**Vocational Annual Review Meeting Minutes**

**January 20, 2015**

The Vocational Annual Review Meeting took place on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 3:35 p.m. in the GCMS High School Agriculture room. The committee members reported on their courses, and discussed curriculum, pacing, as well as both concerns and ideas. Those in attendance were: Julie Briney, Chris Garard, Elliott Hasselbring, Bess Lanker, Jason Mackinson, Trisha Purcell, Sharon Pool, and Cindy Wade.

**Agriculture- Elliott Hasselbring:**

**Intro to Ag**

First semester was mostly about history of agriculture and FFA. The kids really picked up on a lot of the information about FFA and seem to be very excited to see what else happens the rest of the year. Right now we have just started Record Books and are talking about record keeping and the importance of keeping accurate records. We are going to try learning through playing Monopoly. The students will keep track of every transaction and turn so they are able to create a financial report on how they were able to perform in the game. Once they are done with that they will begin keeping records on their own Supervised Agriculture Experience projects. There are quite a few students that have great ideas for projects, especially projects that will help them in their career path. After record books, we will begin learning breeds of livestock and the differences between them, or why a certain breed is used.

**Ag Mechanics and Technology**

During the first semester we went through small engines and wiring. The students were very eager to start working with engines. A few students had some difficulty putting things back together, but that was mostly from not organizing parts as things were tore apart. Wiring was also a great time, the students really like to see something they make turn on or if it doesn’t, they are always eager to find out why it didn’t work. We are now on a basic welding unit. Many students have taken the advanced metals class in this time of transition so it will be great to have them help coach or teach students that have less welding experience. Although I do not plan on making any class-wide large projects, there may need to be something created for the advanced welders in the group. Currently we may create an engine stand for future use in the class.

**Ag Science**

The beginning of the class mostly focuses on soils and how they affect agricultural production. Although most students did not really seem excited about soils, they seemed to learn a lot and most of them were really surprised that soil can do, or does all of the things that we can take for granted. The second half of the year will be focused on animals. We are working on heritability of traits between animals currently; this is something that I would like to relate back to how livestock are selected, graded, and judged. As we work through animals we will discuss basic animal anatomy as well as feed rations for animals.

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 2*

*Hasselbring, continued*

**Horticulture**

The Horticulture class this year is a very excited bunch, even though it is a small class. They worked well the first half of the year when we went through plant anatomy and propagation. The students did some seed germination trials and were able to see how many seeds they could get to germinate. This semester we are currently working on

asexual reproduction and are going to be cloning some plants from cuttings. I will be introducing some new projects this year, as well as a few that will be modified, and I am hoping to see how this class handles everything.

**BSAA**

This class has been a very interesting class this year. A lot of the students have livestock experience or they want to work with livestock in the future, so the first half of the year I tried to work with them and relate everything back to how livestock are produced or why we select animals for those quality traits. This semester we will be working on plants and it will very different for some students. However I think that working with the students on labs to visualize the sedentary lifestyle of plants will give them a better look as to how plants work. I hope to try and do a lab activity with every unit in order to accomplish this with the students. I am very excited and I think the students will be as well once we start to kick off with the labs.

**8th Grade Exploratory**

This quarter long class is always exciting. Many students have a very limited view or knowledge of what goes on in agriculture, so it is fun for the students to find out where things at the store come from. Students always love talking about livestock and all of the things that we can use animals for, especially the by-products. We do some fun activities where students get to see some of the things that happen on a farm. Students also are very competitive and I try and work that in to help them learn through some contests. After talking about livestock we move on to plants, and this gives the students a chance to see that people grow things other than corn or soybeans. I always show the pictures of tulip farms in Holland and many of the students are blown away at how cool that is. I like to have a lot of productive discussion in that class because so many of the students have questions and many of them are able to learn from questions from peers in class.

**Business- Julie Briney:**

**Word Processing**

Letter formatting along with using "Word" for everyday use is the focus of the course.  These classes also covered PowerPoint, and a different activity utilizing PowerPoints was making a slide appear to be 3-dimensional.  The students used Prezi, and their Prezi presentations were given during class.  These presentations help the

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 3*

*Briney, continued*

students prepare for future speech class and/or simply presenting to their peers.  Corrections were made to the semester exam and grades reflected class content.  Two additional "projects" for the exams were used to test the students’ understanding of letter formatting and the using Google Docs/Drawing along with their troubleshooting skills.

