a lifelong love of learning and encourages them to become full and productive participants in our rapidly changing global community.

“Vision: This challenging, open-ended arts and academics program elicits the full potential from gifted students by supporting both intellectual and personal growth. The rigorous, highly individualized program recognizes different learning styles and talents within a nurturing environment that encourages the development of the whole person.”

Supporting Documents (cont.)

Exhibit B. 2005: Needs from PPS District to Support ACCESS High School Program by committee of ACCESS parents, teachers and staff with PPS facilitator

“District must help develop the ACCESS High School program including assurances that in 9th and 10th grades will be offered class placements consistent with ACCESS goals.

“District must grant high school credit for required 9th-grade classes that have been taken at a high school level within the 1-8 ACCESS building.

“ACCESS students should not be expected to take regular 9th grade classes just because it is school policy.

“ACCESS students should not be held back in one area of study because they are at or below grade level in another.

“The the extent possible, 9th and 10th grade ACCESS students should be nurtured with their peers rather than put with 10th, 11th and 12th grade students.

“One counselor in high school sensitive to the needs of this population should be assigned to all ACCESS students.

“The District should encourage solutions that meet the individual needs of ACCESS students.”

Exhibit C. January, 2008: ACCESS Alternative Program for Highly Gifted Students — Report and Recommendations, a PPS sponsored study committee in response to Board directive

“Highly gifted students have increased social/emotional/mental health concerns. One counselor should have consistent alignment with all ACCESS students.

“Recognizing the unique needs of highly gifted high school students, this alternative program should also be staffed at 15:1. This staffing level will provide increased opportunities for mentoring, advanced placement curriculum and counselor support.

“Increased opportunities to communicate with ACCESS High School Program parents and ACCESS Academy staff to gain feedback and suggestions for continued program development.

“Program should follow best practices for Teaching Highly Gifted Children, including content acceleration, opportunities to work closely with others of like ability, mental health support and relevant enrichment.”

Supporting Documents (cont.)

Portland Public Schools ACCESS@Grant High School General Information school year 2008-09

- PPS High School students may apply to enter the ACCESS High School program
- information session(s) for ACCESS parents and families
- expectation that ACCESS High School students will take the most rigorous program possible to best position themselves for college admissions.
- an ACCESS class to provide individualized academic and personal support; college readiness skills, including AP, ACT and SAT test prep; opportunities for extended learning, internships, field trips; and academic counseling (See Exhibit D below for syllabus for school year 2008-09)

ACCESS@Grant diploma requirements (ACC = Accelerated or Honors)

Sample Schedule – some courses may be taken outside the regular school day.

9th Grade

Focus Course	ACCESS Writing and Research 1-2
Language Arts	English 1-2 or ACC English 3-4
Mathematics	Algebra 1-2, Geometry, Algebra 3-4, Pre-Calculus, Calculus 1-2 (or 3-4)
Science	Chemistry, Physics, Biology, or other science
Social Science	AP European History, US History, AP US History
Fine Arts (World Languages)	Spanish, French, Latin 1-2 (or 3-4)
Physical Education	Freshman PE
Electives	Choir, band, drama, art, other

10th Grade

Focus Course	ACCESS Advanced Academic Readiness 3-4
Health	Health
Language Arts	ACC English 3-4 or AP English Lang & Comp
Mathematics	Geometry, Algebra 3-4 (or higher)
Science	AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, or other science
Social Science	AP European History, AP US History, AP Art History
World Languages	Spanish, French, Latin (3-4 or higher)
Electives	Band, Choir, Drama, Art, other

11th Grade

Focus Course	ACCESS Planning for College 5-6
Language Arts	AP Language & Composition or PSU Challenge
Mathematics	Algebra 3-4 (or higher)
Science	AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Biology, or other science
Social Science	AP US History, PSU Western Civ., AP Gov't /AP Econ.
World Languages	Spanish, French, Latin (5-6 or higher)
Electives	AP Art History, AP Art Studio, Drama, Choir, Band, Science electives

12th Grade

Focus Course	ACCESS 7-8 (TBD for school year 2009-10)
Language Arts	PSU Challenge Writing 121, or PSU Challenge British Literature (other advanced English)
Mathematics	Pre-Calculus (or higher)
Science	AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Biology, or other science
Social Science	AP Gov't/AP Econ., PSU Western Civ., or other Social Science elective
World Languages	Spanish, French (7-8 or higher)
Electives	AP Art History, AP Art Studio, Drama, Choir, Band, Science electives

Exhibit D. Syllabus for ACCESS High School program at Grant, school year 2008-09

1. Source: *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know?* Edited by Maureen Neihart, Sally M. Reis, Nancy M. Robinson, and Sidney M. Moon; National Association of Gifted Children (Prufrock Press, Inc.), 2002.