



ESSEX NORTH SHORE
AGRICULTURAL & TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Fall 2019 Program Advisory Committee Minutes

Program: Environmental Science

Date: 10/17/19

Members Present:

Joe Buttner
Ellen Keane
Lynn Fletcher
Eric Baldwin
Lucia Ponte (parent)
Carleen Harring (student)
Abigael Jolliffe (student)
Suzanne Harring (parent)
Jason McCarthy
Brad Perron
Jill Sawyer
John Harring (parent)
Dave Duest
Curtis Dragon
Charles Smith
Michael Kastanotis

Teachers:

Paul Crofts
Anthony Wilbur
Laura Gallant
Clayton Kern



Program Facilitator: Anthony Wilbur and Paul Crofts

Committee Chair: Wayne Jalbert and Joe Buttner

Subject: Student Enrollment/Placement

Discussion:

Jill Sawyer gives an overview of where Natural Resources and Environmental Technology are heading.

- programs are blending, neither one is collapsing
- programs have the same framework umbrella
- the blended program will give students more exposure to different aspects of the frameworks.
- teachers will be able to teach to their own skill sets and students will have some choice about which classes to take.

Many PAC members voice questions about why the programs are combining and the driving cause behind it.

Sawyer:

- There was lots of crossover already and no other tech or ag schools contain both programs.
- cannot speak to the history of the two programs since she is relatively new.

PAC members: Will the size of the programs change?

Jill Sawyer:

- Administration hopes the program will grow
- There is potential for additional staffing
- Teachers will not likely be teaching all students at the same time.



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-There will be opportunity for students to obtain certifications that have traditionally been offered in both shops.

Carleen Harring (student)

-More students means more challenges for field work and more challenges for the classroom spaces which are currently a major concern for NR students.

Jill Sawyer:

-Not all students will be in certification courses at the same time.

-Large groups will be broken up for field work with several teachers co-teaching.

-Programs will need to be creative in their use of spaces.

-Program will be encouraged to spend more time outside on campus.

-Teachers may need to sign up for classroom usages.

-Teachers will need to work out space usages among themselves, this is because if teachers resign the new teachers may not want to keep the same arrangements.

Ellen Keane: Are there suites of standard industry certifications that certain fields require and that the program can start using? If students are picking and choosing which certifications they want to take, it will be important to ensure that they have all the certifications they need for a particular field.

Lynn Fletcher: Is there a safety issue with having more students in the classrooms and in the field?

Jill Sawyer: The state limit for class sizes is a recommendation not a rule. There are no plans to remove staff.

Jill Sawyer departs (approximately 7:30 pm).



Tony Wilbur: Currently there are 2 senior classes, 2 junior classes, 2 sophomore classes. Only one class of freshmen. One difference in the current programs is that most NR seniors go on co-op and most ET kids do not.

Subject: Annual Programmatic Review

Discussion: Ellen Keane, Lynn Fletcher, and Joe Buttner volunteer to fill out this form.

Subject: Bias Review Checklist

Discussion: As in previous PAC meetings the PAC agrees that our subjects are inherently bias free. Eric Baldwin volunteers to fill out and sign the bias review checklist.

Subject: Quality Assessment Tool

Discussion: Paul Crofts explains this was driven by the NEASC visit. Last year PAC personnel refused to sign this document over concerns that it involved checking off on safety issues in the room and could lead to personal or company liability. Last year we pursued answers for this and did not receive any. PAC members chose not to document this again due to the same concerns.

Subject: New Trends in the Occupational Area/ Employment Outlook

Discussion:

Suzanne Harring: Why are some coops not paid?

Crofts: Because many environmental coop and internship like experiences are unpaid even at the college level. It's hard for a high school student to compete.

Keane: Some agencies may not have the funding structure or funds available to allow for coop payments.



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Crofts: NR has traditionally attracted very active students, and this might be why students in that shop are more likely to go on coop. Paul did site visits last year and will continue to do them this year as well. More teachers means more people available for site visits etc.

Wilbur: PAC members should also consider summer internship and work opportunities for students as many environmental industries have more availability during that time.

Crofts: There is a disconnect in the solar and green energy fields. These fields tend to recruit more traditionally trained personnel like electricians and engineers.

PAC members: Many environmental jobs are more involved with site selection for green energy and not so much the building of the energy units.

Crofts: Coops must be more than manual labor. Students should be exposed to an overview of the entire operations so they have context.

Dr. Buttner: Are there still problems with students not being able to drive to coop locations?

Crofts: Yes. Some students have an income prohibition to this.

Dr. Buttner: It would help if students could be bussed to coop locations.

Suzanne Harring: Low income parents are not going to be able to let their students go out to unpaid internships. Parents can't afford to pay for the cars or afford to drop students at the locations. A student in this situation would better serve the family by getting a paying job and earning money for the family.



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Dr. Buttner: Could internships be funded via grant? If there was a 6 month lead time students could pursue their town grant money. The school is good at getting grant money (as evidenced by the Mass IDEAS projects). Could grant pursuit be used for student advantage? Finding funding money is a good learning process for students in our field.

Crofts: A simple solution would be to use the school bus fleet to get students to coops. Also another opportunity is shadowing, a career experience for a few days or a few cycles. Could be a good opportunity for fields that don't have ability to take interns or coops but still get our students some career experience. Ideas are NOAA, environmental law enforcement, the waste water plants. Some of these places have huge variability in career structure from blue collar to white collar administrators.

Subject: **New Business**

Discussion:

Wilbur introduces Clay Kern our new ET teacher.

PAC members: Last spring there was a gloom and doom PAC meeting. School was going to put all the emphasis on traditional shops. So what's the real deal with combining the shops? How do we grow like Jill says if the room is taken away. We've been told both 48 and 24 target enrollment for the shop.

Carleen Haring: If we combine curricula how can we go as in depth with the curricular we do cover? Also what if you aren't sure what you want to study yet?

Tony: Clarification, is there going to be more experiences to less depth? Yes seems that way. But the idea is all students will have opportunity to get all certs. But yes, something will be taken away. ET students did have 3 classes during the first year, and it was a little confusing.



Paul: NR liked having only 2 classes so we could have long in depth studies that were managed over a long period of time.

Students: Is there a legal limit student teacher ratio?

Teachers: No, but there is a state recommended number and school isn't necessarily following it.

Gallant: Chapt 74 guidelines is a 20/1 student teacher ratio and 8/1 for off campus projects.

Suzanne Harring: Should students tell you which parts of the curriculum they want to keep?

Wilbur: If students just pick their favorites could be very not curricular.

Keane: Seems like curriculum emphasis changes with administration. Sometimes college is a primary goal, sometimes it's less so. Seems like things would work better if administration made fewer quick changes.

Subject: Recommendations

Discussion

PAC recommends that the school follow chapter 74 guideline regarding student teacher ratio and student square footage of shop space to limit class sizes and ensure best and safest learning opportunities for students.

Chapt 74 guidelines is a 20/1 student teacher ratio and 8/1 for off campus projects.

The meeting adjourned at (time): 8:15