

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 21, 2020

5:30 PM

Physical Location: None

Virtual Location:

Topic: Education Committee
Time: May 21, 2020 05:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88334030192?pwd=NDIPZDE4ZnR5VFNBTVhXemNEMi9qQT09>

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One tap mobile
+16465588656,,88334030192#,,1#,758766# US (New York)

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Minutes

Committee Members:

Richard Dunning, Niki McGettigan (Chair), Linda Quintanilha, Stephen Ullman and Jerome Wilson

Present: Niki McGettigan, Dick Dunning, Jerry Wilson, Linda Quintanilha, Stephen Ullman, Kevin Pobst, Katherine Heck, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Dr. Ann Forrest, Anne O'Bryant, Jim Elder, Lexy Heatley, Kat Foecking, Tim Conway

5:30 Approval of May 7, 2020 Minutes

Dick Dunning moved to approve the minutes of May 7, 2020. Jerry Wilson second. Katherine Heck abstained. All others in favor. Motion carried.

5:35 Quick Review of Relevant Educational Terms and Acronyms

Niki McGettigan thanked Stephen Ullman for continually asking what specific acronyms mean as he hears them at meetings.

Dr. Ann Forrest shared a list titled "Relevant Educational Terms and Acronyms" and spoke about them briefly.

5:45 Update on recommendations proposed last year by the middle school inquiry groups, including:

- Document, communicate, and adopt a ConVal Middle School model that will guide the decision-making process
- Establish a shared, clear focus and purpose for advisory
- Develop curriculum for advisory
- Focus on Habits of Work and Executive Functioning
- Continue to move toward competencies and a shared understanding of what that mean

Dr. Forrest shared a PowerPoint titled “Recommendations from the Middle School Inquiry Groups”. Middle school groups were developed to look more deeply at specific topics and make recommendations. One group felt that it was important to document, communicate, and adopt a ConVal Middle School model that will guide the decision-making process. This involved focusing on three big ideas i.e. Creating an environment in which students feel safe to try new things. An environment in which they feel supported by both the staff and their peers. Build relationships – student to student relationships, student to community relationships.

Another recommendation was to Establish a shared, clear focus and purpose for advisory. Advisory is a “critical component of middle school because it connects a teacher (the advisor), with a group of students to provide academic and social/emotional support, and to strengthen the community in their school.

Developing a curriculum for advisory was the third goal. Advisory curriculum needs to prioritize strengthening community, building relationships, and enhancing students’ executive functioning and 21st Century Skills (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity).

The fourth recommendation was to “Continue to move toward competencies by continuing to build a shared understanding of what that means”.

6:05 Middle School Schedules

- Schedules for the 2020-2021 school year address previous differences in the distribution of instructional
- Next Steps

Ann Forrest recapped that at the last Education Committee meeting, both middle schools shared the significant differences that have been addressed. Concern was raised about the rotating schedule at South Meadow School and the impact that it might have on some of our students. Based on initial review, it was found that it did not support the concern that was raised. Ann said that this is an appropriate time to look at additional research on schedules. What schedule would best support what we want our middle school experience to look like?

Stephen Ullman said that building staff to staff relationships is critical. Discussion took place about the specificity in learning.

Katherine Heck asked for confirmation that researching the rotating schedule will take place. Dr. Forrest said that researching which type of schedule works best for middle school students will be researched.

Niki McGettigan spoke about the flexibility in scheduling which allowed for the same amount of instructional time for students in both schools.

Katherine Heck shared her personal experience for her children in favor of the rotating schedule. It allowed a subject to be fresh on any given day rather than taking place at the same time every day.

Niki McGettigan said that the hope is to go into greater depth in the next year.

6:20 Other

- Update on Edith Bird Bass Essay Contest

Niki McGettigan reported having received the essays. She has solicited readers to review the essays. Kevin Pobst and Katherine Heck have volunteered to read. Niki reported that there are 17 submissions.

- Review the focus for the June 4, 2020 agenda.

Ann Forrest said that the one thing that must come back to the Education Committee is the multi-age work that Frankestown Elementary School has been engaged in.

Jerry Wilson asked about Kindergarten registrations. Kat Foecking said that there are no screenings at this time. Paperwork is going through the SAU. Families are being asked to set up times and to fill out the necessary paperwork.

Linda Quintanilha asked if an incoming kindergarten student is suspected as having a disability, does the district give the family paperwork for MDS. Ann Forrest said that if people are interested in learning more on this topic she would invite Cari Christian-Coates to this meeting to share information.

Katherine Heck asked about important work under *ConVal 2025* and other work taking place on equity in the schools, such as the work in the Social Studies Department and also the Culture Committee. She asked if that work is driven by the building administrator or the SAU. Ann said that the Social Studies work was driven out of a school board goal, out of her office. Cari Christian-Coates has taken over the District ConVal 2025 that supports building level groups. There is a connection. This work continues.

6:30 Adjourn

Dick Dunning motioned to adjourn at 6:16 p.m. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok