

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee

January 20, 2021 Meeting - 6:00 PM - via Google Meets at meet.google.com/ycx-wxrs-djw
Spanish Translation Line for Meeting: Please call: +1 337-340-3537 PIN: 294 705 646#

- I. Welcome (5 minutes)
- II. Sub-Committee Reports
 - A. Bullying (London - 2 minutes)
 1. Did not meet in January due to Winter Break
 2. Will meet February 2nd with the PBIS committee. Will be working on a bullying curriculum, looking for one that spans from K-12th grade. Reminder email went out yesterday so that everyone is still looking and will be ready to discuss at the next meeting. Once a decision is made the committee will present to the Board.
 - B. MTSS (Hawkins - 2 minutes)
 1. Did not meet in January due to Winter Break
 2. MTSS team worked really hard on and will continue to work on SEL framework to combine district resources into one framework. Staff can access Calm Classroom, PBIS and other resources related to diversity, inclusion and cultural competency.
 3. PBIS coaches meeting on Monday, will start ramping up PBIS and preparing for the return to in person learning. Trying to do a virtual PBIS celebration district-wide so Ryan's tasked everyone with thinking about what that would look like and the different options.
 - C. Behavior and Discipline (Hillary - 5 minutes)
 1. There was a meeting this past Thursday.
 2. Tasha: Discussed appearance policy, mask policy and how to spread that information at the meeting Thursday.
- III. Attendance (5 minutes)
 - A. [Link](#)
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Recommend communication protocols for students returning to school regarding new dress code and mask mandate. (25 minutes)
 - B. Eric has a starting point for the student appearance reminder. Can decide whether it would be better to vote now or at a later date. The new policy came out last Spring and parents were informed at that time but we want to make sure that message is renewed since they've been out of the buildings for so long.
 1. Notification of the new policy must be re-shared with parents in many ways.
 2. School principals review the policy and share with staff members.

3. All staff members receive training on body positive language. Dr. Hillary would like to help with this and make sure the language emphasizes the shift away from punitive measures and toward honoring students. She feels that language and rationale should be front and center. Pat LaScola suggests respecting instead of honoring. Dr. Hillary is good with that, just wants the language as positive as possible.
4. Margot would like a link to the new policy, Eric's shared the link in the chat. <https://intra.wps60.org/GetFile/BoardPolicy/6041>
5. Brandon Ewing would like to see the link to the policy or a reference to where it can be found in the handbook in communications with parents.
6. Lucy Leguizamo has heard from FACE that they're planning on doing an informational video on the student appearance policy as well, would be good to work with them.
7. Dr. Hillary would like to take out rules and add expectations. It's more in line with the spirit of the new policy focused on respect. Mrs. Leguizamo would like to think about expanding those language shifts to the classrooms and school buildings. We will be working on training staff on these topics. Could also do a Facebook Live with Nick that's totally focused on student policy, Dr. Hillary says, that would allow us to set the stage and put everybody in the right space to continue on. (Dr. Hillary is willing to reach out to Nick on that).
8. Margot would like to also focus on consistency with messaging, Dr. Hillary is on top of it.
9. Tejuana Moore is wondering if there's a list available of "dos and don'ts" of body positive language. Tasha will check to see if she has something like that. Ms. Moore thinks a list would be helpful for consistency. Dr. Hillary notes that a lot of the language is in the policy so based on the policy we could probably create a list for staff and parents. The bullying committee will look into it and Dr. Hillary will help.
10. Ta-Nika McGee on #3 and #4, are there conversations framed around body positive language and avoiding shame for dress code as it pertains to people associating certain dress with certain genders. She's been to professional development on the topic and has seen how important it is to students to have the opportunity to identify themselves through those options. Wants to make sure we're giving staff, students and parents alike the knowledge for how to handle situations they don't know about. Paul Hengels thinks gender respectful instead of gender neutral and Eric and Ta-Nika agree. Paul also thinks we might reach out to the counseling department to have them talk about how we can do the training, especially with safety personnel. It would be good to have teachers and safety staff getting the same training with the same information since security guards are often the first to see or address students' appearance. Ta-Nika also wonders if safety should even be having conversations with students about their appearance since they're usually interacting with

students in front of everyone. There is no private space in the entryway to the building. Dr. Hillary reminds us that based on the new policy, if the conversation *has to* happen, it needs to be in a private place not in front of other students. Dr. Hillary, Tasha and Ryan will be working together to make sure that all staff in all areas are getting the training and tools they need.

