



FPS

The fine art of education

School Board Round Table

September 9, 2008

Woodland JHS Library

Today's Work Session:

Alternative Learning Environments (ALE)

Ginny Wiseman, associate superintendent.

- What do we do with those students who don't or cannot fit into a traditional classroom environment?
- The district's ALE programs were previously located at West Campus and served several districts. When West Campus closed, those programs were moved to FHS.
- The Fayetteville PD has an officer stationed at the Bates Annex where the Agee-Lierly Life Preparation Services (ALLPS) is located.
- There is a heavy emphasis on technology, with 45 PCs available to students.
- West Campus closed due to declining enrollment by Fayetteville students. West Campus served students from 17 school districts.
- Wiseman noted that the 150 students in ALLPS have a large number of staff members who serve the students. The goal is to return them to the traditional classroom. ALLPS being located on the FHS campus, instead of West Campus, facilitates this.
- The ALLPS students stay with core teachers for most classes, though they return to the main FHS campus for their electives. A separate location (in a wing or building) is important for these students.
- ALLPS teacher Jeter Morse noted that the FHS program is the only "open" program in the state, in that the students can take other classes outside of ALLPS. Most other programs provide all programs within the setting of the ALE.
- When asked how the ALLPS programs would be situated in a new high school environment, Wiseman said her preference would be to keep them a separate community, as they are now.
- An ALLPS teacher noted that full-time support staff (asst. principal, nurse, social worker, resource officer) would be a great help. All of those staff members are available, but not full time to ALLPS.
- The primary hindrance to providing the additional support staff is money.
- ALLPS teacher Leverett Archer pointed out that ALLPS is not a punitive program. There is a definite discipline component to ALLPS, but it is not the primary focus. He added that the reputation of West Campus was that it was where the bad kids were sent, even though that wasn't the case.



FPS

The fine art of education

School Board Round Table

September 9, 2008

Woodland JHS Library

- Wiseman said that students must meet at least two state-defined criteria to be admitted to the program.
- FHS principal Jim Price said that there are approximately 15 students on the waiting list to be admitted to ALLPS. The program can only handle 150 due to space limitations.
- Price said that students can transition back to the traditional classroom on a case by case basis, but he noted that the transitions usually occur at the start of a new school year.
- Archer said that he felt the ALLPS students would greatly benefit from expanded hands-on technology programs, particularly vocational programs.
- Wiseman noted that the Regional Technology Center offers many of these courses through Northwest Arkansas Community College. However, there is a low enrollment of FHS students, and only a couple of students are from the ALLPS program. Low enrollment is likely due to scheduling conflicts exacerbated by having to move between FHS and RTC.
- Price spoke on School Within-a-School (SWS) and noted that many people think of Wisty Rohrbacher, who taught at SWS for many years and has since retired. He said the primary change was that the students were taught by a committee of teachers instead of just by one teacher.
- One teacher noted that SWS has a high parental support factor, while ALLPS does not. She added that the SWS kids are very emotionally tied to each other and very close knit.
- The teachers noted that 40% of the Bates Annex is used for traditional classes, rather than ALE. They added that it makes the ALLPS integrated, instead of isolated.
- Kring asked how the district could dispel the myth that ALE kids are all bad kids. The teachers said that the ALE success stories should be celebrated and the kids made to feel special. Parents should talk to each other about what truly is going on, instead of perpetuating the myths.
- More common planning time among the team members was recommended to help the teachers better serve the students.
- When asked how SWS might change for next year, Price said that that would be determined based on how this year progresses. He added that an education program is never finished. They are always changing and evolving.
- SWS is an example of a small learning community in action.



FPS

The fine art of education

School Board Round Table

*September 9, 2008
Woodland JHS Library*

Topics for future board round table sessions:

- Recreation of FHS campus
- Pre-K
- Cooperation among governmental and educational entities.
- Assessment trends
- K-12 education: what value is it to a community? To a patron after their kids graduate? For patrons without children?
- Greenland Schools: impact of consolidation (or not): facilities, staff, students, economy.
- District growth projections
- At what point does a district go to two high schools? Should we set a target size?

Comments from Patrons

- "My students received such great skills from the diverse teachers they had at Washington and FHS. I hope my grandchildren will have teachers that have a better voice in how the schools should be run.
- When will the school district join the 2025 plan?
- Maintain the high school where it is.

Questions for District Staff

- How do graduation rates compare among traditional, ALLPS, and SWS students?

Next Round Table Meeting will be Tuesday, October 14

Topic: Serving Those Students in the Middle

Board Round Table Notes on www.fayar.net

<http://www.fayar.net/schoolboard/roundtable.html>