**SCC Meeting Minutes**

**January 7, 2013**

**PRHS Library**

Present: Julie Fogarty, Chris Demion, Ryan Amtmann, Amey Bailey , Deborah Brownstein, Jordan Brownstein, Kate Brownstein, Stephen Buttolph, Andrew Buttolph, Dawn Day, Doug Ross, Carolyn Varin, Will Gunn, Lisa Ash, Barbra Noyes, Judi D’Aleo, Peter Gulick, Bob Price, Bruce Parsons, Emelia Fleck

* Peter Gulick called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.
* November Minutes were accepted
* A packet dealing with Extended Learning Opportunities at other local area schools was handed out and evaluated
* All schools have similar ELO’s to PRHS
* All schools have Project Running Start , a partnership between the Community Colleges of New Hampshire and high schools to give students an opportunity to take college courses for college credit while also completing the requirements for high school graduation.
* One school has Project Lead the Way (similar to Project Running Start) primarily an engineering program for students interested in having an engineering career
* All schools offer some type of college course
* There are ample ways for students to receive ELO’s
* The faculty was solicited by Dawn Day regarding their thoughts on ELO’s
* Dawn stated that many of the questions and concerns asked by the faculty came up several times
* Teachers have been seeing gaps from students taking VLACS classes making it difficult for students to excel at to their full potential
* Credit recovery
* Competencies
* How our Core Values fit into the rubrics of PRHS
* Peter stated that PRHS has a policy concerning VLACS
* Bob stated that the policy for all ELO’s at PRHS is if a student chooses to take a class through another source the grade goes on their transcript, however, their grade does not calculate into their GPA.
* There is no limit on the types of courses that students can or cannot take
* They must receive prior approval to receive credit
* ELO’s can also come from non-institutions as long as there is a certified teacher who is responsible
* PRHS takes the approach that they want to provide students with as many opportunities as possible to enrich their learning opportunities
* There is no written policy that prevents students from taking a class outside of PRHS that is offered at PRHS
* Deborah asked the question “How often are students turned down who have applied to enroll in ELO’s?”
* Bob answered that if the presented proposal is not satisfactory, changes can be made to the proposal
* There has never been an instance of a student being completely turned down , but there have been instances where PRHS was not financially responsible
* When students are enrolling in an accredited institution there is nothing to say ‘no’ to
* There was a change in the policy for the coming year, if a student signs up for an ELO whether it is completed or not it goes on the students transcript as is (ex: withdrawn or failing) PRHS expects students to complete all courses within PRHS as well as ELO’s
* If a student is enrolled in an ELO course where PRHS is financially responsible and the student withdraws or fails they are responsible to pay the bill in full, PRHS will only pay for classes that are completed and passed (this has never happened)
* Deborah asked “A lot of other schools specifically state how many credits can be taken in a year or in four years to count towards graduation, what does PRHS do?”
* Bob stated that PRHS does not have a limit for credits received from ELO’s but it does for independent studies (a subset of ELO’s)
* Other schools for various reasons set limits on credits
* To be considered a full time student and receive a diploma students need to be taking 4 credits with PRHS
* Some students take 6 credits with PRHS and 4 credits via ELO, although that creates a heavy course load it is not the place of PRHS to limit students from choosing this path
* Bob spoke about the concern dealing with the financial impact ELO’s are having
* A yearly limit could be set on the amount of funds school wide under the acceleration policy
* Dawn asked “Is it true that if a course is offered at PRHS and a student chooses to take it via VLACS that PRHS is actually paying twice?”
* Bruce stated that the school board would have to create a policy dealing with this issue and that this might change the philosophy of the VLACS program
* PRHS does not want to put restraints on students enrolling in ELO’s
* The PRHS guidance department honors a student’s choice to enroll in ELO’s
* VLACS offers fulltime diplomas
* Many of the 8th graders enrolled in SAU 48 are supplementing math and foreign language allowing them to enter PRHS with a foundation that they would otherwise not have
* PRHS does not want to carry restrictions on program approved by The Department of State
* Bob stated that most of the other schools state in their policy that if a course is offered at their school the student is required to take it within the school system and cannot take it online, however if it is for credit recovery then there is an option to enroll in VLACS
* Bruce stated that the school board has always been extremely proactive on a financial base for academics such as Running Start and AP
* This year PRHS had 28 students enrolled in Running Start
* The amount of money spent on students through the acceleration policy is minimal compared to the amount of overall money spent
* Bruce brought up the topic of class rank discrepancy
* Many schools have disregarded class rank because it is no longer accurate
