



Wamego Middle School

Mrs. Vici Jennings, Principal
1701 Kaw Valley Rd.
Wamego, KS 66547

Ph: 785 • 456 • 7682
Fax: 785 • 456 • 2944
www.usd320.com

Wamego Middle School Site Council Spring Report 2007-2008

Site Council Members

Vici Jennings, Principal/Secretary	
Marc Stratton (7/Faculty), President	John Powers, Faculty
Marilyn Beck (7)	John Ritchie, Faculty
Tami Cook (6/8/Faculty)	Jeanette Standlee (8)
Richard Flanary (7)	Jenny Stewart (6/8)
Jina Kugler (6)	Jeanie Swart (8)
Delores Milke (8)	Elaine Werner, Counselor
Tamra Mueller (6)	Karen White (8)

Site Council Goals

#1 - The WMS Site Council will continue to actively participate in the school improvement process by studying data, reviewing programs and contributing information and advice to the Board of Education as requested.

The site council will

- **review the annual building report.**
 - Various reports were reviewed throughout the year, including the 2007 building report and 2007 assessment data.
- **will discuss issues in education and offer suggestions as appropriate.**
- **review programs and curricula as called upon to do.**
 - In 06-07, we considered information about the ACT Explore Test for eighth grade students. This test was not included in the 07-08 school year, and site council members renewed their request to give this test during the eighth grade year, as opposed to waiting for high school.
- **will review the yearly progress and develop the May report for the board.**
 - We concentrated our energy on establishing clear-cut guidelines for Eighth Grade Recognition, grade-to-grade transitions, and more activities for the students. We are pleased with our efforts this year.

#2 - The WMS Site Council will encourage increased participation of parents and/or community members with students and the school.

- Following Parent-Teacher Conferences in the fall, the site council reviewed the structure of the time and attendance.
 - It was the feeling of the council that we provided more than adequate time to meet with parents, and members posed the question: were we dedicating too much time that students could be in school? Suggestions were made to reduce the amount of time set aside for conferences, and restructure that time. With that in mind, a schedule change was made to set aside one evening of only two hours for very crucial meetings that will be made by appointment.
 - Attendance was lacking, and the council believes that is due in large part to the increased amount of information and services that WMS provides to help parents keep abreast of student issues: Homework Hotline, parent meetings with grade level teams, weekly grade emails, weekly announcements by email, individual teacher websites, and the district website.
 - Finally, the council endorsed the change to move conferences up in first and third quarters. In the coming school year, conferences will be held at mid-term, not at the end of the quarters. The members felt this change was more proactive, meeting with parents while students still had time and opportunity to address their needs and grades in a current quarter.

- Back to School Night was a huge success again for WMS. This year members decided to try to pre-pack the meals so the lines would run faster, and the schedule was changed to meeting with grade level groups, rather than running the bell schedule for the evening.
 - Members still believe that rotation through the class schedule would be most helpful for the incoming sixth grade parents, but agreed that it was not as necessary for seventh and eighth grade parents.
 - Meal preparation and physical layout of service still seem to be an issue for discussion. Suggestions were made to more clearly label the entrances and guide folks through the service line and to not package the meal.

#3 - The WMS Site Council will continue the focus on the transition process of students from fifth grade and to ninth grade.

- Due to a desire to trim Eighth Grade Recognition to an appropriate celebration, a great deal of this year's time was spent defining "appropriate" and keeping the focus of the celebration on those students who had earned the privilege of participating in the recognition program. The council established that

- students will plan the theme for their recognition, with final approval by the faculty class team and Mrs. Jennings. A small budget will be provided for decorations.
- the students' dress for the evening must be in agreement with the student dress code, established in the Student Handbook, p. 16. Based on input from members, teachers, and parents, it is widely believed that these guidelines will help to direct the focus of the evening to the students' accomplishments.
- it was most appropriate if students spend the day with their classmates, and not skip the activities for personal appointments.
- music by eighth grade band and vocal students will be included in the program, not before.
- student projects will be on display in designated areas.
- a slide show will be viewed prior to the program.