**Data Management**

The focus of this class is to learn Microsoft Office Excel program. The students will develop spreadsheets and learn how to prepare a spreadsheet using concepts learned during class. Projects used along the way show a students progress in being able to setup and execute a spreadsheet, and see the outcome with color charts in the end.  A new project the students enjoy is using Google Forms to send a set of questions to their classmates.  The students plan and prepare these questions so they will have the data for a spreadsheet that they will develop and edit to become a chart/graph.  Spreadsheet development is not always easy for students, but the concepts learned may be used for future career or personal use.

**Web Design**

The student will begin web design concepts through HTML code.  TextEdit has been used, however the students have found Sublime to be a user-friendly HTML editor.  Free website developer sites are also used.  Weebly has been a popular one for the students to manipulate a design with, and this year we will compare Weebly to Wix, Google, and other web based sites available.

**Digital Imaging**

Students will begin by organizing and taking digital images.  Picasa is a great starting point for editing, while other free editing websites will also be explored.  Adobe CS6 Bridge and PhotoShop will be introduced and the students’ images will change with their editing styles.  A composition book is used to make hard copies of their images, along with writing paragraphs to describe some photos.  iPhoto and iMovie is used to collect and demonstrate their images to the class.  This demonstration of their editing skills is enjoyed by all within the classroom while they learn new techniques from each other.  Photos have also been displayed in the hallway for all to enjoy.

**Programming**

Java is the object-oriented computer programming language used along with the integrated development environment Eclipse that the students are using this year to explore JavaScript.  The students really experience success and progress and are able to help other students with errors on their codes. Student will learn coding terms, questions, and the ability to find coding errors. The smallest of errors occur and when they are

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 4*

*Briney, continued*

found - it is a great day!  CodeAcademy will be explored to learn what Python’s language has to offer.

**Data Management 2**

A variety of apps and web-based programs are discovered.  The students create a project utilizing the app/web-site and then present and describe how they developed that project.  Students learn a variety of concepts using these app/web-sites.  Aurasma, QR

Codes, GarageBand, iBooks Author, GameMaker and Screen Cast-o-Matic are just a few items the students explore.  Students look at other apps to see what those apps will do for them, along with the importance of the reviews of the apps.

**MMJ**

This year the class is focusing on digital development and applying more effects.  The students work on quarterly project, which work on their individual talents.  The WFAL broadcasts progress throughout the year to bring out the students talents.  The broadcasts are finalized and posted on YouTube/Twitter/Facebook. Students/Teachers are informed of the broadcast posting also via school Gmail.

**Animation**

The students started the semester with history and various types of animations using spinning, drawing on paper/whiteboard, and other techniques. CS6 Flash was used to see how the animation developed using software.  Stop Animation continues to be their favorite style of animation to produce.  Animations evolved with feet, hands, Legos, toys, clay and using their bodies.  A great deal of time goes into taking the pictures, uploading, and developing the animation using iPhoto and iMovie.  Their animations were shown to the class and self-evaluation/ peer-to-peer evaluations also used.  These animations were also grouped according to sources used, and then were uploaded to YouTube so the students could show family and friends.

**Business- Trisha Purcell:**

**Career Readiness**

This class has been evolving this year into something that is truly beneficial for the students. The students work on everything from personal interest surveys to cover letters and resumes, to a brief unit on banking. The goal of this course is to broaden the minds of 9th and 10th grade students in terms of the world of work and life after high school. Since not all students attend a 4-year college, this class provides students with other options they may not have thought about. One of the most exciting additions to this class is Career Cruising. We now have all of the 9th and 10th grade students assigned a login and password. This program will allow students to search career possibilities, research colleges/universities, and the majors and minors offered at those schools, and

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 5*

*Purcell, continued*

provide the students a place to archive all the jobs, activities, and courses they take in high school. Another new addition to the Career Readiness classes are the visits to other Vocational classrooms. We discovered that many of the younger students do not know

what classes are offered in the Vocational Department. Through these visits, the students are exposed to different activities they would complete in the different classes offered.

For next year, I am really looking to streamline the 9-week class. I would like to have a topic and project for each week or 2 week time period.

**Introduction to Business**

This class has been has been planned out very well. The curriculum that has been set up is great, but the pacing has been a little slow. I anticipated being through Chapter 10 by Semester 1 Finals, but we only made it through Chapter 6. I think much of this comes from venturing outside of the textbook and really trying to make sure the students have experience with the important concepts. The students complete several projects with each chapter to give them experience outside of the reading. I am working on the pacing of the material, but since this is the first time students are dealing with these concepts, we work at a slower pace.

