



Respectful, Responsible, Safe & Prepared

INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2024 – 6:15 p.m.
Waupaca High School Community Room and [Live Stream](#)

Welcome and Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairperson Molly McDonald at 6:17 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present in the WHS Community Room: All members of the Instructional Committee were present (Chairperson Molly McDonald and Bob Adams; Betty Manion was present via phone). Additionally, Board members Dale Feldt, Steve Klismet, and Ron Brooks were present.

Also Present:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Mark Flaten, Austin Moore, Laurie Schmidt, Sandy Lucas, Michael Werbowski, Jenifer Erb, and Kyle Scherwinski.

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Bob Adams and seconded by Betty Manion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Making Learning Visible Plan (MLVP) Update:

Director of Teaching and Learning Mark Flaten advised that the main goal of the MLVP is to improve student learning through increased clarity in what we want students to know and be able to do. He provided an example of how that is applied in a particular class by asking the Board members to draw a single family home and then each were scored on it and were asked for their feedback on their score. They felt the scoring was not fair because they were not provided enough information so they completed the project based on what they thought it to mean.

Mr. Flaten pointed out that a lack of clarity impacts expectations, inconsistency and lack of transparency in expectations and grading negatively impacts student motivation, and allowing extra credit to influence a grade blurs academic achievement and reporting and negatively impacts those who do not do extra credit.

He then asked the Board members to complete the activity again through a different lens by advising them of the learning target and success criteria. They advised that the expectations were clearer this time, but asked if grading would include creativity. Mr. Flaten advised that it would not be considered for this class because the learning target and success criteria are the items listed, so those are the expectations at this time.

Mr. Flaten emphasized that in order to fully meet the learning target, all of the success criteria has to be fully completed. A proficiency score of 3-2-1 is used rather than a 10 point rubric, for example (because what is the difference between each point). The student reflection area asks the student how they think they scored and why, and the teacher feedback area helps students know how they are doing. The student is not chasing points but rather they are learning.

Mr. Flaten compared traditional letter grading with the MLVP proficiency scale of 3-2-1 grading and reporting, explaining that the emphasis is on the most recent achievement. The key aspects of accurate grading and reporting provides clarity in expectations, focuses on growth and provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, keeps behaviors (i.e., extra credit, not doing homework) separate from academic achievement, and emphasizes most recent achievement instead of beginning failures (so it doesn't just average grades for everything the student has done).

He further explained that the MLVP grading and reporting works with students to improve skills and abilities to meet the learning targets, and provides for more student ownership. They contact a parent/guardian if the student is not meeting expectations. He added that it is important to be cognizant that not everyone learns at the same pace so growth is not rewarded (as in traditional grading). In calculating the final grade, 100% emphasis is focused on where the student finished in meeting the expectations – at the present time, what do they know.

Much discussion then ensued, particularly as it related to homework. Several Board members expressed their concerns that by focusing on the final grade seems to disincentivize a student from doing the work since the final grade is all that counts, and the student should receive credit for showing improvement. In addition, some classes are more subjective and, therefore, are not as easy to know what the objectives are. We should expect students to focus fully every day and we need to teach our students from start to finish, rather than not doing the homework and only taking the test. This seems to encourage more emphasis at the test level. Several Board members also advised that they have heard from parents that they are apprehensive of not requiring homework and are concerned that it could lead to laziness and the student could become less motivated. Requiring homework instills work ethic, and those students who put in the effort should get credit for it and be rewarded for putting in the work versus someone who doesn't but still does well on the test. In addition, students should be rewarded for passing a test the first time versus others retaking the test in order to pass it.

Mr. Flaten advised that is why learning targets and success criteria have to be on point as possible so that students/parents know what skills they are focusing on, and then the rubric has to be very clear so students know the expectations. Learning targets and success criteria are part of the everyday class. He advised that they do not have a scale that rewards growth because they do not want to penalize someone who doesn't need it. In addition, they do not want to lower the bar based on demographics, as it is important to meet the expectations regardless of status and we need to be equitable for all students.

MLVP is called that intentionally – if a student is not doing practice (homework), the teacher only sees them during the school day to work with them, so if they did not do the homework, that limits the teacher in knowing what that student's next steps are or to know what they know or don't know. A teacher is required to create a syllabus which includes setting out the learning targets. This is given to parents and students so that they know what is expected. As a result the report cards are longer.

High School Principal Michael Werbowsky advised that teachers are not counting homework as part of their grades, but students receive feedback on the learning targets from their teachers so they know where they are at. They also encourage students to work on their own. Mr. Flaten added that people learn at different rates and no one is lowering the bar. We want to have students who are motivated and they must meet the expectations required.

Mr. Flaten advised that in order to prepare our students to succeed after high school, expectations are set at grade level using state standards. In order to increase the school report card performance we have to change things to increase achievement and maximize the needs of students within the budget we have to work with. We put more responsibility on the student to get in the mindset to do the best that they can.

Administration is aware that using the 3 point system versus the 4.0 (letter grades) grading scale has been a struggle point and many parents are confused by it. Mr. Flaten shared three examples comparing the 3 point scale to a 4.0 letter grade scale. He reiterated that these are just examples and we are not yet ready to move forward with that this year. The process of determining a class valedictorian is also still being worked on.

Mr. Werbowsky advised that communications have gone out to parents regarding homework as well as the new grading scale. However, they are still working through some of the technical aspects and fine-tuning them before any additional communication is sent. When that is complete, the District will have a presentation for parents and students.

Mr. Werbowsky explained the process and provided an overview of what has taken place to get to this point for the MLVP. Phase 1 compared standards with assessments to create the learning targets. Phase 2 focused on creating the success criteria and classroom assessments that aligned to the learning targets. Phase 3 focused on the instructional strategies to achieve the best student learning outcomes. Phase 4 continues, which includes reviewing the work completed in Phases 1-3 as well as providing support for teachers. All of this work has been done by the staff during PLC time on Wednesday afternoons for the past 5-7 years.

Mr. Flaten noted that this is a significant change so he will continue to update the Committee as needed.

Tiny House Update:

Director of Business Services Austin Moore provided an update on the construction of the Tiny House. He advised that it will cost approximately \$25,000 to build the project, which includes \$8,200 for the trailer and \$16,800 for building materials and supplies. The District has spent approximately \$10,000 to date. To this point it has been built inside, but as soon as the weather improves, it will move outside to complete the upper sections of the structure. He also shared the blueprints for the house, and advised that Director of Technology Steve Thomaschefskey and/or WHS Technology Teacher Aaron Strebe have obtained or will be obtaining all required permits.

He along with Mr. Thomaschefskey will be meeting tomorrow with representatives from United Country Udoni and Salan Realty Groups, who will be working with students regarding the marketing and sale of a home. They will also sell the Tiny House at little or no cost to the District.

Mr. Moore advised that after tomorrow's meeting, he will have more information to share so will be scheduling another Instructional Committee meeting.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Betty Manion and seconded by Molly McDonald to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.