
Parent Advisory Committee

October 23, 2018
Group Notes

Attendees:

Board of Education

- Barbara S. Palko, Chair
- Victoria T. Kelly, Member
- Virginia R. McGraw, Member

School system staff included: Kimberly A. Hill, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Amy Hollstein, Deputy Superintendent; Linda Gill, Ed.D., Executive Director of Schools; Marvin Jones, Executive Director of Schools; Angel Willett, Executive Assistant

Community members: Amy Young, Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) and Marnie Grove, Parents Affected by Addiction (PABA)

Twenty-six parents represented twenty-seven schools, three Board Members, five staff members, and two community guests attended the first Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the 2018-2019 school year.

Welcome and Greetings

Deputy Superintendent, Amy Hollstein opened the meeting by thanking parents and other guests for attending. Mrs. Hollstein introduced Board members, guests and staff in attendance. She reviewed the meeting format and the purpose of the PAC. Parent Advisory Committee meetings are a conduit to school system information and programs to keep representatives informed in order to share information and clarify misinformation at school meetings and in the community. The meeting gives parents an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on a variety of topics.

Superintendent Hill warmly welcomed guests, acknowledging their support and thanking them for participating as members of the PAC. Dr. Hill acknowledged Board Members in attendance, noting their commitment to the school district. She expressed how much the Board values input from the PAC, citing the committee's feedback on the eligibility requirements for sports and extra-curricular activities last school year.

Dr. Hill and Mrs. Hollstein spoke avidly about the "#chooseKIND" campaign. All stakeholders including parents, staff and students want our kids to grow in a kind community.

AGENDA

The Good, the Bad, and the Planning

Parents were asked to write a one-liner describing what they feel the school district is doing well and a one-liner sharing what they think needs improvement. The one-liners were placed on the one-liner wall to allow other PAC members to see each other's comments and to discuss as a group.



To maintain authenticity of the committee's feedback, text reflect the writer's comments with minimal editing.

- Teachers work tirelessly to better the students
- Schools are filled with teachers who care!
- I like that the teachers are eager to teach!
- ParentVue communication with parents
- Enthusiasm around Reading and peer discussions
- New principal cares about welfare of students, parents' opinion and listens to our motto: *Our Block, Our School, Our Community*
- Westlake teachers that go above and beyond to ensure our students learn and feel a part of a family and know they have someone to turn to when they have a problem
- Accommodating the growing population
- Staff that truly cares! The kids trust their teachers and respect them
- Communicating with parents and involving them in decisions
- Caring teachers/administrators. Investment in infrastructure
- Teachers updating the ParentVue daily (even though requirement is once every 2-weeks)
- Positive inclusion of parents in policy changes
- We have dedicated, caring teachers
- Clubs and activities available to students. (i.e., MESA, DI, Robotics, etc.)
- Engaged principal and vice principal who engages and facilitates activities for children and parents (outside of school hours)
- Caring and supportive environment (teachers and staff)
- I love that my administration cares about students beyond the classroom!!
- Activities for students before/during/after-school
- PBIS program
- ESOL support and liaisons
- Positive mass communication strategies really keep parents informed
- The extra help that is offered
- CCPS have diverse options of study (culinary, engineering, biomed, vo-tech)
- Transparency/communication
- The amazing staff
- Great "mass" communication for parents and families!!!
- See Something Say Something!
- Communication

The Good, the Bad, and the Planning, continued



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- There needs to be more consequence
 - Extra-curricular activity communication – parent volunteers working with administration
 - I don't like that the behavior hinders the teachers for teaching
 - Student safety when using outside classrooms
 - Dress code – will there ever be a uniform policy?
- I'd like to see more parent/community support, and partnerships
 - Classroom disruptions. Elementary scheduling
 - Dissemination of positive information to all parents
 - Addressing disciplinary issues
 - Getting community leaders engaged at the bus stops
 - Upgrade sound systems to ensure that everyone is alerted if there is an emergency
 - Refs for the sports – often unfair/not consistent
 - Calling the same kids name whenever someone talks
 - Trauma Informed Care, Restorative practices (mental health, social, emotional across all ages)
 - Communication between teachers, administration, Board, etc.
 - Event support
 - Overall morale
 - We need more parent volunteers to support the schools (PTSO meetings)
 - How to get students involved in sports, clubs, other activities
 - Criteria and training for substitute teachers – professionalism, education background
 - Discipline (or process) for handling disruptive (child)ren in primary-level (pre-k – 2nd) classroom; special needs vs. children without special needs
 - Bus behavior
 - Communication and being proactive, change perceptions
 - Providing appropriate resources for teachers and students
 - Lack of skilled teachers and paras for diverse special ed. population
 - Too much attention given to the bad behavior
 - Instructional support

Maryland Coalition of Families

Amy Young, Family Peer Support Specialist with the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) spoke about this organization and services available to families dealing with addiction. Ms. Young shared her family's personal journey with the PAC.

The Maryland Coalition of Families is a statewide nonprofit across Maryland. MCF provides free support, information and resources to Maryland families with funding from federal, state and local agencies. Families who want to tour the HOPE trailer can do so November 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the Charles County Sheriff's Office. To find out more about this nonprofit, visit mdcoalition.org or call 410-730-8267.

