



WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS MEETING MINUTES

March 2, 2020

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Safe and Healthy Schools Committee was called to order at 2:00 P.M., WCSD Central Administration Building, Board Room, 425 East 9th Street, Reno, Nevada 89512.

1.02 Roll Call

Commissioners Alice LeDesma, Jim Nadeau, Charlene Bybee, Diane Nicolet, Marci Burke, Coretta Patterson, Richard Jay, and Jeffrey Frame were present at roll call. Commissioner Amber Joiner was present via phone. Lisa Ruggiero, Misty Vaughan Allen, Darin Balaam, Leanne McCulley, and Scott Benton were not present. Dr. Paul LaMarca, Committee Staff Liaison, Dr. Kristen McNeill, Interim Superintendent were also present.

1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1.04 PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, PRESENTATION AND/OR ACTION

2.01 ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA

On motion by Richard Jay, second by Charlene Bybee, the Safe and Healthy Schools Committee approved the agenda as presented (Yea: Alice LeDesma, Jim Nadeau, Charlene Bybee, Diane Nicolet, Marci Burke, Coretta Patterson, Richard Jay, Jeffrey and Amber Joiner, Final Resolution: Motion Carries 9-0)

2.02 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF REVISED SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE 2021 FISCAL YEAR WITH THE SCHOOL SAFETY ADVOCACY COUNCIL (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

Chief of Police Jason Trevino and Roy Anderson, WCSD Emergency Manager presented letting us know they asked the School Safety Advocacy Council if they could move the cost from \$115,000 to \$100,000 for project due to allotted budget constraints. They

have received a new proposal that reflects that change in price and matches WCSD fiscal year. New proposal reduces safety assessment from 18 schools to 16 schools and WCSD will utilize those 16 schools as training tool for the new School Safety Specialist who will finish the approximately 10% school assessments that will need to be completed. Per the proposal they will go from 7 school revisits to 8 and will continue two Principal Administrator focus groups. WCSD emergency management staff will take over the substitute preparedness program. The new scope of work will begin in July. Interim Superintendent, Dr. McNeill addressed the Commission to let them know she asked Chief Trevino and Mr. Anderson to go back to the Safety Advocacy Council because it is believed that once the WCSD school safety specialist is in place, that person would be able to cover the scope of work that the council had been doing. She reminded the Commissioners that the school safety specialist was mandated by legislation but was not funded.

Commissioner Nicolet opened discussion. Commissioner Marci Burke asked for clarification on how the new schools would be affected. Chief Trevino let her know that the new schools will have many of the safety aspects already built into them and will present their own set of safety concerns based on location and layout of property, but will have the school safety specialist in place to address those concerns. Mr. Anderson confirmed that the school safety specialists will be working under his department.

Commissioner Nicolet asked Interim Superintendent, Dr. McNeill if the mandate came from the Governor's Task Force and had been mandated by the state. Dr. McNeill stated she believed it was mandated by the state and Mr. Anderson added that SB89 is what put the mandate in place and was evident they wouldn't have someone already in place to take on what was outlined in the bill and would need to hire someone.

Commissioner Nadeau asked that with the new school safety specialist in place, would that eventually phase out the Safety Advocacy Council. Chief Trevino responded that they would like the school safety specialist to work with Safety Advocacy Council so they are familiar with the assessments and would most likely utilize the Council on a smaller level with some administrative assistance in the future. Commissioner Nicolet asked for timeline for having school safety specialist in place, Chief Trevino responded person should be hired by March 23, 2020.

On motion by Jim Nadeau, second by Coretta Patterson, the Safe and Healthy Schools Commission recommends to the Board of Trustees to adopt the revised scope of work the 20-21 fiscal year with Safety Advocacy Council (Yea: Alice LeDesma, Jim Nadeau, Charlene Bybee, Diane Nicolet, Marci Burke, Coretta Patterson, Richard Jay, Jeffrey Frame and Amber Joiner, Final Resolution: Motion carries 9-0)

2.03 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE INPUT TO DISTRICT STAFF RELATED TO THE SAFETY FORUM (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

Meagan Downs, Communications Manager presented having the Safety Forum on July 8, 2020 as an evening event. Possibly hold at Wooster as a central location focusing on pedestrian safety, invite school stakeholders for priorities the Commission should focus on. Ms. Downs also mentioned could have the usual panel forum, then asked for questions.

