

**WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS
MEETING MINUTES**

April 5, 2021

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Safe and Healthy Schools Committee was called to order at 2:04 P.M., via Zoom.

1.02 Roll Call

Vice-Chair Misty Vaughan Allen, and Members Amber Joiner, Natalie Sanchez, Jim Nadeau, Darin Balaam, Charlene Bybee, Coretta Patterson, Jeffrey Frame, Lorraine Benuto, Jessica Goicoecha-Parise, and Ivy Batmale were present at roll call. Chair Scott Benton, and members Leanne McCulley, and Alice LeDesma were absent. Dr. Paul LaMarca, Committee Staff Liaison and Superintendent, Dr. Kristen McNeill, were also present. Member Marcie Burke resigned prior to the meeting.

1.03 PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment provided.

1.04 INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSION MEMBERS

Dr. Paul LaMarca welcomed and introduced new commissioner members, Jessica Goicoecha-Parise who is with Washoe County Human Services Agency and Ivy Batmale who is the student representative from Incline Village.

Commissioner Goicoecha-Parise expressed her excitement to join the commission and let everyone know that she is a marriage and family therapist and has worked in early childhood trauma for the past 15 years. Previously was a director for a trauma informed private school, specific for children who had PTSD diagnosis. She is also a parent to a second-grade student in the District.

Student Representative, Ivy Batmale let the commission know she is a sophomore at Incline High School. For the past two years she has served on the Student Advisory Council. She stated she is passionate about the District and brings a unique experience as she was diagnosed with leukemia at age 5 and was in a wheelchair for a longtime that provided her the experience to ensuring there was equal access for everyone. She

said she was excited to share her experiences especially now with the pandemic and trying to navigate high school.

Vice-Chair Vaughan Allen welcomed Ivy and said the commission has really missed the student voice and cherish what she brings to the table.

1.05 ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA

On motion by Lorraine Benurto, second by Jim Nadeau, the Safe and Healthy Schools Committee approved the agenda as presented. (Yea: Misty Vaughan Allen, Amber Joiner, Natalie Sanchez, Jim Nadeau, Darin Balaam, Charlene Bybee, Coretta Patterson, Jeffrey Frame, Lorraine Benuto, Jessica Goicoechea-Parise, and Ivy Batmale,) Final Resolution: Motion Carries 11-0

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, PRESENTATION AND/OR ACTION

2.01 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 1, 2021 MEETING OF THE SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS COMMISSION

On motion by Jim Nadeau, second by Darin Balaam, the Safe and Healthy Schools Committee approved the agenda as presented (Yea: Misty Vaughan Allen, Amber Joiner, Natalie Sanchez, Jim Nadeau, Darin Balaam, Charlene Bybee, Coretta Patterson, Jeffrey Frame, Lorraine Benuto, Jessica Goicoechea-Parise, and Ivy Batmale) Final Resolution: Motion Carries 11-0

2.02 RECOGNITION OF WCSD STAFF AND THEIR EFFORTS IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS, STAFF, AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE THROUGHOUT THE DURATION OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Staff Liaison Dr. Paul Lamarca read a statement to recognize the tireless efforts of District employees who paved the way to the District's ongoing success, Roy Anderson, Emergency Manager and Leslie Allfree, CPR, AED Trainer. Dr. LaMarca said Mr. Anderson has been instrumental in the District's ability to secure PPE, he is the liaison to both regional and state emergency response operations. Dr. LaMarca continued about Mr. Anderson's work when confronted with fires, covid and antigen testing, and instrumental in implementing vaccination pods which have been highly successful.

Dr. LaMarca said Ms. Allfree has worked side by side with Mr. Anderson through all these efforts and her leadership and work was instrumental in researching the best PPE gear to purchase for distribution and training for proper use of the equipment. She has trained staff and been "boots on the ground" for all testing events and vaccination events. She has been the go-to person when things need to get done.

Dr. LaMarca continued that Mr. Anderson and Ms. Allfree have gone above and beyond and have not heard either of them raise doubt or ask for acknowledgment. They have been the first to volunteer, have been consistently kind and calm while working to keep our community safe.