* Julie asked the question “Have we had any 8th graders who have taken some of the courses, fulfilled pre-requisites, and gone right into a class”?
* Bob stated that yes, students prior to 8th grade are on their own
* PRHS does not give credit, unlike in college
* With Running Start students can graduate from high school and receive their associates degree at the same time, this option is not offered at the high school level
* 8th graders enter high school with zero credits
* Julie asked “Is this is creating any gaps or difficulties, are they excelling?”
* Bob stated that those students have not had any gaps, they are at the top of their class
* Dawn stated that several teachers had brought up the idea of doing more Running Start courses on the general ed’s offered in college (psychology, sociology) due to the fact that those are the classes that students enroll in during the first two years of college. If they could get some of those classes out of the way while they are in high school they might be able to enroll in electives that they have an interest in rather than those that are required.
* Bruce stated that 100 students were eligible to enroll in British Literature this year and receive credit
* Judi asked “Do we know what other school are doing as far as schedule conflicts? Would they allow a student to take a VLACS course if there is a schedule conflict?”
* Bob stated that it depends on the school
* Some more restrictive schools will only let a student take a VLACS course to receive credit when there is a schedule conflict
* Peter stated that he would like to see PRHS offer Project Lead the Way
* Many students are interested in technology and engineering
* Bruce stated that a single piece of machinery required for this program costs $110,000.00.
* Laconia has Project Lead the Way and there are only 4 students currently eligible and enrolled in the program with a full time instructor
* Bruce had attempted to pursue a grant for the Project Lead the Way when it first started
* Many schools offer this program through their CTE
* Smaller schools struggle with Project Lead the Way due to the high cost compared to the low amount of students that can succeed and benefit from the program
* Judi brought up the Early Childhood Education program
* ECE would be a perfect program to add into the PRHS curriculum
* PRHS has access to the program at PSU
* There is a lab/practical piece connected to the program
* There is a Day Care and a Child Development Center in the community
* Bruce stated that PRHS had this program in the past which was housed in the Elementary School
* The Child Development Center at PSU may be willing to develop a program to accommodate PRHS students interested in enrolling in a ECE program
* Doug reiterated Deborah’s question “How many students are actually interested in applying for and enrolling in ELO’s to receive credits on their transcripts to graduate? How many want to improve their skills and knowledge in a particular subject?”
* Bob stated that this year PRHS had more than fifty students enroll in ELO’s
* Peter stated that this year there have been some unique ELO requests such as a student interested in going directly into a profession rather than participating in college. They are now shadowing someone in that profession , which was approved by the Department of Labor, giving them the opportunity to see if it is actually the direction that they wish to go in rather than attending college
* Peter stated that a lot of the legitimate concerns are coming from the faculty regarding ELOS
* The faculty is concerned about their jobs
* The quality of the ELO programs
* VLACS creating a gap within the classroom
* Dawn stated that there are many faculty seeing discrepancies and gaps in the classroom
* Faculty is feeling the responsibility of trying to fill the gap for VLACS students while the other students in the classroom are ready to move forward causing dysfunction within the system
* ELO’s are a wonderful opportunity and PRHS is very flexible but it is causing problems within the classroom
* Barbra asked a question regarding the inconsistencies “Are the courses that are being promoted on the outside looking like they are consistent with ours but in actuality are not? Are they evaluated before the students are allowed to enroll?”
* Dawn stated you can tell by looking at many of the VLACS classes that they do not completely coincide with the classes taught at PRHS
* Judi stated that many of the descriptions are the same but once a student is enrolled in the course the inconsistencies are discovered
* Barbra stated that If VLACS is promoting a class description to sound the same but it in fact does not coincide than there becomes an issue ; if a course description immediately does not sound consistent than a the student should be denied from enrollment unless there is a scheduling issue
* Peter spoke about teaching at private schools as well as at PRHS
* PRHS has a very strong academic reputations
* As a guidance councilor he sees that students transferring from other schools are taken aback by the academics offered
* The courses offered at PRHS , Science and Math are far superior to surrounding , sending schools and schools outside the area
* If a student fails and enrolls in a VLACS course and come back to the classroom there is bound to be a gap, for instance, in Science, VLACS students will have missed the lab safety and lab courses that other students involved in the classroom have already learned