11. Ta-Nika also suggests having those training sessions recorded (and translated) for future use and to keep with the consistency.
12. Dr. Hillary will clean up some of the language and add where necessary.

C. Mask Mandate Compliance in Schools

1. This committee has a little less control in the mask mandate policy but Eric would like to have some recommendations to pass up to the Superintendent or committee making this decision. Margot, Eric and Katie met and then Dr. Hillary, Tasha, Ryan and Eric met and these are some starting points based on those discussions.

2. Number 1: That the Board of Education updates the student appearance policy to include masks per state mandate.

Margot: I was the one screaming and yelling about that but I withdraw my complaints because I found that the policy already says “except as a bona fide religious observance or verified health reason”. Dr. Hillary believes there is already a group of amendments related directly to this pandemic so we wouldn’t need to rewrite the actual policy. Brandon Ewing would recommend it be an amendment and not an actual policy change. It took us two years to pass this policy so if it’s possible to just include this in a mandate I would recommend that. John Samuelian totally agrees with Mr. Ewing, the first executive order signed today was for a federal mask mandate so it just shows the importance of the issue. Our president is taking it seriously and we need to as well.

3. Number 2: An adequate supply of masks to be made available in each building and classroom without question or comment.

Ta-Nika would like to add language about vendors and other visitors to the building because they could need masks as well. Reminder from Tasha that there is signage as well to make sure visitors know. Debbie Vladesov would like to request the language be changed to “**good** paper products” because the ones we have don’t work well. The issue was brought up to Mr. Moten and is being addressed. Mr. Ewing reminds us that a lot of those products are on contracts combined with other schools or the state of Illinois so can’t necessarily be changed but would look in to supplying additional supplies. The district will provide adequate cleaning supplies. Dr. Hillary recommends having this conversation with Dr. Bublitz for the specific concerns Ms. Vladesov is requesting for her specific student population above and beyond what’s normally provided.

Paul feels it’s incongruent to say that supply kits are at staff discretion but masks freely, are the supply kits separate from the masks? Yes, they are,

this slide was just an example. Paul wants to know if they're getting a separate cleaning kit, Eric does not know.

Margot has spoken to some admin and they don't know who is ordering what. Who is ordering face shields, who is ordering different supplies, that needs to be communicated to those administrators. Eric and Dr. Hillary agree and that will go through Mr. Moten.

Janet Ritter wants to be cognizant of the fact that it's not just classroom safety, it should be throughout the building such as in the nurse's office, social worker's office, etc. It's all of those areas students gather. She says counselors, social workers and psychologists are very concerned about the groups they often have in their offices. There needs to be consideration of that. Eric's hope is that principals will make arrangements for that but it does not in any way relate to this committee or their recommendations on mask policy. Janet wants to know if it's the expectation that teachers are giving out masks to students. Eric is expecting that any staff member who sees a student without a mask give them one immediately and without question. That's why it's so important to have an adequate and even over abundant supply of masks. Debbie V wants to know everyone's response to the fact that her principal told her they're supposed to switch the kids masks to a new one when they get off the bus. A reminder from Eric and Tasha that a discussion that specific is more appropriately had with the principal or department head. Dr. Hillary agrees and points out that it should be brought to Creatia's attention. Debbie says she already did and repeats her concerns then adds a few personal details. Eric doesn't have exact answers because that's not his area. Debbie points out that Dr. Bublitz doesn't answer his emails, so she believes Eric and other higher ups should address it.

4. Number 3: Parents given resources to help educate their children and practice.
5. Number 4: Teachers given resources and training for sharing mask compliance expectations with students and ways to re-teach. Remote class time prior to in person instruction where students can practice wearing masks.

Dr. Hillary points out that the Lake County Health Department has a lot of resources available on these topics already. Janet Ritter adds that there are also specific organizations with information specific to persons with certain disabilities and would like to make those available as well.

Kim Rodriguez wants to know what happens for low incidence students who need help transferring in and out of wheelchairs who can't wear masks and can't keep a 6 foot distance because they need to be moved. Eric has a document from Illinois Department of Health regarding face shield alternatives for students that can't wear masks. It says that staff should wear appropriate PPE but that students can't be refused an in-person education based on an inability to wear their own PPE. Kim