**Word Processing**

This class went very well first Semester. The students were able to learn and practice with Word, a little bit of Excel, and PowerPoint. The items covered during the class will help the students as they progress in high school, and even as they move forward into college. The only concern I have, and this is specific to my Computer Lab (Mini-Lab), is how outdated the software and systems are. The computers in the lab run Microsoft Office 2007. There have been many improvements and additions since the 2007 version. I would love to see this lab improved just so I can provide the students with the best hands-on experience possible.

**Data Management**

This class has just started, but it has been going very well so far. I have changed the processes of the class a bit for the semester. The students each have a chapter-by-chapter packet with different skills to master, and short projects to complete. These packets not only allow the class to work together, but to also work at their own pace. Just like with Word Processing, my big concern is the software and the computers in the lab. While they are definitely functioning, for the most part, the software and systems are just outdated. Most of the students have more updated systems outside of school, which makes using my lab a challenge and a step back for them. I would love to see this addressed in the future.

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 6*

*Purcell, continued*

**Cooperative Education**

This is the one class I have that I am anticipating the biggest change in for next year. As far as placements for students, I am looking to place students in positions that

will truly give them experience in a possible future career field. While employability skills are wonderful for students to have, that is not the only reason to take Cooperative Education. I would like to see the program evolve into a program that truly provides students with a look into a future career. As far as the classroom portion of Coop, I am

looking into purchasing new textbooks and materials for the students to use. The current textbook is outdated and not helpful or in tune with the needs of today. The textbook I would like to switch to is: ***School to Career*** – published by Goodheart-Wilcox. This new textbook focuses on more important topics for future workers, such as: Career Exploration, Career Planning, Job Satisfaction, and Managing an Income. My only concern for this class is the changing of placements. Since I am looking to transition the program away from random placements, I am worried there may be a dip in numbers for a year or two. But, I believe it will only make the Cooperative Program and class better in the long run.

**Marketing**

This class has seen the most growth this year by far. While we do read about new concepts and terms in the book, the students have been asked to put those concepts and terms in to real life situations. The students have already taken part in several large projects: Homecoming Button-Making, Veteran’s Day Button-Making, and, soon, T-Shirt Making. I love the direction this class is taking, with more hands-on activities for the students to truly understand what marketing is in the real world. I believe the students like these activities as well. Since we have added more projects and activities to the curriculum, the pacing has slowed a bit. But, I know the students’ knowledge and understanding of the material has grown through these projects. I would love to see this class grow in size in the next few years; currently there are only 9 students in Marketing.

**Home Economics- Bess Lanker:**

Home Ec is a mini class for 8th grade students. The course is only 9 weeks long.  Students learn kitchen/food safety, basic cooking and baking skills, nutrition, budgeting, laundry, hand sewing and machine sewing.  We spend one to two weeks on each unit.  We have some written assessments, mainly in the form of quizzes, but I try to keep most lessons as hands-on as possible.  The course is only an introduction to home economics practices, but will hopefully provide students with meaningful skills that can help them become independent adults.   
I am currently teaching Home Ec for the seventh time, and it has allowed me to improve and test out new lessons frequently, which has been very beneficial.  I am happy with how the class is going. I am looking into requisitioning some new equipment for next year; I would like to get a few new sewing machines and maybe a few electric burners.

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 7*

*Lanker, continued*

We only have one stove and electric burners might open up opportunities for students to learn more practical cooking skills. I have no concerns about this class and I believe it is going well.

**Home Economics- Cindy Wade:**

**Parenting**

The class was smaller but very interactive and shared many life experiences. We had many discussions on how to change the parenting style that we might be used to, or what could be done differently when raising their own children.

**Adult Living**

This is a large class with many different ideas. Good discussions occurred on the topics of finance and college. Good discussions resulted about the importance of insurance in many areas of life. Students still struggle with running a checkbook.

**Food and Nutrition**

There are two classes of Food and Nutrition this semester. There were many interruptions for testing and other activities this semester, and I was disappointed that we were unable to get farther with curriculum. Two students had celiac disease (allergic to gluten). This created a challenge for me, and yet it provided a learning experience for all. It turned out to be a wonderful experience for the entire class. New recipes and techniques were used.

**Resource Management**

Class had many students with IEP’s. Mrs. Carter was a great help with this class. Some students struggled with the curriculum, but many of those would have benefited from doing more homework. Class time was provided to start the homework, which helped improve the number of assignments that were turned in.

