

Strategic Planning Meeting

Thursday, September 22, 2016

Rooms 170-172, 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.



Guiding Questions:

1. What is rigor? What does rigor in Scarsdale look like?
2. What is wellness, or attending to the “whole child”?
3. What is the relationship between the two, if any?

The last time we met as a District-wide Leadership Team, we reaffirmed that any version of a Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow 2.0, would prominently feature *wellness* and *education of the whole child*. Among others, these elements complement our continuing belief of offering a classic education that is taught in a progressive fashion.

It is also a given here that students, parents, and faculty recognize the high level of rigor associated with a Scarsdale education. For some students, this intensity is motivating and fosters high quality work and performance. For others, a Scarsdale education causes unhealthy stress levels, or other abnormal physical and psychological symptoms.

Lately, our teachers, parents, and students are reporting concerns about the *balance* between academic rigor and wellness, often representing these as poles on a continuum. We wonder whether viewing these elements as dichotomies is truly warranted.

To address this issue, please discuss the assumptions at the heart of this dilemma.

[Discuss by grade alike, table groups. Record your thoughts.....]

#1 We often speak about academic rigor, but what do we mean by rigor? Do we have a shared definition of rigor?

[Group debrief....]

[Discuss by grade alike, table groups. Record your thoughts.....]

#2 Given reports of elevated stress, anxiety, and depression in our student body, some have asked:

- How do academic rigor and student wellness interact here? Ideally, how should they interact?
- What changes need to be made, if any, to achieve this goal?

Task:

Create a graphic that appropriately depicts the relationship between rigor, wellness and any other inter-related elements that you might have discussed. Additionally, please brainstorm ideas about how to achieve this more balanced approach. Please make sure that your graphic does not require verbal explanation.

Resources:

Teens feeling stressed, and many not managing it well

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/02/11/stress-teens-psychological/5266739/>

NYU study on stress at high performing private high schools

<http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2015/august/nyu-study-examines-top-high-school-students-stress-and-coping-mechanisms.html>

Can stress help students?

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/can-stress-help-students-renee-jain>

The non-negotiables of academic rigor

<https://drive.google.com/a/scarsdaleschools.org/file/d/0B3EvX7w6i1MtREVYUDNmaEZjVGc/view>

What exactly do “fewer, clearer, and higher standards” really look like in the classroom? Using a cognitive rigor matrix to analyze curriculum, plan lessons, and implement assessments

<https://drive.google.com/a/scarsdaleschools.org/file/d/0B3EvX7w6i1MtWHBscm83MGU1dmc/view?usp=sharing>