says some of the problem is that you don't have the ability to stay far away from students who are very young and have specific needs. Eric says that's why we want health plans in place before the students arrive. Janet says the district nurses return to school committee has been reviewing these documents and planning based on those, there are ongoing discussions regarding this. Jeremy says those are some of the conversations that are continuing to be had by administration but we need to remember that a lot of these plans have to be individualized. Also, there's a reference to a health plan in number 5 and these details will likely be included in section 504 or IEP meetings. Margot thinks we need to do a lot of IEPs prior to these students entering the building. She notices that a lot of the highest need students at the pre-k level will be the first back and it's unlikely they'll have enough time to hold an IEP before returning. Eric had a discussion with Dr. Bublitz about doing a separate push to make sure we know what those parents are planning on doing as far as at home or hybrid learning going forward. Ta-Nika adds that some of the concerns teachers are having were addressed in the meeting last night. The presentation is available and there will also be a video of the presentation available. They've been answering staff questions on the spot at these meetings so she encourages everyone to attend and ask or at least watch the presentation. Debbie wants to know what is she supposed to do in the event that parents self medicate if they have to work or leave their children at school and say I can't get there yet. It's happened to her many years in a row and that was pre-covid, what is she going to do if it's a situation where a sick child is in the classroom. She is posing questions because she says she is the most dedicated teacher anyone can imagine. Eric believes that a sick child will be a part of the health station that will be at each school. Debbie wants to know if there will only be one nurse and one custodian in the building. Tasha notes that the operations department has added custodians. She adds that these questions will be best answered at the presentation tomorrow. Nelson wants to add, from the principal's perspective, every school has worked with operations to get plexiglass and small group instruction tables where necessary including nurse's office, social work office etc. The principals are working on detailed hybrid plans that will be shared with staff. Janet says each building is supposed to have a designated space with a separate area outside so that whoever's monitoring isn't exposed to all of the kids, each school is different but the nurses have reviewed concerns and you wouldn't be the one sitting with a child who is sick or symptomatic with the plans we have. Debbie wants to know but what about other students or staff members that have been exposed to that student? Her kids are pre-k and they can't keep their masks on all the time. Eric does know that Dr. Bublitz talked about other services being received electronically (OT, PT, etc) but contact tracing will be in effect

and if that happens it has to be documented. Debbie wants to know what about the older brothers and sisters who are out there working in the community and could be transferring it to their siblings. Eric doesn't know the exact protocols right now.

6. Number 5: Students that cannot wear a mask will need to constantly remain at a 6 foot distance even with alternate PPE in place. Do we want to do a health plan for each of those students?
7. Number 6: Students should be given every opportunity to learn how to correctly wear a mask.

Dr. Hillary says the progressive discipline part of the handbook is clear about giving students opportunities to learn. We have to change the mindset and believe that students will wear masks if they're given the opportunity to do so and understand the need for it. She does not think it's a good idea to assign punishments or consequences or sending students back to remote learning as a "punishment." She thinks there's never enough teaching, reteaching and modeling. Students respond strongly to modeling and our staff will be doing that. That needs to be framed at the school level and we need to take that responsibility on collectively because removing students from school shouldn't be an option. Margot understands the need to be supportive and patient but thinks that people are terrified of Covid. She also thinks teachers are responsible for both themselves and the other students in their classroom so our teachers can't afford to be patient or need to be patient. A paraprofessional was handing out materials three weeks ago and is not dead from Covid, she doesn't think it's fair to expect them to be patient. Dr. Hillary does not want the burden solely and squarely on the shoulders on the students because we all know that there are adults everywhere and even right here in our district that aren't doing everything they should be. If an adult feels emboldened to ignore a mandate, how can we expect students to do it? Margot says if an adult doesn't follow the rules they will be subject to discipline.

Ta-Nika thinks it needs to be added that teachers should understand when they need to bring in additional support. If a teacher is having issues with a student repeatedly not complying they need to be trained and know when to call to have someone assist them. That could mean speaking to that student privately and having the teachable moment then. She doesn't want us to have situations where teachers aren't feeling supported but also doesn't want punitive results towards students.

Timothy understands that we're moving away from zero tolerance but reminds everyone that we're talking about teachers' lives, not theories, actual lives. When we hear the admin saying we don't have answers, we've dealt with that for a long time now and the teachers union members are now very concerned about how much this will be enforced and how much their safety will be considered. John is always for what is best for

the students, the reality is that there have been over 400,000 deaths in this country. He thinks we need to consider the student's ages in these considerations. Middle and high school students should be able to understand that they make a choice to wear their mask or they make a choice to learn remotely. Anthony McIntyre is thinking about this from a slightly different angle. There's an element of emotion here because it's people's lives but fairness is very important. No one is here to protect the rights of the students. If staff members were to do the wrong things with their masks, will they be disciplined? We're talking about teachers' lives but we're talking about student's lives as well. Who is enforcing the rules for staff members? Just something to consider. If we're understanding of the adults then we need to be understanding of the students as well. Eric believes that progressive discipline for staff has been discussed but hasn't seen exact steps. John Samuelian agrees completely, there should not be a double standard. The disease affects everyone, everyone has to follow the policy. Mr. Campos agrees with Mr. McIntyre and believes that if we focus on training our students, providing necessary resources to them and given necessary tools, training and guidance for staff and students he believes in progressive discipline but if we provide the resources and do our best it won't be needed or will only be needed as a very last resort.