Superintendent, Dr. Kristen McNeill thanked them for their efforts as the District is one of the few to remain open for in person learning during the pandemic. 8,000 people have kept the District going with the best interest of our students and families in mind. Superintendent Dr. McNeill joked about Mr. Anderson being the “podfather” and said Mr. Anderson and Ms. Allfree have been angels with wings and that Ms. Allfree is a beautiful person inside and out. Superintendent Dr. McNeill also thanked Counseling and Human Resources department with everything they have been able to do.

Vice Chair Vaughan Allen thanked Superintendent Dr. McNeill and Dr. LaMarca for keeping everyone informed in this very difficult process with grace, thoughtfulness, and kindness. Vice Chair Vaughan Allen opened item for comments.

Jennifer Crane, Assistant Director from Student Health Services commented that Ms. Allfree has been instrumental in her department with helping to get masks, training, and has been an asset and appreciates that she is being recognized. Victor Sherbondy, Executive Director Strategies Department said he has been very impressed with Ms. Allfree and happy more people see her brilliance. He said she has risen to the challenge and has done a lot of work for re-opening efforts and more recently helping to get over 1,000 football players and coaches tested.

Commissioner Bybee thanked them both for all the behind the scenes work they have done to get schools open safely when other Districts across the country have not and still are not open. The work to have in-person learning is truly amazing and appreciated.

Chief Trevino thanked Mr. Anderson and Mike Parry, School Safety Specialist for pulling together and came together with some outside of the box ideas and hustled to get things done. He mentioned he sits on Chiefs group from other school districts across the country and listening to the Chiefs who have not opened and are now trying to open with the struggles they are facing makes him appreciate the work the District did to stay open.

2.03 UPDATE ON 2019 LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDED FUNDING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS, SCHOOL POLICE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL, AND FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICE, THAT WAS INTERRUPTED, IN PART, BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Chief Trevino stated last session in 2019 there was funding approved for school police officers and did receive some of the grant awards that they had to apply for and received funding for officers and did not receive any funding for infrastructure upgrades. Because of the way the grants were structured made it hard to implement in Washoe County, they worked closely with Nevada Department of Education and had just gotten details worked out and were ready to go and covid happened and everything was put on hold. Unfortunately, when the state was looking at the budget, they took any unused grant monies back to the state and the District lost the funding that they had and did not hire anyone from that original grant period in 2019. Moving forward understand that it is not feasible to reinstate the amount of money from 2019 towards projects and recommendation from statewide school safety task force is to reinstate that funding if possible and he is not aware of any current legislation that would make the previous grants available to apply for the next school year.

Katherine Loudon, Counseling Coordinator presented a power point on school Social Workers letting the Commissioners know that the emerging social work program has been housed with school counseling. School social work and school counseling collaborate with MTSS and other departments. She let Commissioner know that March 7th through March 13th is National School Social Worker Week. She introduced Eric Ohlson, Peace Grant Coordinator who has been the project director and has a background in school social work and has helped the District grow with social work. She also introduced Beth Schroeder who is a school social worker who is now working in crisis and helped launch SafeVoice.

Beth Schroeder said it is important to understand that social workers are trained in a unique holistic approach and strength-based approach on how to work with children, youth, families, and the community. Through the pandemic they had the ability to make sure the community is connected within the schools. She said they stand at the ready to assist whenever necessary. They do basic needs attainment, work with resources and at master's level, social workers practice mental health supports for students and families. Have done home visits, even during pandemic to get students connected back into education. Ms. Loudon stated Ms. Schroeder was instrumental in working with Mr. Ohlson for the social worker evaluation model. She said people are familiar with nurses and school psychologists, but people are not familiar with school social workers.

Mr. Olson discussed the national model through the school social workers association of America and the priority for ethical guidelines, advocating for vulnerable populations, and working with evidence-based programs. Currently have 14 school social workers that have endorsements through the Department of Education which means they have expertise in working within school environments.

Ms. Loudon gave information about the grants that the District currently have and let the Commissioners know that in addition to the school social workers, the District also has three mental health professionals who are licensed and employed marriage and family therapists and can be employed under the new mental health endorsement that the state has. She also discussed the Safe Schools Professional grant through SB 89 that is \$4.49M that will end June 30, 2021. She let Commissioners know that Superintendent, Dr. McNeill, and Dr. LaMarca to make sure that employed school social workers and safe school professionals are a part of the general fund so they can continue to support schools.

Mr. Ohlson discussed the Project Peace Grant which is a Federal Direct grant of \$702,425 that will end June 30, 2021. Originally meant to be a five-year grant and currently on year seven with the grant. The grant is largely focused on the North Valley community where there has been scarcity of resources and a high need for student population. The grant was instrumental in helping to bring school social workers into the District. He let Commissioners know that the Project Aware Grant of \$500,000 is new and they are sub granting with the state of Nevada which has to do with mental health literacy and working with MTSS systems in the District to strengthen school-based mental health capacity. Mr. Ohlson stated that Washoe County School District is now an approved internship site for licensed clinical social work interns. Ms. Loudon stated through the departments strategic plan, they have been building school and District capacity to integrate social work resources and were able to put school social workers, counselors and school psychologist working together side by side. Working with Superintendent, Dr. McNeill, Dr. LaMarca, other leadership and Ben Hayes have been able to incorporate into other grants the District and had a part of the ESSER grant supporting school social work. Currently working with Dr. LaMarca and grants office on the schools and supports that will be provided next year.

Commissioner Natalie Sanchez commented that in working with Mr. Ohlson, he has done phenomenal work and has made it seamless as a community provider to be able to support the schools in the mission of getting mental health resources.

Commissioner Joiner said how excited she that the program is growing so much, and that she sees firsthand how helpful the social workers are in schools. The model seems to really work and she wishes there were more social workers in the schools and appreciates everyone collaborating and this is huge progress.

Commissioner Goicoechea-Parise had a question about how the social workers are assigned within the school district. Ms. Loudon responded that they worked with their leadership team as they were applying for different grants that allocated social workers to the schools. In the beginning they were looking for administrators that wanted to participate and data points that were required by Nevada Department of Education to apply for the grant. District does not have enough social workers or even in the

community and currently have some funded positions that are unfilled because of the lack of workforce. They were looking at middle and high schools a lot in the beginning because they have the largest population of students and assigning them at various elementary schools as well.

Commissioner Batmale asked if there was at least one social worker for every school or if that was a long-term goal. Mr. Ohlson responded that no, they do not have a social worker at every school and yes, it is a long-term goal. They do not currently have someone in the Incline area, but that is something they have been working on. Ms. Batmale said she can see the stigma about mental health diminishing with students around her age and thanked them for all the programs that have been implemented.

Lindsey Anderson, Director of Government Affairs spoke to the information that was provided by Chief Trevino and Katherine Loudon, and how the state is working on a new funding formula for education and how the social workers grant will be included. She said as the state moved from having lots of different categorical grant programs in addition to the per pupil funding, they are working to have all categorical grants that would be put into the per pupil funding, giving districts the ability to use those resources how they chose. School social workers grant is being recommended to be included into the new formula. We will not know how many of the dollars are allocated to Washoe County. She let the Commissioners know that right now the way the formula is being moved forward negatively impacts the Washoe County School District and there is a lot of work being done with our delegation and others to try and make sure the formula represents the current reality of cost of living, cost of wages and higher costs seen in Washoe County.

Dr. LaMarca mentioned there was another area of funding that was authorized through the same bill in the last session that continued the school social work program, there was a mandate to expand social emotional learning as well as restorative practices being a non-traditional approach to discipline. The District was moving along aggressively to comply and expand programming and those funds were also taken back by the state as they had not been used when the pandemic hit. He said through Superintendent Dr. McNeill's leadership the District was able to get Federal funding through stimulus money. Dr. LaMarca also reminded the Commissioners about the upcoming Trauma Informed Practices Conference that will be held April 19th through April 22nd.

Commissioner Joiner asked about a bill to put phone numbers on an ID card and asked if District is taking a position on the bill. Ms. Anderson responded there are two bills with similar language. District position was to default to the recommendations of the safe office of safe and respectful learning as it relates to SafeVoice. The phone numbers have been narrowed down to SafeVoice plus one other phone number that included an option for texting. There was a discussion on SafeVoice and how lifeline

plus text would give another option for crisis outreach. Ms. Loudon stated that SafeVoice goes to Nevada Department of Safety who sends to school safety team based on what teacher shares. The crisis support services of Nevada offers more of de-escalation and listening response, both are valuable resources with different follow-up or intent and they are both needed.

2.04 UPDATE ON PHYSICAL SAFETY MEASURES INCLUDING SINGLE POINT OF ENTRY AND DOOR NUMBERING PROJECTS

Adam Searcy, Chief Facilities Management Officer presented on single point of entry and the door numbering project. He began with an overview of facility projects over the last 10 years. In 2011 there was a significant item approved by the Board of Trustees which was the "School Works" program that focused and began the work on public address system upgrades, secure perimeters, single point of entries, CCTV systems, and door hardware security upgrades. Between 2011-2017 saw most projects being completed. The local sales tax initiative in late 2016 that was approved creating significant additional opportunities for the school district fund capital projects. Focused on elementary and middle schools for single point of entries and secure perimeters and were able to get most of the schools set up to provide a secure campus during school hours. High school and middle school were the focus for CCTV cameras to add or upgrade. There was also a focus to retrofit all classroom door hardware with locking systems to allow classroom teachers to lock the doors from the inside. During 2018-2020, post the 2016 sales tax initiative, the District was able to put a large investment towards finishing the single point of entries of approximately the 2 dozen schools that remained at the end of 2017. He said safety and security are not immune to the impacts of technology with literal IT technology of CCTV cameras, technology in the classrooms and technology used by school police and emergency responders and that is becoming more of a component of the facilities program to maintain and upgrade. Discussed the initiatives of public address system upgrades, elementary and middle school secure perimeters/single point of entries, middle and high school CCTV, door hardware security upgrades, and cost sharing for emergency response radios have all been completed. Showed the Commissioners pictures of the door numbering project. Mr. Searcy briefly went over more initiatives that capital projects is currently working on such as safe school sticker updates as current safe school stickers had outdated NRS references and needed to be fully compliant. The stickers will be on the primary public entrances at all the schools.

Commissioner Joiner said it was fantastic to see the progress and asked how presentation aligns with audit and future major initiatives. Chief Trevino answered that they are confident the District is in line with the recommendations from the last audit and have made significant progress. Commissioner Nadeau stated it was exciting from a security point of view because the security of the schools is so important.

2.05 UPDATE ON SCHOOL REOPENING EFFORTS RELATED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, INCLUDING STEPS TAKEN TO OPEN SCHOOLS AND OTHER INFORMATION RELEASED BY THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SINCE THE FEBRUARY 1, 2021 SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING

Dr. LaMarca let the Commissioners know that the TMPRA risk meter has been down and they are working on getting it back online. Stated we are heading in a good direction and are in a moderate range on the risk meter. The covid data shows an uptick but will hopefully remain in the moderate range. The latest score according the WSCSD Covid Data Dashboard, test positivity was 5.4 which is still in a very manageable range. Dr. LaMarca stated we are not out of the woods, and it is great that they have been able to do more to reopen and all the self-protective measures along with measures to protect others is critically important.

2.06 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO DETERMINE CONTENT, LOGISTICS, AND MARKETING OF THE 2021 SAFETY FORUM

