

Writing Committee Meeting Summary

January 28, 2016

3:10-4:10pm

Classical School Library

1. **Call to Order**--Board President Anne Tretinyak called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call**--Anne Tretinyak, Nancy Fischer, Stacey Foley, Sara Schroeder, Ellen Holcomb, Bridgette Osorio, Kathy Diedrich
3. **Guest Attendees**--none
4. **Presentation/Review of working document created to summarize the current Classical School writing program:**

Nancy Fischer shared a skills document that she assembled using the Core Knowledge sequence and Shirley Grammar curriculum content. Anne Tretinyak shared work she did in taking Nancy's skills doc and plugging it into a classical type framework. The group perused the docs prepared by Anne & Nancy and discussion followed as to what the group felt was already part of the Classical School writing curriculum and what was missing from the documents. The group also discussed elements of the current writing program that need clarification and further definition.

From the initial perusal of the documents, the group determined the following:

Missing:

Literary responses--Where do they fit? We spend a lot of time on them.

Need for Clarification:

Research papers and thesis statements--Need to determine definition of a thesis statement. What does the research paper mean for Classical at each grade level?

Where do certain skills/components fit under different genres of writing?

Need for Common Language:

It was determined that there is a need to establish a common language when we discuss types of writing. For example: skills vs components, research paper vs report?

The group also discussed the need for recording best teaching practices at each grade level for common thread through grade levels and also for communicating the Classical writing program to new Classical School teachers.

5. Review of staff surveys

Limited time to review staff surveys. Stacey Foley communicated a few responses from our 6th grade teachers on their frustration with the lack of clear documented writing curriculum guidelines at the 6th grade level when they started at Classical a few years ago. Stacey (long time 6th grade instructor) verified that much of the 6th grade writing curriculum, though rich in content, was not documented in a manner easy to transmit to a new instructor.

6. Determine next steps

The following goals for the writing committee were discussed:

Reevaluate and define types and quantity of writing at each grade level--What's missing? Too much overlap?

Educate ourselves on those types of writing

What components make up those types of writing?

How many activities needed for each type at each grade level?

Norms--What can teachers expect from their students at each grade level?

Norms--Agreement on editing practices (how much) at each grade level; common editing marks

Determine process

Use components of Writer's Workshop? Mini-lessons, conferences, peer editing, etc.

Use components of Excellence in Writing? Dress ups, sentence openers, fused outlines, etc.

Research--Group determined that this is a major subtopic needing extra time and thought

Establish Classical School tech practices for writing curriculum--Google Classroom, word processing

7. Public Comment--none

8. Motion to Adjourn--The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm.