

School Council Meeting
November 18, 2021

Meeting commenced at 4:30 pm

1) Welcome and Introductions, new members

2) School Improvement Plan

Goal 2

- The plan was for academic remediation but it was found that most of the issues were social and emotional; the academics are in place.
- We were able to have a back-to-school event in person; the plan was to keep the parent-teacher conferences remote. This will continue, especially with the number of current covid cases.
- The PA has had little improvement in attendance and participation. They're trying to come up with ways to bring people together. One idea is an SSCPS movie event over the holiday break.
- There is hesitation with participating in in-person events due to the increased amount of positive cases.
- Angie is wondering how high school students are feeling right now about the covid situation.
- Jordan said that there is concern about COVID; Aditi agreed.

Goal 3

- In terms of school culture, one thing that the school needs to wrap up is finding a new social emotional curriculum. First grade teacher June Fontaine is involved with SEL curriculum through the DESE and is researching to bring some possibilities to the table.
- Some of the goals include:
 - Restorative justice
 - We are seeing, and have concerns about
 - Student behavior
 - Student stamina
 - Students struggling with in-person relationships
 - Older students addicted to their phones
 - Etc.

Council Comments:

- There is a huge uptick in student behavior issues, particularly at the high school.
- There is a rise in bias-based conflict; this is also on the rise in the state and the country.
- MARC from Bridgewater University has a program to help with this, Angie has put in a request to pilot the program
- There are challenges with welcoming new families to the school due to covid restrictions and lack of events.

- What do we use to replace in-the-building relationships between families?
- Writing is an issue across the board
- Rowena would like to see some things brought back to the high school, like morning meetings with student-led announcements; Jaguar Games, etc. that have worked in the past to improve both behavior and relationships
- Joe Kay has had sessions on respect, addiction to cell phones etc.; this is a good thing to continue.
- Ray has been doing crafts with the students during advisory. The students say they feel they're just drifting through the day. She feels we need to increase the social emotional treatments to help the students; she feels the problems have increased dramatically.
- Marco loved the sports and how they were able to help make relationships between students, and with faculty better.
- In the lower grades, relationships can be improved. Liz said that the all-level field trips have stopped, which eliminates an opportunity for relationships to grow.
- Reegan said 5th graders were able to do the pumpkin carving and were behaving and excited, even with assigned partners. More of this type of opportunity for other groups of students would be beneficial.
- Rowena asked if Craft Day before the Christmas break would be happening this year.
- Angie is working on bringing back craft day, although it would probably be with some restrictions.
- She said that arts and crafts seem to be a good way to go; students really enjoy them.
- Alisha suggested larger group projects as well as individual projects.
- Jordan said the high school was going to start doing Mindfulness Mondays, with coloring sheets and relaxing music. This could be done in any grade.
- Angie asked if anyone would be interested in morning yoga.
- Rowena is doing a Mindful Movement workshop at the high school and they could help out. They are currently working with Kassandra's kindergarteners on Tuesdays, playing games. Her workshop is available to help out in other ways.
- Angie agreed that using workshops to help in other levels is good. We have three trained yoga teachers on staff.
- Aditi and Jordan can ask around to see if high school students are interested in being involved in such things.
- There is currently no winter concert planned due to close contact with no masks; she believes something can be done in the spring since it could be done outdoors.
- Liz thought maybe a live zoom could be done by classroom for a winter concert.
- New music teacher Paul Barrett is working on a plan to get families involved in music this year.
- We do have literacy night on the calendar; Angie is talking to Kristen Gale about planning this, using small groups. Literacy nights have historically been very popular and can be done in such a way that could avoid too much close contact.

- Rowena asked about International Food Night; Angie isn't sure this is possible, though holding an event outdoors is a possibility
 - It's clear there's a sense of loss with having so many events not being done; it would be a great way to bring back a sense of involvement and fun that's been missing during covid.
 - The African Diaspora nights we've had have been very well attended. It's probably doable if people can, masked, be spread out more.
 - Welcoming new families; this is a hard year to be a new family. Ann pointed out that it's hard to even know who's in a child's class. She mentioned that family directories and class lists aren't available but they would help.
 - Angie said that many families have opted out of directories and sharing their information. Rowena would like to see those come back.
 - Liz said that many families would not want to share phone numbers and addresses with so many strangers; we're a big school now. Sharing phone numbers is much different from sharing email addresses.
 - Having birthday parties began to be a problem due to outbreaks of covid after having them.
 - Matt and Angie talked with trauma specialists about what kids are experiencing as a result of the trauma of the past year and a half.
 - Trauma-centered practices training for teachers should be helpful. We will have printed resources.
 - Marco said the fatigue level in his students is intense. He doesn't know if it's due to staying up too late, issues at home, working, addiction to their phones, medications. They literally fall asleep in school. He suggested taking walks to help wake students up although that will be more difficult as the cold weather arrives. Well-ventilated spaces are helpful for keeping students awake.
 - Ray said the three blocks at the end of the day are really difficult for the students. Fidget toys have helped some, but students are complaining much more that they have headaches and want to go to the nurse. She feels they are overwhelmed and tired.
 - For next meeting, December 9th, we need to start thinking about goals for the School Improvement Plan. What are the goals we would like to see, what changes we would like to see. Changes to schedules, events to plan, etc.
 - Rowena would like to hear about other schools and what their ideas have been that have worked for them, so we can possibly adopt some of them. Coming out of covid is expected to be a long process that will continue.
- Angie will share the "Brainstorm List" which she will share.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15

Attendees:

Rowena Samuels

Reegan Whipple

Angie Pepin

Jordan Alexandre

Aditi Suryawanshi

Marco Pedulli

Anne

Alisha Uhlenbrock

Liz Sweeney

Ann Mantil

Ray Ciambriello