Commissioner Burke asked why forum would be in July and how many schools would be in session. Ms. Downs answered letting her know that with events already scheduled, July would be the best date and although no schools would be in session, Communications office would promote as a back to school event. Interim Superintendent, Dr. McNeill reminded the Commissioners that at the last meeting the discussion was held as to the reason to have forum in July. Commissioner Bybee asked when the start of school was as she agreed beginning of July was too early. School is set to start August 12, 2020 with the back to school expo the week prior to that start date. Commissioner Bybee shared concern that families would not be available as it is still summertime and thought end of July would be more appropriate. Commissioner Nicolet agreed with Commissioners Bybee and Burke that beginning of July is too early for families.

Commissioner Nadeau asked if the location and time has been secured. Ms. Downs responded that the hope would be to have at Wooster high in the evening beginning at 5:30 or 6:00 pm as that is the time that has worked best for families. Commissioner Burke asked if would be aimed at both families and students to attend, and Ms. Downs let her know that yes would be marketed to both families and students.

Discussion was held regarding the Commission possibly having a table at the back to school expo at Meadowood Mall in August in order to capture as many parents and students as possible. Interim Superintendent, Dr. McNeill suggested maybe having presentations staggered throughout the event, and Ms. Downs said there would be a budget aspect to renting out more spaces of the mall but has worked in the past with Special Education Workshops.

Commissioner Nicolet opened discussion to those in attendance: Parent Christine McLean who has two children in the District and is the Director of Forever 14, a new organization to help prevent teen suicide spoke and asked for an aspect that would be dedicated to mental behavioral support. Offered their support and services to collaborate on the event and have backpacks with their logo on it that they would like to donate for the event. Commissioner Burke reiterated that the Commission takes mental health seriously.

On motion by Coretta Patterson, second by Darin Balaam, the Safe and Healthy Schools Commission provides feedback to staff to make changes as discussed to move the safety

forum and rolling it into the back to school expo at Meadowood Mall on August 8, 2020 (Yea: Alice LeDesma, Jim Nadeau, Charlene Bybee, Diane Nicolet, Marci Burke, Coretta Patterson, Richard Jay, Jeffrey and Amber Joiner, Final Resolution: Motion Carries 9-0)

2.04 PRESENTATION, AND DISCUSSION OF DISTRICT STUDENT SUPPORT EFFORTS INCLUDING BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT, ATTENDANCE SUPPORT, AND SUPPORT IN STRENGTHENING SCHOOL CLIMATE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Dr. Paul LaMarca, Chief Ombudsman and staff liaison presented on behavioral supports they have provided the District. Gave an overview of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, equity lens and how they view work practices, and on-going efforts. They work with kids on a tiered system to ensure they are getting the supports they need to be successful. They use the equity lens to see how discipline practices affect various student population cultures. Each school has an MTSS team to help students who are suffering with struggles. As an example, Dr. LaMarca discussed Tier Two which is a small group intervention to help gain more academic time or skills around behavior and work with families around attendance. Dr. LaMarca stated that each school will have exhausted everything they can do within the building to help a student when they request the referral to MTSS.

MTSS team is made up of grade level teachers, counselors, Principal and other staff to help decide what the student needs to be successful.

There is a District level interventions team consisting of Administrative staff, juvenile services, childrens cabinet, and other community partners to help give referrals to families, provide evaluation services if necessary.

There is a hearing officer who meets with the families, staff and those involved to get the facts of the case to render the decision. The students could be placed in alternative education for a time period due to outcome of case. Conduct 75-100 hearings a year for students.

They work juvenile probation and parole department, human services weekly to work with students who will be coming back to the District and need a transition plan.

Student Attendance Review Board – schools refer students who are truant. Will meet with students and families to try and identify issues related to truancy and what problems are occurring. Generally dealing with manifested behavior which is a signal for a bigger issue where the student may need help.

School counselors and social workers are generally on safety teams in relation to social emotional health and physical safety. Typically, a part of transition meetings, they are critical to developing behavior and safety plans. School psychologists are skilled and are

busy covering multiple schools and whenever there is a threat to a school, they are there to assist with threat assessment and threat inquiries.

Legislation impacted how the District disciplines and trauma informed practices are handled. Working with Washoe Education Association to hear the needs and help teachers to build their capacity with the enormous amount of responsibility placed on them. Have great partnerships and are working with the state on clarification to the changes from legislation. Have begun a student school climate task force of administrators, teachers, parents, and multiple stakeholders who are looking at student safety and violence. Dr. LaMarca asked for any questions.

Commissioner Burke asked if any of the middle or high schools have peer review teams. Dr. LaMarca stated that we do not currently have anything like that, but that they do have student councils and student voice that are active. Commissioner Burke asked for clarification on what happens to a student during the 180 days they are in trouble for bringing a weapon on school grounds. Dr. LaMarca responded that those students would be sent to an alternative education facility like Inspire Academy or Turning Point where they would receive a lot of support for social emotional learning.

