

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS HIGH SCHOOL

## SITE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2015 8:45AM

Present: Dr. Chomokos, John Moes, Jay Christopher, Jessie Petrillo, Kelly Lantz, Cassie Watters, Gary Thompson, Shay MacBan, Maya Partha, Scott Pekarske, Tess Chua, Chris Woolf, Lalita Hadley, Maria Pastorini, Cheryl Joseph, Mark Rubin-Toles.

#### **I. Call Meeting to Order**

*Dr. Chomokos*

Dr. Chomokos called the meeting to order at 8:47am.

#### **II. Approval of the Agenda**

*Dr. Chomokos*

John moved to approve the agenda with one piece of new business moved ahead of the CWRA . Jessie seconded.

#### **III. CWRA**

*Jay Christopher*

We have just finished CWRA+ over period of 10 weeks, testing 1 class per day - 425 students in total. In order to get best out of students, the assessment needs to count for something. The importance of student buy-in was brought up at a recent national convention that Jay Christopher attended. To this end, we have discussed putting CWRA scores in transcripts under comments. To a great degree, our seniors have worked very hard on these tests, even though they would not gain personally from it - teachers supported this, and the proctors emphasized that this year's seniors were helped by last year's scores, and that the work they would do this year would help the class of 2016.

CFHS seniors score much higher than college freshmen nationwide, and higher than other schools that administer the CWRA in high school. For example, on Scientific and Qualitative Reasoning, our students scored an average of 533; the national average was 507. It's important to note that most of the schools that use CWRA are private schools, many of whom are elite prep schools. Our school has also shown tremendous growth in some areas, like in Critical Reading and Evaluation, and how to Critique An Argument. The class of 2015 showed growth over the 4 years: as freshmen, they scored on average 971, but as seniors, they scored an average of 1126.

We give this test because the Board found this test a great way to assess how well we are preparing our students for college. The test doesn't assess knowledge of subject, but rather their critical thinking skills.

This is consistent with other strategies we use to help prepare students for college and career, for example with Naviance beginning in middle school.

Sometimes CWRA information is used for placement after students have been accepted to schools. CWRA results demonstrate growth for individual students, and they also help to establish and maintain our reputation as a school among colleges.

CWRA aligns to Numeracy, Literacy, and Transfer goals in the Strategic Plan. CWRA pulls everything together.

Multiple courses in multiple disciplines demand that students tackle CWRA-like tasks: tasks that require numeric analysis of data, evaluation of information sources, and synthesis of

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS HIGH SCHOOL

## SITE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2015 8:45AM

multiple perspectives into a single, coherent argument.

Our middle schools have begun to teach their students in ways that also contribute to their ability complete the kinds of critical-thinking-dependent tasks on the CWRA. Our scores among freshman have been growing steadily; we believe this is attributable to the work that middle school teachers have done with their students.

CWRA questions are similar to AP "DBQ" (Document-Based Question) prompts, in that students must evaluate sources, extract valid information, and compose detailed analyses and arguments in response.

This is an indicator that separates our schools from other schools in Arizona. Most public schools do not use this test. Private schools use this in place of their state tests, so they can show what they can do. In fact, private school representatives were coming to Mr. Christopher during the national conference to find out what we were doing here, because we have shown remarkable growth and achievement on the test.

Our students can and should be excited to see their scores on the transcript, because college admissions officers know what the scores indicate. Now that juniors will take the test, they will get scores back in time so that they can use them when they apply to colleges as seniors. It would be good for seniors to understand how they can include these scores in their applications - mention their scores in essays, etc.

Site council response: It will be good for students to understand how they can use the scores to help them. It would be good for parents to understand the test and growth. This is a great assessment that colleges can look at, now that SAT is becoming less important. Students were truly engaged in the assessment. You can't study for this test, and this is problematic for motivation for students - your 'study' is every day in class; teachers need training about what the CWRA is. It would be exciting for teachers to see concrete examples of the different kinds of test items, and to be able to see student scores at a granular level.

