

**Parent Advisory Board Meeting Notes**

**Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2016**

**Time: 7:45am**

**Location: HS Cafeteria**

*(Notes were taken by Melissa. Therefore, any ‘I’ found below refers to her.)*

* September Meeting Follow-Up
  + Our meeting began with a review of our past discussions. I shared that we have discussed the possibilities for extending physical education opportunities beyond the school day. In addition, great care will be taken to provide as many of the required courses in the morning as possible for our STEM students to avoid conflicts.
  + Our discussions regarding PE requirements continue with our teachers and the administrative team.
* Drug Abuse
  + Given the recent overdoses within the county, we discussed the school’s response to this frightening issue. I shared that as a parent of two boys (ages 12 and 9) myself, I am very concerned about the prevalence of drug abuse in our community. We discussed the possibility of an assembly for students that includes local members of the community who have seen the impact of drug abuse first-hand. Mr. Bressi and I both sit on the Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) with officials from local law enforcement, courts, probation/parole as well as other human service agencies. We have reached out to some of them and they are willing to participate. In addition, we have been contacted by a BHS graduate who is now free from addiction and would like to address our students. The mother of a recent overdose victim is also willing to speak. Some members of our parent advisory board have contacts within the drug and alcohol treatment court and Columbia Montour Snyder Union (CMSU) services. They will reach out to them regarding this potential assembly for students. It is our hope that we can organize it before the end of the first semester.

Some questions from parents include what we do to prevent drug use in school and/or support students who may already be addicted. I reviewed our Bloomsburg Assistance Support Education (BASE) team, which fulfills the requirement of a Student Assistance Program (SAP) in schools. Through this process, teachers, parents, and other students can refer students who may have drug, alcohol, or mental health issues that impede learning. The confidential team of teachers, administrators, and counselors then discuss the individual student’s case and ask teachers to complete a checklist regarding his/her observable behaviors. Based on this information, the team decides if an outside drug/alcohol assessment is recommended. If so, the parents are contacted and must give permission for an outside assessor to evaluate their child. If permission is granted, the assessor then shares the results with the parents and makes a recommendation regarding treatment. At that point, the parents also have the option of accepting the recommendation or not. The parents can stop the process at any time. Essentially, the school serves as a liaison between the family and outside agencies, but the parents are not obligated to follow through with the assessment and/or recommendation.

Additionally, I shared that we had one incident of distribution of prescription medicine in school this year. I noted that it was addressed immediately and significant consequences were assigned. When asked if we used drug sniffing dogs in the building, I deferred to Mr. Bressi, who came in briefly. He noted that we have done so in the past, but it has been a few years. He and I both said that we would contact law enforcement to determine when it can be scheduled again. Our conversation included where/how the dogs can search. Essentially, those searches take place in the hallways while students are in classes. Due to the potential risk to property/person, the dogs are not taken through the parking lot or near students.

Our discussion of the distribution of prescription medicine led to a conversation regarding students using over-the-counter medications in school. We reminded parents that the students are not allowed to carry these medications either. There is a process in place for students to keep these in the nurse’s office and self-administer if/when possible. Please find our Board Policy #210: Student Health Services/Use of Medications attached for more information. Please also find our Board Policy #227: Use of Unauthorized Substances, which includes information regarding the possession, distribution, and/or use of such substances in school. Clarification regarding over-the-counter medications for athletes in competition was requested.

* Transgender Conversation
  + I shared an article from Principal Leadership entitled, “Transgender Issues: Out of the Shadows” with everyone. The article includes one school’s development of a policy for transgender students. In it, the school set guidelines for the following: privacy, official records, names and pronouns, gender-segregated activities, restroom accessibility, locker room use, school activities and programs, physical education classes and sports, and dress codes. Our discussion included the fact that we do not have a current board policy to address these items. I requested a conversation with our parent advisory regarding the community’s comfort level with the topic. I also noted that I shared the need for conversation with our faculty at their last meeting.

With regards to this issue, I shared that we’ve had one request by a student who identifies as a transgender male although he was born a female. That student has not requested the use of a bathroom or locker room that coincides with his gender identification, but he has requested that we use the male pronouns (he/him) when referring to him. As a result of this request, he met with his teachers. They were able to discuss the matter with him and asked questions if they had any.

In particular, we discussed our current restroom accessibility. I noted that we have three full sets of gender-specific bathrooms in the building (two on the first floor and one on the second floor). I also noted that we have two gender-specific single-stall bathrooms on the first floor (main office and guidance office), which are designated for adult use. We have one set of gender-specific multiple-stall bathrooms on the first floor devoted to adult use as well. A question from the group was whether any of these could be renovated to become uni-sex single-stall bathrooms. I confirmed that one of them could. Again, this was the first conversation regarding the issue with our parent advisory board. I thanked everyone for sharing their thoughts and requested that those who have additional questions or concerns feel free to speak to me privately about them.

* Additional Concerns
  + Fundraising during lunches: One parent asked if it was true that students can no longer conduct bake sales during lunches. I confirmed that though it had been allowed in the past, competitive sales during lunches do not comply with our wellness policy. In addition to the competition with our school lunch program, these sales do not comply with the nutritional requirements necessary for food sold during the school day. A copy of Board Policy #118: Physical Education, Physical Activity, and Nutrition is attached to this message for review. We also discussed Subway Day, when our students have the option of a Subway sandwich during lunches. This month’s Subway Day will be held today (Wednesday, October 26, 2016). Though I did not share it at the time, a microwave was purchased for students and placed in the cafeteria for those students who pack lunch and have a need to heat their food.
  + Another parent asked why daily announcements were not being updated on the school website. I apologized for not knowing that they were no longer posted and shared that they would be posted again by next week. (They are now being updated daily.)
  + One parent asked about the issue with MMS (our student information system) that led to duplicate progress reports. I shared that some reports did not include grades even though grades were present in the system. Another parent questioned why some classes did not have any posted grades yet. I shared the expectation that all classes should have grades and asked that parent to reach out to the teacher for explanation and let me know if it wasn’t rectified after doing so.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 1 at 8:00am