Commissioner Nicolet asked about the online option for students in need. Dr. LaMarca let her know that the District has Edgenuity for the online learning program credit accrual available in each high school and distance learning for students who learn at home. There is also NorthStar which is a virtual online high school. Commissioner Nicolet asked how they are assessing success and where they need improvements with these plans. Dr. LaMarca stated they are loosely tied to the Strategic plan of the District and school climate goals. They look at discipline and academic data on an ongoing basis, stated there is a lot of work to do as there are outside community issues factoring into student's behavior and influencing their ability to be successful with the school environment.

Commissioner Burke asked where parents come into the system, Dr. LaMarca stated parents are there from the beginning and if they are not, that is a big problem for the teams. Further explained that parents need to be made aware of what is occurring because they are always a part of the solution.

Commissioner Patterson asked for clarification on the counselors that Dr. LaMarca was referring to. Dr. LaMarca let her know he was referring to school counselors and guidance counselors.

2.05 DISCUSSION OF THE STUDENT ATTENDANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE DETAILING ITS WORK AND ALIGNMENT WITH THE SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS COMMISSION (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Rechelle Murillo, a social worker within the District and oversees the intervention department presented an overview what the intervention department does. Oversees truancy, reengagement centers, children in transition support with homelessness and foster care. Had 2,069 students who were homeless in our District last year and identified 499 students that were in foster care last year.

Ms. Murillo discussed chronic absenteeism, missing 10% or more of the school year, which she views as an issue related to something else that is happening in the school or home life of the student. The Student Attendance Advisory Committee tries to look at the whole picture of how they can truly help and support the students. They look at data related to chronic absenteeism, factors related, effectiveness of programs students are currently in, provide procedures and recommendations to Interim Superintendent and inform parents of programs that they have.

Commissioner Burke asked about the Multi-tiered System and what each tier is, asked if she could email them. Ms. Murillo let her know that they do have a cheat sheet for schools that breaks down the different levels.

Commissioner Nicolet asked Ms. Murillo to elaborate on root cause of chronic absenteeism with poor school climate and discipline issues to see what they have discovered. Ms. Murillo stated that when they are looking at school climate regarding how safe students feel in the school, and they look at each student's perspective on feeling safe and connected to someone in the building. The district is looking at restorative practices when there is inconsistency around discipline, they look at keeping student engaged. Commissioner Patterson asked if she was referring to the disparity between African American or Hispanic and white students. Ms. Murillo answered yes, and that students feel like they are being watched or targeted, so they have a disconnect. They are rebuilding those relationships with the school and students.

3. CLOSING ITEMS

3.01 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Nicolet stated the next meeting of the Safe and Healthy Schools is scheduled for April 6, 2020, at 2:00 P.M. at a WCSD Central Administration Building, Board Room, 425 East 9th Street, Reno, Nevada, 89512.

3.02 PUBLIC COMMENT

Christine McLean spoke about Forever 14 mission to advance communication to help stop teen suicide and discussed their top initiatives related to media and coping skills, giving teens a voice. They began their program in November and are proud of what they have been able to do and are passionate about their cause. She let the Commission know there has been a 76% increase of 10-19 year old of teen who have committed suicide in

the last 10 years attributed to technology use. She spoke about co-founder, Carrie's son who committed suicide. He attended Bishop Manogue High school, where he googled "Kahoot makes me suicidal" on a school computer, the day before he committed suicide. During the interview that Carrie was involved in afterwards there was a WCSD school counselor who stated it was very hard to have firewalls around specific words. Forever 14 have met with Robert Sidford, IT Manager and Joe Ernst, Area Superintendent, who stated this Commission would be the best format about providing information about helping solve the issue and get information about their program out to the District.

Carrie Countess with Forever 14 spoke about the BARK program which is a free program that allows school districts to filter key and targeted words. Need to have a way of controlling what kids have access to. In the instance of her son, had this program been in place, IT would have been notified that suicide was tagged at his VPN, perhaps allowing someone to reach out to him and talk to him and would alert parents on what child was doing. They asked to be put on the next agenda to discuss what they have learned and what the kids are saying to them about suicide because there are good programs in place but they are lacking the communication with the kids.

Commissioner Nicolet thanked them for coming and offered condolence for Ms. Countess' loss and let them know they will look at this to be on a future agenda and will look at the information provided on the BARK program.

3.03 Meeting Adjourned

There being no more business, Commissioner Nicolet adjourned the meeting at 3:48 pm.