Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting Minutes
Library Presentation Room, 11AM-12:30PM March 10th, 2017
Minutes taken by Ivy Suzuki-Jaecks

Introduction by Principal Vicki Puckett
Science Curriculum today
Today’s meeting is available as video and notes, both will be available on MIHS website

Science Curriculum presentation by Chairs of the Science Department
Jamie Cooke, Biology
Aaron Noble, Physics

Webpage of notes on the Science Curriculum was created for this talk by Mr. Noble:
www.mercerislandschools.org/noble, please go to bottom link on left side

General Science Schedule
• All Freshmen - take Chem 1 and Phys 1
• All Sophomores take Biology
• Some Sophomore students double up in science which opens up more opportunities in their Junior year– most common choice being Chem 2 H/Phys 2 H
• It’s a pathway so follow the flow chart (available in notes and course catalogue)
• Decide early on what course you want as your final destination (example AP Chemistry) and find out the pathway to that course. Plan your schedule to take those courses.
• EOC (End of Year Course test) in Biology - required by state
• Graduation requirement: need three years of science

Regular level vs Honors level
Regular
9th: Chem 1/Phys 1
10th: Biology
11th: Chem 2/Phys 2
12th electives: Biotech, Material Science, Earth and Space

Honors
9th: Chem 1 H/Phys 1 H
10th: Biology –or- Biology with Chem2 H/Phys 2 H
11th and 12th: Chem 2 H/Phys 2 H and college level electives such as AP courses and Earth and Space Science (EWU course)

Notes:
• This is not a rigid schedule, you can mix and match the above (honors and regular). It is dependent on interest as there are no tracks to follow.
• Doubling up in Chem 2/Phys 2 at sophomore year – is reserved for Honors courses only as priority is for kids that are interested in science.
• Core requirement: 2 years of chemistry, 2 years of physics, 1 year of biology
• AP course has an AP exam at the end, colleges may grant credit for students with minimum scores
• Earth and Space, AP Biology, AP Physics C are available for college credit (Bellevue College)
• Community College credit for Material Science (Edmonds CC) and Biotech Research and Ethics (Shoreline CC)
• Earth and Space Science could be taken as regular or Honors level
• Material Science, Biotechnology, and AP Environment can be used to satisfy CCR credit

Parent Question: why no Biology honors?
• Math skills not quite there for some students at sophomore year
• Also no staffing available
• Also because of state testing for Biology – which is a fixed test for all students – so need adequate and equal content given to all students to take the exam

Course workload estimate (average hours/week per student)
Chem 1/Phys 1: 1 hour/week for each course
Biology: 1 ½ hours/week
Chem 2/Phys 2: 1.5 hours/week for each course

Chem 1 H/Phys 1 H: 2 hours/week
Chem 2 H/Phys 2 H: 2 hours/week

Material Science: 1 hour/week
Biotech Research and Ethics: 2 hours/week
Earth Space and Science: 4 hours/week
AP courses: 4 hours/week

Parent Question: How much tutoring and courses are taken outside of school?
• Not many students take Biology at Privett, but it is available and occasionally taken
• Hard to find physics tutors outside of school so it’s harder to do it outside (note: my son does AP Physics tutoring at Privett)
• One parent commented: at least 10% AP Chemistry students are taking tutoring outside of school
• There is tutoring before and after school funded by PTSA and MISF.
• Mr. Brian Hampsch usually does the tutoring.

Parent Question: How many students end up in the wrong class/wrong level?
• As funding gets tighter, the class spots are tighter and harder to switch.
• Make sure you take the Honors courses before AP courses (Chem2 H/Phys2 H for AP Chem or AP Phys)
• Most kids at this level take multiple science courses, so most of the time they can just drop one if the course load is too much.
• It’s great that there is no track so you can go from regular to Honors to AP if you like the subject and vice versa if you don’t like it.

Principal Vicki Puckett:
• Forecasting budget cuts for next year, so there will be impact on staffing. So we have to look at courses with low number of students (less than 20) to cut. Master schedule is what drives the staffing. So be careful how you choose your request. Not much flexibility.
• Who gets priority with the courses? Seniors
• Budget cuts and its influence on courses:
  o Don’t want to have science courses with too many kids for safety reasons.
  o Would like to keep them under 30 but might be 31 next year
  o For example, PE will cap at 39 students due to safety issues

Parent Question: More group projects in biology because of more students? 
No

Principal Vicki Puckett

Budget crisis: How to make a comprehensive curriculum?
• Drama courses are under 20 students. But cutting drama will not make a comprehensive curriculum. So hard to cut.
• Advanced Art is adjusting by dividing one course time for two subjects – ceramics and graphics. The teacher sends part of their class to the hallway and keeps the rest of the class in the classroom. Teacher goes back and forth between the two groups, and teaches two courses at the same time.

Parent Question: If levy cliff was postponed, why are we having a budget crisis? 
Answered by Principal Puckett, Ivy Suzuki-Jaecks, MISD School Board member Tracey Drinkwater (combination answer)
• Because of the programs that were added (language program at elementary and new elementary school), MISD had to dip into reserves. Cannot sustain that. We were hoping for state funding and McLeary did not come through. Plus we got more influx of students this year and it will probably get worse next year with private school students opting to stay on island after I-90 traffic issues. Some teachers are retiring so those positions will not be replaced. Hoping not to have to fire any teachers. Budget is currently being worked on by school board.
- Instructional coaches (0.4) have to go back to full time teaching. No more instructional coaches. We don’t have the luxury any more.
- MISF has not reached their fundraising goal in the last couple of years. That was another area of budget hit.

Need to start cutting the “extras”: for example, cheaper facilities for graduation ceremony starting next school year

Biggest priority: protecting the classroom, keep class sizes manageable

Tracey Drinkwater: We have Maintenance and Operation Levy so that will cover other things such as construction.

Parent Comment: Baseball is the only sport on city property. Booster had to pay for the new scoreboard, etc. Are there any funds to fix scoreboard? Would the city pay for that?
- Principal Puckett will look into it. She was unaware of this issue.
- We have 70 sports team at MIHS. Largest in King Co. Our athletic fee does not cover the full cost of sports. ASB is bankrupt. Vicki was asked to cover the remaining $60K this year to maintain athletics. This will be brought to the community as she cannot cut C teams and JV teams and not have the parents get angry.
- At other districts, they charge $1500 per student for facilities fee. Principal Puckett cannot cover all the costs from the school as she has no budget for that anymore.
- Transportation for all the different teams cost too. Many booster clubs pay for transportation. Bellevue has $75 in additional fees per student for transportation.
- Club sports exist that are WIAA recognized. The athletic fees are the same.

Several Parents Comments:
- Parents at PAC recommended to bring this to the parents. If parents hear this, they might agree to pay.
- Bring all the Boosters into this discussion. They will disseminate that information.
- Why is our athletic costs so low? Other districts have much higher amounts.
- Principal Puckett: Club sports exist that are WIAA recognized. The athletic fees are the same for them too.
- An example by a parent: Lacrosse parents pay $190 to school and $550 to the lacrosse club. But that $550 is not to school. So they can pay more to school. But where is that $550 going to? Principal Puckett wants to know this too.
- Another example from parent: Water polo pays $190 to school and another amount to ??? Where is that money going to? Parent unsure. Principal Puckett unsure.
- Swim and water polo costs more due to rental of facilities. But she does not want to charge by sport, but divide it among the sports.

Parent Comment - Request from Safe Ride: on the back of ASB card, please add suicide hot line
- Principal Puckett and Parents think it’s a great idea