

Saunders Middle School
Principal's Advisory Council
Wednesday, October 20, 2021 – 6 p.m. via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions: Karen Achico, Anne Dean, Mr. Webb, Di Berrios, Dr. Lewis, Caroline Lucarello, Kim Newman, Matt Holman, Tawanna Taylor, Sarah Lanzo, Elise Simpson, Nick Riccardella, Liz Pereyra, Mr. Eline, Mrs. Zimmerman, Kelly Brewer

Principal's Time – Mr. Eline

Challenging Start to the School Year (not unique to Saunders)

- Student behavior has been more challenging at the start of the year. We are seeing improvement; however, bus behavior remains an ongoing problem.
- Bus delays have also been a challenge. 5-6 late buses daily. Students are waiting in the cafeteria 45 minutes to an hour. Activity buses need double run – only able to get 2 of 3 activity buses requested.
- We are working with moving kids safely through the building and we are all doing our best. Morning flow of students will include going through the café and through the front hallway.
- Focus on Wellness of Staff: Teachers have been working very hard – Mr. Eline thanks all of the teachers for their dedication. We are all getting tired and worn out so please support each other. Wellness ideas: Large conference room could be converted to a large staff wellness room with comfy furniture, coffee bar, juice bar, etc. Maybe a yoga instructor, massage therapist... The old snack cart could be fun. **Does the staff have any suggestions?**
- Focus on Wellness of Students: Kids are also struggling with the return to school environment. High volume of assessments for suicidal ideations - 2 kids have already been hospitalized this year. Wellness room for students can be considered but it can be abused.
- Spartan Values Breakfast: Each teacher chooses a student to have at breakfast each quarter and their parent will be invited. We need a criteria for these nominations keeping the 5 values as a criteria for the nominations. We need other ways to reward kids for academic success and citizenship. (No Quarterbash). Send your ideas to Eline as he has money to put towards these initiatives. One Read was a great success. 70% enjoyed the book according to the student survey. We look forward to the next book. Please keep the momentum going with the SSR in the morning. **Ideas for criteria to identify students for Spartan Values Breakfast as well as other ways to recognize students efforts in lieu of Quarterbash.**
- **We are still in the pandemic, we need to talk about Health and Wellness.**
- Celebrate One Read success with *El Deafu* and kudos to the One Read Team. 370 students responded to the survey and more than 70% enjoyed the book and many completed the entire book. Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) continues to be beneficial to ease students into the school day.
- Feedback:
 - o Di Berrios was speaking as a mentor to present some of the frustrations of first year teachers. They need our support and encouragement. Saunders 101 offered every 2-3 weeks. Mr. Eline is purchasing Fred Jones workshop toolkits. Recommendation to offer instructional rounds opportunities for new teachers to observe experienced educators and vice versa.

Liz Pereyra asked if we are getting parental feedback during this difficult time? Eline said that we may send out a parent survey. Most feedback has been supportive but there are some unhappy parents.

We will review the minutes from May 19, 2021 meeting at the next meeting.

SCA/Student Report: We do not have representative; however, we have reached out to the NJHS sponsor to help identify students who may be interested, so maybe November meeting.

Department Chair Time:

Math -Karen Achico - We have 9 students who will be going to the county-level Math Quest.

ELL - Di Berrios - We are trying to work with the content teachers to practice academic vocabulary and the rest of the time we are working with the reading and writing. Di appreciated the One Read being read for her students - it made a big difference for her kids. **Teachers need to turn in their QPAs this week please.**

Health and PE - Matt Hollman - There are two new members to the Health and PE team. We have started our fitness testing unit and it is going well.

Reading - Caroline Lucariello - They are working on building stamina with students.

SPED - Kimberly Newman - Thanks all teachers for supporting students in so many meetings and with the classroom supports. Having the same format for the IEP this year is helpful.

Encore - Liz Pereyra- The music department is working towards a concert in December and a fundraiser. They are also getting ready to rotate through to Quarter 2 students.

Social Studies - Nick Riccardella - The 8th grade Civics SOL is back. The 7th grade coaching cohort is engaging in teaching historical thinking activities.

Language Arts - Elise Simpson - Literacy is the initiative and LA is excited to read and write with students. The writing class is a great addition for students especially for 6th graders.

Gifted/SIGNET - Tawana Taylor - Current focus is getting back to hands-on activities and less screen time. Gearing up for a possible increase in student participants following Naglieri testing in November (11/12 - 6th graders, 11/19 - 7th graders). Testing will take place during Science classes with no adjusted schedules and is expected to take 30 minutes.

Science - Tamara Zimmerman - Huge shout out to the 6th grade teachers for their success with the Watershed Field Trip. 8th graders will visit the Hylton HS planetarium on November 8th and 9th. The Science Fair Club is being offered for the first time ever. Shorter class periods have created challenges with labs so teachers are introducing the lab during one class time and completing the lab during the next class meeting.

Superintendent's Advisory Council (SACI): Anne Dean is our representative and Kelly Brewer is the alternate.

SACI met on October 14th with Dr. McDade discussing *Launching Thriving Futures*. Vision 2025 - "Every student will graduate **On-Time** with the **Knowledge, Skills, and Habits of Mind** necessary to create a Thriving Future for themselves and their community. The core values are equity, inclusivity, innovation, integrity, resiliency, and well-being. PWCS' strategic commitments are Learning and Achievement for All, Positive Climate and Culture, Family and Community Engagement and Organizational Coherence. (full presentation attached)

American Rescue Plan Act funding for schools. There are a lot of great funding sources available but finding staff will be difficult. The team spoke about the Unfinished Learning Plan including social emotional learning and academics.

PTSO - First PTSO meeting with SY 2021-22 board members. Budget approval is key activity for this evening's meeting. Seeking opportunities for student activities based on restrictions (Fun Friday). PTSO will be surveying the staff to see how they can support the staff.

Open Discussion Topic: Consider the option of moving to network printers in central locations instead of individual printers in every classroom. **Please discuss with team members and share feedback at November meeting.**

Adjournment at 6:53 PM.

Next Meeting - Wednesday November 17th at 6 PM via Zoom