Mr. Christopher and Ms. Petrillo spent 4 straight days collating and organizing the mail-out of AzMERIT results; this has necessarily bumped back distribution of CWRA results. It would be great if families could access it electronically. In the results, there are a page of results, and four pages of explanation about the strengths and weaknesses of individual students.

#### IV. New Business

*Dr. Chomokos*

**Staff changes:** K. Niazi resigned her Global Issues teaching position. Letter sent home with students today. Ms. Maass will take over the classes with Ms. Kirts assisting. Hiring new teacher asap.

Dr. Jill Ranucci is leaving us, and will take a job in Austin, Texas.

**Parent Roundtable on Communication about Student Learning:** We met with parent representatives in a Parent Roundtable. We got some great feedback, and have already taken action as a result - the athletics website was updated; we are going to send a bi-weekly report (distilled from the internal memo, the *Falcon Flash*), and we will find a way to store and display information more consistently on our website - for example, the grade-level letters that go out to students. Parents requested a freshman timeline, in addition to the senior timeline that we have posted on the website. Our next push will be to get families to go to the website, where

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS HIGH SCHOOL

## SITE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2015 8:45AM

much of this information could be stored. We revamped the website a year and a half ago, but we will be reaching out to some parent representatives to get feedback. We have a limited ability to make changes to the website, but we would like to make it as useful and efficient as possible.

**Donuts with Dr. C:** Dr. Chomokos has gotten very good information from seniors; roughly 10 out of the 35 invited seniors are able to attend every month. One of the issues that has come up often is the dress code; Dr. Chomokos will convene a group to look at the dress code. Students have also asked if we could make lunch longer. Dr. Chomokos has also been going to the cafeteria on a regular basis, and asked tables of students some specific questions: What has been your best experience here? What would you change? What specific programs have you benefited from? One telling aspect is that there have been no unified concerns echoed by the majority of the students - students are really pretty happy with what goes on here; they are busy, and feel they have a lot of homework.

Emergency Committee: We will be convening a committee; a number of parents have requested to join, though we will not be able to accommodate all of the

#### V. Student Council Updates

*Gary Thompson*

**Freshman elections:** We just had freshmen elections; all of the candidates gave excellent speeches and materials. The newest members are: President Peris Lopez, Vice President Otto Krueger, Treasurer Kristin Nelson, Secretary Allyson Hadley. We will have two freshman appointment slots. Prom will be April 16th at Skyline Country Club, the theme will be Galaxy. The Council is selling new apparel: new Superfans shirts that will be sold at lunch.

#### VI. FFO Updates

*Lalita Hadley*

FFO gave the second check to the office for the second sail for Falcon Park. Teacher of the Year deadline: November 30th. Grad Night: Open House on December 2nd. We just had a Taco Lunch for staff; in December, breakfast is coming up.

#### VII. School Update

*Dr. Chomokos*

**Future Falcon Open House:** January 26th

**Fly Ins:** Esperero Canyon February 2nd, Orange Grove February 9th

**Middle School FFO Visits:** Dr. Chomokos, Randie Collier, John Moes, and Lalita Hadley will go to both Orange Grove and Esperero's FFO meetings (Jan 20th EC, Jan 21st OG)

**Course Selection:** Course selection dates are tentatively scheduled, but need to be confirmed; we will be pursuing electronic registration this year. Kelly Lantz called for paper documentation in addition to electronic registration. Dr. Chomokos emphasized that we will continue to have some sort of paper documentation, and that teachers and

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS HIGH SCHOOL

## SITE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2015 8:45AM

parents will still be involved in the selection process, especially for classes that require

#### **VIII. Call to Public**

*Dr. Chomokos*

*Individuals who wish to address the site council are requested to complete a blue card. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda, however the topic may be placed on a future agenda. The Council requests that all comments be limited to three minutes or less.*

#### **IX. Closure**

*Dr. Chomokos*

Chris Woolf moved to close the meeting; Jessie Petrillo seconded. Meeting adjourned at

9:52.

*Upcoming meetings:*

*January 29, 2016*

*March 25, 2016*

*April 22, 2016 (if needed)*