



BLAINE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent GwenCarol Holmes, Ed. D.

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Dear Blaine County Neighbors,

The Blaine County School District is convening a Secondary Education Task Force to develop a framework for secondary education in the district that is based on research proven practices and the values and goals of the Blaine County community as expressed in the Strategic Plan. Last October during the Financial Planning Listening Meetings across the county, the IB Middle Years Programme was identified as an area for further conversation.

The conversation was continued in the Financial Planning Survey conducted in December. Different components of a secondary framework were identified in order to further clarify what is involved in secondary education. Respondents were asked to indicate which of these components were the most important to them. The results were as follows.

Most Valuable for Secondary Programming			
	Count (N)	Percentage	Rank
Arts (music, drama, visual arts)	482	74	1
Professional Technical Education (Construction Academy, business, computer science, culinary, engineering and robotics, etc.)	448	69	2
Real-world problem solving	385	59	3
Honors and Advanced Placement (AP)/dual-credit classes)	376	58	4
World Languages	341	52	5
Soft skills (collaboration, work habits, communication skills, etc.)	298	46	6
Project-based learning	287	44	7
Integration of technology	267	41	8
Assessments that allow students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways	266	41	9
Global perspective	158	24	10
Inquiry-based learning	154	24	11
Student voice in learning activities	147	23	12
Personal project as a part of the senior year	141	22	13
Interdisciplinary learning	124	19	14
Personal projects included at grade 10 rather than grade 12	88	13	15
IB Authorization (affiliation and support from the IB Middle Year Programme)	61	9	16
Instructional coaches	54	8	17
IB Coordinator	26	4	18

(For results from the entire survey go [here](#).)

These results indicate that much of what the district has accomplished over the past several years are important to the community such as students being educated in the arts, technology/professional technical education, and world languages. In addition, it is important to our community that students be involved in real-world problem solving and advanced opportunity classes. Much less important to our community is the affiliation with the International Baccalaureate organization.

We have also nearly completed a written secondary curriculum that clarifies the outcomes or standards to be achieved in each class and how these outcomes will be measured. This has been the result of the incredible work of BCSD teachers who have collaborated across classrooms and schools, sharing their expertise to establish this clarity and consistency across the district.

This task force will allow us to take the next step on the continuous improvement journey for our secondary education and move closer to achieving our goals in ensuring every student is Inspired, Engaged, Educated, and Empowered. The task force will include teachers, administrators, and parents representing Wood River Middle School, Wood River High School, Silver Creek High School, Carey School, and the District Office. Components to include in the framework are, but not limited to:

- Curriculum and Assessment (including content areas to be offered, including academic and social emotional curriculum)
- Requirements for high school graduation and middle school matriculation to high school
- Instructional Practices
- Grading Practices
- Grouping Practices
- Student Supports
- Extra-Curricular Offerings

The framework developed by this task force would be brought to the Board of Trustees for their consideration, modification, and/or approval. Meanwhile, the district's course requirements for students and the current secondary curriculum would continue to serve as the expectation.

It is anticipated that the development of this framework, approval and preparation will take some time and be implemented at the earliest in the 2017-18 school year.

We are blessed to have a community that continues to push for the very best education for its children.

With gratitude,



GwenCarol Holmes, Ed.D.
Superintendent