The eighth grade Site Council parents worked a spring track meet concession stand, earning \$300 to be used in preparing the evening for the students.

- The joint meeting of the high school and middle school Site Councils was on April 9. The discussion continued about the freshman transition to the high school.

Last year's suggestions:

- Incorporate some form of comprehensive final for eighth graders to prepare them for the rigorous form of testing at the high school. This was discussed but not implemented by the eighth grade team.
- Teaching management and organizational skills at the middle school. Study skills was added to the home base curriculum every two weeks. Organizational skills were addressed through several Student Improvement Plans and additional services.
- Have eighth graders meet with their freshmen advisors to establish a relationship with a high school teacher. This practice was not established, and the discussion continued on this year. Two issues specifically bring to mind the need for more mentoring at the middle school level and those are assuaging the fears of transitioning to high school and being prideful about one's accomplishments. In both instances, the joint councils believed that high school students could be selected to visit with struggling eighth graders throughout the year, mentoring them and helping them prepare for high school. Additionally, a group of high school mentors could meet regularly with eighth graders about the importance of doing well and the rewards that come with good performance. All thought establishing this mentoring relationship would be most accepted by eighth grade students and benefit them in the long run.

Additional suggestions for consideration:

- With the help of counselors and high school students, create a "50 Questions from Incoming Freshmen" webpage to field questions and concerns throughout the year.
- Continue with the Freshman Transition activities provided by the high school Link Crew Leaders and Peer Leaders, but spread out the activities over the

course of the year so that students can be “transitioning” all year. Perhaps invite students to games or activities where they are recognized as “next year’s freshmen at WHS.”

- Activities will continue for the fifth grade transition to the middle school. Students participate in two concerts at the middle school in the spring, as well as a visit to the middle school where they eat lunch, meet their teachers and tour the building.
 - This year the sixth grade team has designed a “Cool Fact” sheet that has a picture of the sixth grade team and middle school office staff. The students will be listening for a “cool fact” as they go through the visit, completing the sheet. The hope is that the students will be able to familiarize themselves with the staff’s faces and be less apprehensive about next fall.
 - The second new activity is a Sixth Grade Information Booth at enrollment. The members of the sixth grade team will be staffing that booth, availing themselves so parents and students can get their questions answered during the enrollment process. Sixth grade team members thought that service to be more beneficial than an evening of talking before parents had a chance to review enrollment procedures and the beginning of the school year.

#4 - The WMS Site Council will encourage a more positive school environment through support and monitoring of school climate, staff development activities, and team building activities that include students.

- The council continued their support and praise for various programs and activities at WMS: Get in the Game school-wide theme, inviting various speakers throughout the year, Teen Leaders, and the Olweus Bully Prevention activities.
Two new activities this year:
 - Club Day: Every student participates in a club during home base once a week. The clubs are interests of the teachers, and students rotate every nine to 18 weeks.
 - Career Day: Eighth grade students were treated to an afternoon of breakout sessions led by 10 professionals. Students chose six presentations to attend. Their choices were athletic trainer, mechanical engineer, early childhood educator, teacher, park ranger, pharmacist, business management, law enforcement, FBI fingerprint examiner, and veterinarian.
- Site council members helped serve refreshments at the Holiday Celebration for WMS students on the last day of first semester.
- Plans have been made to sponsor two activities this summer for WMS students that will include the incoming sixth graders. On June 13, we’ll host “Freaky Friday,” an outdoor movie night at the middle school. Plans for an August Back2School activity for students will consist of swimming and eating.

For 08-09

Members would like

- information on the professional development of teachers: the focus, activities, and outcomes of those activities.
- a firmer understanding of the Student Improvement Process and the many ways we are helping students with challenges.
- consideration of changing our meeting time to the evening.
- to plan more age appropriate social activities for students.
- to discuss ways to make academic assemblies more enjoyable and meaningful.