It Takes a Village

Working in small groups, the PAC reviewed and discussed different discipline scenarios. The groups were tasked with reviewing the legal guidelines, and recording general group comments and questions.

Scenario #1

Student A is a six-year old first grader attending school in CCPS. During the first weeks of school, student A has disrupted the classroom setting by throwing temper tantrums, refusing to follow teacher directions and eloping from the classroom.

PAC comments included:

- Transparent communication with parents regarding situation (while maintaining child's confidentiality)
- Increasing education of parents regarding their options (how to bypass the SST process)
- If involved in SST process, how long must data be collected before decisions can be made about considering special education testing
- Is it appropriate to test students for a disability at this age
- Clear and consistent discipline
- What is the process
- What is CCBOE/school responsibility
- How is it determined to be a disciplinary vs developmental issue
- Students in pre-kindergarten thru second grade cannot be suspended, so what do you do
- Is in-school suspension an option at the elementary level, as it is at the secondary level

7-305.1

Students enrolled in a public pre-kindergarten program, kindergarten, first grade, or second grade—suspension or expulsion prohibited.

Only exception—suspension for not more than 5-days if the school administration, in consultation with a school psychologist or other mental health professional, determines that there is an imminent threat of serious harm to other students and staff that cannot be reduced or eliminated through interventions and supports.

13A.08.01.11

In accordance with the rules and regulations of the local board, each principal of a public school may suspend for cause for not more than 10-school days, any student in the school who is under the direction of the principal.

- Each student suspended or expelled out-of-school who is not placed in an alternative education program shall receive daily classwork and assignments from each teacher, which shall be reviewed and corrected by teachers on a weekly basis and returned to the students.

Scenario #2

Student B is a 15-year old tenth grader attending school in CCPS. He is very disengaged in school and often skips classes and when in attendance can be disrespectful to adults. He has been involved in 3 altercations and has been suspended for 8 days. Although his behavior causes a disruption to the school and affects a safe and orderly environment, his actions have not risen to an extended suspension to the Superintendent.

PAC comments included:

- After reading the law ... giving daily classwork isn't going to solve an issue because they aren't engaged in school
- Setup some type of mediation with administrators and parents to discuss situation. Include guidance counselors, school resources officers. Why disengaged? What is going on in the home
- All high schools and two middle schools have in-school suspension room where teachers and counselors rotate thru what went wrong. What can be done differently

Scenario #2, comments continued

- Consider testing – are there educational issues? Not understanding the classwork
- Consider alternative education program – smaller groups, more interaction with teacher
- Every school has restorative team. Every principal has been trained. Repair relationships
- Parents get notifications about tardies and attendance. Do the parents care
- What can be done differently
- Trauma informed cared ... what's in their invisible backpack
- Putting students in an alternate classroom is not going to work if the student is already disengaged
- Is the school system teaching the “whole child”
- Peer mentoring groups; link with another student
- How is the effectiveness of the program measured

Reportable Offense Law

The Reportable Offense Law does not apply to crimes committed at school.

The removal of a student with a disability from the student's current educational setting and the provision of educational services shall conform with the provision of 34CFR, Education Article, §7-305 and the Annotated Code of Maryland and COMAR 13A.08.03. The instructional setting for the provision of educational services to a student who has been removed from school on suspension may not be a student's home.

Scenario #3

Student C is a 17-year old tenth grader who was involved in a series of altercations during dismissal at a local high school. He was suspended for 5 days and charged by the School Resource Officer. Although his crime falls under a reportable offense, he cannot be placed on Safe Schools or on home teaching.

- When a student enrolled in a Charles County public school has been arrested for a reportable offense that occurred off school property and is 21 years of age or younger, the school system/principal shall be notified promptly. The principal will evaluate the information concerning the reportable offense, determine appropriate steps to maintain a safe and secure school environment, and develop an appropriate educational plan. Reportable offenses do not apply to offenses that happen in or on school property; those are subject to school discipline.

Other comments included:

- Kids need therapy support. Possibly, there could be afterschool therapy programs
 - Each school receives an allotment of funds for afterschool programs and Saturday school
- Background in conflict resolution is helpful
- There are many programs at the middle and high school level. The greatest impact can be made at the elementary level. What preventive steps is the school system taking
 - Several elementary schools have the ASPIRE program staff with a certified teacher with expertise in behavior, a psychologist and instructional assistant. The goal is to expand the ASPIRE program in every elementary school
 - The Student Engagement and Conduct Officers are a great resource to our schools and students. The officers visit schools frequently, identify potential problems and help with interventions that lead to student success
- All students need resources and programs, including accelerated students. Opportunities have to be available for ALL kids
- All students deserve another chance; do not label kids
- Building relationships is the foundation for student success

CLOSING

Reminders

Whenever possible, every school should be represented at the PAC meetings. Primary school representatives who cannot attend a meeting should notify the school and coordinate with the alternate committee member. E-reminders are sent to primary representatives for each school. The meeting dates for the current school year are included in the parent handbook/calendar and noted below.

As a courtesy, PAC meeting notes summarizing the committee's discussion and activities will be provided. These notes are not official minutes, but are meant to serve as a resource for the PAC members.

Meetings for school year 2018-19:

- Mid-year meeting: Tuesday, January 29, 2019
- Spring-end of year meeting: Tuesday, April 30, 2019