

Raw ideas from the November 7, 2010 community workshop on Hyde Park Schools

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Public School Forum Discussion Outline

Curriculum

- a. **Testing**
 - i. Curriculum too focused on tests
 - ii. How can we use tests to guide curriculum?
 - iii. There is some value in testing but it is too high stakes
 - iv. We need to move from compartmentalized teaching (test focus) to integrated teaching (learning focus)

- b. **Community members/organizations**
 - i. These people/groups can be used to augment class time
 - ii. Master gardeners can help create school community gardens
 - iii. Community volunteers can sign up to help in classrooms or to pull out students who need extra support

- c. **Parent support**
 - i. Need to find way to model behavior for parents to support their children
 - ii. Have parents in class with their child to learn info so that they can help their child with homework
 - iii. Offer classes at HPNC to help parents

- d. **School subjects**
 - i. Are there too many subjects in school?
 - ii. Can some subjects be combined?
 - iii. Are too many subjects overwhelming to students?

Special Education and Assessment

- e. **Identifying and assessing for special needs**
 - i. Are schools required to test?
 - ii. Some insurance companies pay for evaluations
 - iii. If child is found to have special need, what does that mean?
 - iv. We need to recognize the diversity of special needs

f. **Parent/family support**

- i. Parent/sibling support groups needed
- ii. Number and type of support groups needs to be expanded in HP
- iii. Parents need help understanding the process for evaluation in schools
 - 1. Can parents request evaluation from school?
 - 2. Trainings and info sessions at HPNC
- iv. Many parents feel ashamed and afraid to label their child and therefore don't get help

g. **Community resources**

- i. Karen Williams provides trainings
- ii. We need to identify local resources and tutor referrals
- iii. Volunteers to provide professional support at IEP meetings
- iv. Use University students for support (Neighborhood Schools Program)
- v. Use technology to help students with special needs (i.e. keyboard training)

Arts

h. **Curriculum**

- i. Allow teachers to use creativity in their classrooms
- ii. Art should be integrated into the curriculum (theater and literacy/music and math/visual art and technology)
- iii. Arts within the curriculum supports multiple learning styles
 - i. Funding
 - i. Parents should contribute to the cost of arts education
 - ii. Students can do visual art projects throughout the year and school/community will host event to auction off artwork

1. **Black tie event**

- 2. Hosted at HPNC
- iii. Partner with local art groups to find funding/write grants
- iv. Use community volunteers to write grants
- j. **Community resources**
 - i. Parent led classes after school

ii. **Chicago Children's Choir**

- iii. Suzuki Institute
- iv. Hyde Park School of Dance
- v. Little Black Pearl
- vi. Columbia College
- vii. Smart Museum

- viii. Chamber of Commerce
- ix. Museum of Science & Industry
- x. Hyde Park Art Center
- xi. University of Chicago
- k. Activism
 - i. Build public support for arts education
 - ii. Communicate position on arts programming to people in power (locally)
 - iii. Find principals willing to rethink curriculum development

Recess, Physical Education, and Wellness

- l. **Recess**
 - i. SO IMPORTANT
 - ii. Treat recess as a right not a privilege (problem is that teachers may need to take away recess as a punishment)
 - iii. Recess time includes transitions
 - 1. Kids end up losing out because it takes too long to line up and get to recess destination
 - iv. LSC can allocate more time to recess
 - v. Plan activities for bad weather days so kids don't lose out on recess
- m. **P.E.**
 - i. School gyms are not only used for P.E.- not enough space to have P.E. daily
 - 1. Use HPNC for P.E.
 - a. Students can walk over from schools
 - 2. City may help fund space sharing for gym use
 - ii. Use NSP to facilitate P.E. classes if no gym teacher on staff
- n. **Wellness**
 - i. Have physical activities in classroom
 - 1. Stretching at desks
 - 2. Use local yoga teachers
 - 3. Push-up/sit-up contests
 - 4. Class/school wide wellness challenge

Science & Technology

- o. Community Resources
 - i. Community committee to promote technology programs in schools
 - 1. Help with fundraising
 - 2. Train parents/teachers in new technology

- ii. University of Chicago
- 1. Student volunteers
- 2. Funding
- p. Technology in the schools
 - i. Students should be proficient at typing and Microsoft Office before entering high school
 - ii. Offer computer music class for elementary age
 - iii. Increase awareness of Green Technology
 - iv. There shouldn't be too much focus on technology

Funding & Fundraising

- q. Think Outside the box
 - i. School gardens- produce used in lunchroom
 - ii. Collect juice pouches and plastic bags to be recycled- collect money (?)
- r. Grant writing
 - i. Grant writing volunteer at each school
 - ii. Grant writing committee to write grants and distribute among local schools
 - iii. Establish a grant fund
 - iv. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- s. Other Fundraising ideas
 - i. Alumni list and membership
 - ii. Follow private school model of fundraising
 - iii. Solicit local businesses
 - iv. Hold art show with student work to be auctioned
 - v. School carnival