Vice Chair Vaughan Allen stated she spoke with Megan Downs in communications and they have the tentative schedule and are preparing to start marketing through social media and media building for the bigger media push. Reminded Commissioners at the last meeting agreed to do three events, one from 7:00 am to 8:00 am for the coffee group, one from noon to 1:00 pm, and one from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Would like Chair Benton to the welcome and speak to the Commission as a whole and why we host this safety forum every year. Would like to ask Superintendent to offer some comments from the District as a whole and a trustee. This would be a 10-minute introduction because we only have an hour. After intro, would like to move in two different tracks because there are four topics of concern. Track one would be safety discussion much like what Mr. Searcy and Ms. Loudon presented today with a safety focus on mental health. The tracks would be 20 minutes long allowing 15 minutes for content and 5 minutes for questions via chat or Facebook. The track that would run simultaneously would be on technology, social media, and suicide prevention that will be presented by vice chair Vaughan Allen along with one of her interns. Another track will be with Sergeant Smith and Reno PD discussing human trafficking. The second part on mental health will be Commissioner, Dr. Lorraine Benuto on wellness during this time of covid. Vice Chair Vaughan Allen said she is finalizing marketing flyer with more concrete paragraphs on the content. Will end forum with 10 minutes of discussion and provide an opportunity for final questions.

Commissioner Joiner had a question about what the roles of the Commissioners will be and what they need to do to prepare and help contribute. Vice Chair Vaughan Allen stated she would like the role of Commissioners to be monitoring the chats and will assign people to those different tracks. Ms. Downs asked if the Commissioners would

like to have one live session and can facilitate questions through a moderator and other sessions would be a live chat with recorded session. Another option would be to take questions ahead of time and offer forum via YouTube. Commissioner Benuto commented that this sounds wonderful and thanked them for organizing the forum.

Vice Chair Vaughan Allen asked for volunteers and someone to be a spokesperson for forum on live media. Ms. Downs stated the needs would be promotional videos via Facebook which would be pre-recorded and edited and the other portion would be in-person or zoom media conversations with local media partners to get some preview stories out about the forum encouraging people to attend. Commissioner Sanchez said she would be better at a pre-recorded situation and if needed she would help with that.

Commissioner Goicoechea-Parise believes if forum can be live especially when talking about mental health would be more of what people are looking for right now as there has been so much non-live and this would be a good opportunity for engagement. Ms. Goicoechea-Paris also offered her assistance with the forum and asked for the date. Vice Chair Vaughan Allen let her know the forum would be May 12, 2021 and she liked the idea of live and has her track booked to do live, but Sergeant Smith and his team may not be able to do all live. Commissioner Benuto said she is happy to share materials on her clinic's Facebook page and she can have staff from the clinic to help moderate for each of the time slots if that would be helpful. Vice Chair said people could reach out to her and Chair Benton if they would like to volunteer as they will be finalizing the next week. Ms. Downs asked the Commissioners to reach out to their networks sending out personal invitations or social media pages. Commissioner Joiner offered to be a moderator for safety building and mental health track. She also commented that she agrees forum should be live as much as possible and the question-and-answer portion should be live and interactive as much as possible no matter how forum is presented.

3. CLOSING ITEMS

3.01 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Vice-Chair Misty Vaughan Allen stated the next meeting of the Safe and Healthy Schools is scheduled for May 3, at 2:00 P.M. via Zoom.

3.02 PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Joiner stated she believes the Commission had a segment during this part of the meeting where they discussed any issues they have heard about or any issues that they wish to have brought up at future meetings. Several concerns she had today were addressed. She brought up concerns brought to her by parents regarding distance learning families. Some people have received letters from principals telling them that they are mandated to send children into the building for five days of testing.

When she received the letter, she knew there was an opt-out form. She received phone calls last night from upset parents who feel pressured and coerced into sending their children into the building after they have spent all year keeping their family safe and are concerned their principal will be retaliatory if they do not bring kids to the school and wanted people to know so they can look into it. Superintendent Dr. McNeill said she could not comment because it is a public comment but let her know that the misunderstanding will be taken care of and there is no retaliation on either side.

Commissioner Batmale discussed that before spring break they saw the Board passed an item sending kids back to school every day and there was a lot of miscommunication amongst the teachers and principal and students did not really know what was going on. She had a teacher reach out saying that students were mandated to come back to class every day and had received no notification from principal. The teacher almost instituted punishment for not showing up every day and not allowing them to see the board because they were not in the classroom.

3.03 Meeting Adjourned

There being no more business, Chair Benton adjourned the meeting at 3:44 PM.