8. Number 7: Teachers should receive training on de-escalation to utilize when the mask becomes a challenge.
9. Number 8: School admin should work with parents or students who refuse to wear a mask.
10. Number 9:

Dr. Hillary says this definitely needs to be cleaned up because it contradicts what is in the handbook.

Ta-Nika wants to add that we should let parents know to contact the district if they are in need of masks.

Margot would like the training to be available before we move to in-person learning. She would like the students to have opportunities to practice before coming into the building because there are lives at stake.

Debbie wants to know how we're going to help students who can't afford masks so it's not just the school helping them all the time. Eric adds that the district's plan is to provide masks to every student and staff member in the building. Christina Musika is curious about how portion 9 violates the student handbook and other policies but we haven't been told which parts. Prior to voting, would it be possible for members of the committee to have something in writing about which policy or part of the handbook number 9 violates? Eric says we can pull the relevant policies and handbook sections together, Jeremy has some of that as well. Christina says whatever rationale being used to say that # 9 is inappropriate should

be made very clear for all the members to see and research if they like. Eric will get that out.

Should we vote on this at the February meeting or have a sooner meeting? Margot believes we should reconvene in 2 weeks. Christina would like the information requested well before voting. Eric will have it written up and available for a week before voting. Christina would like to list both the existing and proposed language side by side. Yes, this version will be available as part of the meeting documents and then we'll have the updated version. If the changes don't reflect your recommendations you could write an amendment. Margot reminds everyone about the requirements, and would like people to know what's required before being able to vote.

V. New Business

A. Proposal to amend by-laws regarding Open Meetings training and voting requirements. (15 minutes)

1. Bylaws say we're subject to the open meetings act but legal says we're not. Encouraged to but not required.
2. In membership it says you have to complete training to vote. Another section says you have to be at the meeting prior to vote and another section says you have to turn in open meetings training completion but Eric would like to eliminate that requirement.
3. Eric will send out recommendations to everyone and if anyone has ideas of changes or suggestions to update the bylaws please let him know. It's not up for action yet. Margot would like to get that information/ link to people before the next meeting so they can do it if they want to. Timothy wants to know who to send certificate of completion to. (Eric). Nelson wants to clarify who can vote. As it currently stands, those who have attended one full meeting, sent a written request to join the committee and have completed the open meetings act training.
4. Want to add their name to the record officially: None.
5. Mr. Blanks has an update on some previous business from past meetings. He used to update everyone on the grievance with the US department of education with black abolition movement for the mind (BAMM). This was filed during the tenure of the previous superintendent. On December 20th he had a conversation with the US Dept of Education regarding suspensions and expulsions and their proportionality. The primary thing that prompted us to file the complaint was the high rate and degree of inappropriate touching and sexual misconduct taking place on students at the time. The update is that particular aspect of the complaint (which we were most concerned about) according to the US Department of Education that aspect is still an open and ongoing investigation. We

also had Susan Malter, esq. who was involved with the last discipline committee and I haven't heard from her during the meetings this year. I know she was very involved with crafting the language for some of our policies now, wondering if she's still around and involved? Dr. Hillary says Susan was removed from the committee as were many other committee members. Margot says it was the superintendent. Dr. Hillary says just as she was removed as chair by the superintendent, Susan was removed from the committee by the superintendent. Eric would be happy to speak with Mr. Blanks more about it as well. He emailed his certification to both Dr. Hillary and Eric.

6. Timothy shared training information in the chat.
7. Christina Musika has never seen the complaint mentioned in this meeting and wants to know if those documents can be made available to everyone in the committee. Eric can make that a future discussion/ presentation. Christina would like to have the documents to peruse on her own. Eric will look into it and present whatever can legally be presented.
8. Lucy wants us to focus on obtaining more parent involvement. We've been district personnel heavy and not really hearing anything from parents. She'd really like to see what we can do to invite more parents. Eric will review the ways we communicate meetings details with parents.