

# SCIENCE MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 8, 2004

**Members Present:** Victor Britton, Doreen Giamportone, Roberta Bloomer, Scott Stiverson, Carl Mayer, Marvin Kreps

The Science Vertical Team met to continue analyzing the district's K-12 Science program. The meeting began with a general discussion about the district's Science curriculum, and student achievement as measured by the State tests at grade 4, 8 and the commencement level. It was concluded by the group that our students are performing well on all State assessments. (*see attached data charts for details*). However, the group concluded that there are areas for improvement that require our attention. So a conversation ensued pursuant to identifying priority need areas. The following is an overview of the topics covered. *See also attached handout for the middle school science teacher's suggestions.*

- It is the perception of the group that excessive numbers of students read and write below grade level thus making it difficult for them to do grade level Science work.
- The Middle School Special Education and 504 students require more support.
- The seventh grade students are overscheduled with Research in Computers, Health, Expo, and class projects. This makes it difficult for them to master basic academic knowledge and skills.
- The Elementary faculty requires time to collaborate on aligning unit and lesson plans with the District's prioritized Science curriculum.
- Mr. Worrell's Science lab program is effective. However, it is perceived by the group as insufficient lab experience. Students receive approximately one lab per month for a total of 8 labs per year.
- Because of scheduling conflicts, Science is often cancelled to allow for some other activity.
- Classroom teachers need Science equipment such as microscopes, hot plates, and general equipment. Perhaps we could begin looking for funding sources for these supplies.
- There is a need to clearly define the vocabulary and concepts that should be mastered at each grade level.
- It was suggested that we consider expanding the Dr. Dee Burlinghoff Differentiated Instruction project.
- Students need to improve their reading and writing skills across the curriculum.
- Student achievement motivation is often lacking and it appears to be related to a lack of basic academic skills.
- The district needs to do a thorough job of getting an inventory of Science materials for K-12.
- The issue of time to thoroughly teach Science needs to be addressed.
- It was noted that the Report Cards do not adequately reflect the knowledge and skills we expect our students know and be able to do.
- It was suggested that a checklist of secure knowledge and skills be developed and a set of assessments to measure student progress.
- It was suggested that faculty need more opportunities to work together to share areas of expertise.
- It was suggested that the District consider how to enrich the program by providing after school opportunities or electives in the High School.

At adjournment it was agreed that each member will continue getting information regarding the Science program in their respective buildings and be prepared to report at the next meeting.