* Judi asked “Have we ever done a survey from the student’s perspective about what they received from their VLACS course? Did it match the curriculum in the classroom?”
* Peter stated that we had not administered a survey on this subject
* Judi stated that it would be a good idea to see what the students thought on the course they took, if they thought it was easier or harder than what is offered at PRHS
* Barbra was interested analyzing what is actuality causing the gaps in the consistencies in the courses taken on the outside, if they are consistently causing gaps or if it the students ability or inability
* Peter stated that one way to compare to look at the VLACS courses list of competencies and compare them to PRHS’s competencies
* Barbra stated that competencies can be listed but not taught
* Judi stated that while her daughter was enrolled in VLACS her class was all self learning
* Andrew stated that a lot of the courses that are offered provide pre-made videos that may have been produced in 2005, some instructors are very responsive and on top of everything while others are lacking. All classes have specific assignments (ex: 100 assignments to complete),covering all of the topics even if the teacher is unavailable
* Judi stated that there was a teacher at PRHS that helped her daughter during her study halls with assignments since the VLACS teacher was unreachable
* Doug asked Andrew about the work handed in “Was essay format? Scantron? True or False?“
* Andrew stated that it depended on the class and the teacher
* There are various ways for submission such as Scantron where you can automatically receive your work back, all of the work submitted can be uploaded
* A Science class might contain short answers while an English class may require essays
* Reassessment is an option if you come to the end of a lesson and do not completely understand the material
* Bob stated the success level of a student enrolled in VLACS depends on which teacher is administrated to that particular student
* A curriculum within a course may be exactly the same throughout multiple classes but the way two different teachers teach the course can be extremely different
* VLACS may creates gaps the same way that two different teachers at PRHS might create a gap, it is hard to pinpoint where a gap might be coming from
* Dawn stated at lot of college courses are going hybrid and some are going online
* Deborah stated that if you segment the 50 students enrolled in ELO’s by their reason (credit recovery or advanced learning) that perhaps there may not be as many students taking them in place of a course that is offered at PRHS
* If Juniors or Seniors are enrolling in ELO’s only after they have exhausted all options at PRHS then perhaps there is not actually a gap issue
* Peter suggested that there may not be an issue concerning gaps
* ELO’s are offered from the highest to the lowest in the student body and each individual has their own specific need for the classes they enroll in
* Peter asked if the SCC needed to continue discussing ELO’s
* Ryan stated that perhaps it was a good time to forward
* Bruce stated that the group needed to look at partnerships such as Intellects partnership with local businesses, working on a way to develop a community connection
* Ryan had three recommendations to look into for a topic of discussion. ECE’s, surveying teachers and students post course to discover where gaps may be forming, pre-checking the courses that students are signing up for and addressing the teachers concerns about gaps
* Dawn stated that some students do not recognize a gap immediately
* A survey would be most beneficial after a student is established in the proceeding level class
* Barbra stated that when students graduate they are given a survey about how their experience at PRHS has helped them
* Dawn stated that the response may be different after a year or perhaps adding a piece about ELO’s to the end of year survey might be a good direction to go in
* Bob stated that the state provided funded School to Work Coordinators who had the responsibility of working with partnerships with local businesses and the Department of Labor to connect students with careers, unfortunately the funding was pulled
* Peter stated that the SCC will follow through with any recommendations and report back
* Bruce stated that there is an opportunity to look at these issues, for instance the board is looking for input on ECE’s
* Peter asked what the SCC wanted to look at next. Does the school board have any recommendations?
* Scheduling was brought up as a suggestion
* Barbra asked “How many years have we been on the current schedule?”
* 17 years
* The SCC discussed schedules in 2009-2010
* Some classes need to run for 1 ½ hour and others do not need as much time
* Bruce stated that as a teacher he would prefer to see his students five days a week for sixty minutes
* Barbra stated having extended periods can eliminate study halls, a benefit
* Bruce stated that it was time the SCC looked at schedules
* It is impossible to accommodate every academic area
* Ryan brought up the subject of researching community partnerships for this year’s topic
* Judi suggested researching class rank, weighted grades and what college and universities are looking for
* It was decided by the SCC that the subject of partnerships would be discussed for the remainder of the year
* The topic for 2013-2014 will be voted on during our final meeting of the year

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 4th at 5:15 p.m in the PRHS Library.