**Introduction to Home Ec.**

This was a great class of eager learners. Each made a pillowcase and pajama pants. This semester, we have begun learning safety and sanitation and will move into the kitchen for cooking.

**Child Development**

There are two classes this year. Students will earn their ECE Level One certificate through the State of Illinois. They will set up a preschool and teach preschoolers for 8-9 weeks. This is a very nice hands-on class.

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 8*

*Wade, continued*

**Living Environments**

This course has a large enrollment this year. We will be working on redecorating Mr. Carter’s classroom. We will also be painting Mrs. Meyer’s bathroom. Students also learn design, and work on decorating apartment bedrooms and dorm rooms. Budgeting money and use of the Internet for ideas is encouraged.

**Food Management**

This class will be working in small groups and making meals for the entire class. They will also be demonstrating a small appliance. This class takes their cooking to the next level above Food and Nutrition.

**Industrial Arts- Jason Mackinson:**

**Home Maintenance and Repair**

This year’s class was a huge success. The class was busy making several items for the school and classrooms (book shelves, benches, and cabinets). This class focuses on the different home improvements that can be found around the home. For outdoor maintenance, the class successfully refinished the gazebo in the front of the school, added some fresh mulch to the landscape and planted a few new plants around the gazebo. The class also learned how to do common wiring hook ups with lights and outlets on a framed wall. Once the students were done with the wiring, they were then introduced to drywall and how to install, tape, and finish. The class also learned how to pick out, layout, and install floor coverings. The students constructed a small ceramic tile sample layout on tile backing board. The students also made benches, tables, and bookshelves out of the old material that was salvaged from the gym renovation this past summer.

**Woods I**

This year’s class was another success. The students learned all the basics involved with cabinet making while creating their class projects. This year’s class project was a small single or a two-drawer nightstand. This project is a good introductory project that covers the many steps involved in cabinet making. Over the course of the project, students learn how to use several machine and hand tools when constructing their cabinets. Students are required to use practical math skills in constructing their projects when adding and subtracting measurements. This project has turned out to be a good one since it covers so many of the basics involved in woodworking.

**Communications**

This class is primarily made up of freshman students. In this class, students learn the basics involved with drafting. Students learned how to construct drawings using manual drafting techniques and using Computer Aided Drafting and Design software (CAD). The CAD software is now free to educational institutions and has been downloaded to all

*Vocational Annual Review*

*January 20, 2015*

*Page 9*

*Mackinson, continued*

computers in the lab. Students were taught how to create drawings using the manual drafting method and then they took those hand drawn drawings and recreated them on the CAD software. Students learned how to create and edit CAD drawings while completing a series of CAD Drawings that touched on new commands each week.

**Advanced Metals**

This year was the first year I taught welding in my Advanced Metals course. Welding is a topic that had been brought up to me several times by past and current students. I decided this to give welding a try in this class. I was able to get some supplies purchased using CTEI money to make this possible. Last summer I arranged to have a meeting with Jim Sirovatka at Alamo Group about getting scrap materials for the students to weld on. Alamo donated around 4,000 pounds of scrap to our class for welding. They also donated the metal for the small yard trailer the students made for the school that can be used around the grounds. Just before Thanksgiving break, the students took a field trip to Alamo to see all the different products they make there. They were allowed to see firsthand all the different types of welders, cutting machines, milling machines, and CNC equipment that is used to make the mowers, blades, backhoes, and tillage equipment. The students made several comments regarding the trip, and most said they didn’t have a clue what was really in those buildings. The welding unit was a huge success and I hope to be able to expand it further in the future.

This second semester the students are designing and building a piece of furniture. The students are required to develop a plan, calculate amount of materials needed, and select a type of material to be used in the construction of their project. *(It was suggested to Jason that when the projects are completed, perhaps faculty could come and view the furniture.)*

**Furniture Repair and Refinishing**

Students are working on refinishing older pieces of furniture. The students will be working on several different pieces to gain knowledge in many areas.

**Production Technology**

Students have completed their safety unit, and will be making benches and tables out of the old gym materials. The students designed a small stool last semester in CAD, and now this semester they will be making it. The class teaches students the basics of hand and machine tools and how to operate those tools safely. These benches and stools will then be sold at the home basketball games.

*(After our annual review meeting, Mr. Mackinson organized a project in two of his classes where they created over 40 stools and benches using the wood from the high school bleachers. These items were sold at the January 30, 2015 basketball game. All 40 items were sold in less than 30 minutes. The funds will be used for future industrial arts projects for the students.)*