Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

February 20, 2017

**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 11:40 am by Sulema Flores, SHAC Coordinator.

1. **Welcome**

Sulema Flores, Director of Health Services, introduced herself and Juanita Rodriguez-SHAC Secretary and Edgar Garcia-Health Services Administrator welcomed all in attendance and thanked all the parents in attendance and Mr. Orlando Noyola-Administrator for Student Services, Mr. Ruben Garcia-Positive Behavior Coach and presenter for today’s meeting, Norma Garza-Parental Engagement Coordinator, and Corina Gonzalez-Child Nutrition Area Supervisor for being in attendance. Ms. Flores informed the parents that she would be presenting in a bit why it is important for all the different departments that were present be present and the role they each play in SHAC. She then asked the parents to review the minutes before the meeting continued.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed by the committee. Ms. Garza motioned to accept the minutes, Mr. Noyola second the motion. The minutes were approved.

1. **Introduction to SHAC-Sulema Flores**

Ms. Sulema Flores began the introduction to SHAC for all the parents that were in attendance for the first time by informing the committee that the law of Texas requires SHAC to be in place in every district in Texas and meet frequently so the well-being of the students is being assessed in every area through the SHAC committee. The SHAC committee then brings recommendations regarding the eight components of SHAC to see what is in policy or not and recommend what and how recommendations can be implemented in policy if necessary. Ms. Flores gave a brief description of each of the 8 components that entail SHAC. She began with the first component being Health Education which is an area that all staff must cover not just coaches and nurses, because there are presently no health classes and whenever there is an opportunity to teach students the importance of health, even teacher aides can teach students to make healthier choices in the cafeteria. The second component of SHAC is the School Environment, this area entails students feeling comfortable and safe in their environment, where there is no bullying or drugs; however the reality is in every district this can be found but as a committee we can see what can be done to minimize these issues within our district. The third component is School Health Services, Ms. Flores shared she is over this area and what can health services do to make sure that the children are healthy and can come to school to make sure that they do not develop diabetes or have cardiovascular problems. The school nurses complete health screenings and have referrals sent to parents if there is a health concern and the importance of having the parents follow through with the referral because if a student is struggling in their classroom why is the student struggling is it because they cannot hear the teacher or they are not able to see the board and it is important that the committee takes this information back to their perspective campuses and let other parents know how important it is for parents to follow through with the referrals because it can depend on how well their child will learn. The fourth component is School Meals and Nutrition and mentioned what can this committee do to ensure that students are not only eating healthy at school but at home and give students the right information on what foods are healthy as well as to parents and what foods are doing a lot of harm to the children. Ms. Flores mentioned Ms. Corina Gonzalez as being the representative present for that area. The fifth component is Counseling, Psychological and Mental Health Services Ms. Flores shared with the committee that presently there was no representative but shared that the committee will have an opportunity to bring their recommendations as to what they would like to see from that area for the overall well-being for the students. The sixth component is Physical Education and Ms. Flores shared how Coach Chavana oversees this area and how he plays a big role in this committee making sure that the student’s health is maintained not only during school, but also after school hours. The seventh component is Health Promotion of staff and parents, Ms. Flores shared it is important that staff and parents model healthy behaviors because it is not only beneficial for the staff and parents well-being but it is an example that students follow. The last component is Family Community & Involvement, Ms. Flores thanked Ms. Garza for all that she and parental involvement have done within the community and with the parents to make sure that parents are obtaining the resources that they need to make sure that they are able to guide their child to a college or career pathway. Ms. Flores also thanked the parents for their involvement in their child’s lives because what parents’ model at home and the example they give are crucial to the child’s development and the parents that were present in the committee were thanked by Ms. Flores for their concern and their desire to be involved in their student’s education. The SHAC committee reports at least annually to the school board with what the SHAC committee has accomplished and what goals are set to be met for each school year. Ms. Flores then shared the goals that had been attained in the past several years for example, what has been done in the area of Human Growth & Sexuality. Ms. Flores shared that a survey was given to the parents on how a course would be beneficial and what they would like the course to entail. Ms. Flores informed the committee that a grant had been received for an abstinence only course to be taught to 7th and possibly 8th graders. The course includes teaching the students the consequences, respect, how to get out of a situation and helps students to set goals and to value themselves. The course also includes homework that the student can work on with the parent at home if they choose. The course is an evidence based course so the information is accurate and will teach the student scientific and factual information through role playing, real life testimonies, interactive games, and DVD lessons. Ms. Flores encouraged the parents of the committee to let their communities know so that parents can go to their children’s campuses to sign the consent if they have not done so and inquire if they have not received information about the course. Ms. Flores informed the parents that the curriculum is available to view if at any time they choose they can stop by the Health Services office to view it or at their child’s perspective campus. Ms. Flores shared that there are 8 times the student’s will meet for 45 minutes each session and that representatives from the course will be sharing at the upcoming meeting as well to show the parents what is being taught and to be able to ask any other questions they may have in regards to what is being taught. A committee member shared that part of the registration process for 17-18 school year the consent is provided hopefully to have more success having parents giving consent to have more students participate in the course for the 17-18 school year. Another goal Ms. Flores shared that was attained is having recess at least at all the elementary schools. Ms. Flores said that each department will highlight in the forthcoming meetings the goals that have been attained through their individual departments. Ms. Flores highlighted the CATCH Program that was implemented through SHAC and has taught children to make smart choices when it comes the foods they eat knowing how to categorize a food under Go, Slow, & Whoa. Mrs. Flores concluded with letting the parents know that goals for SHAC will be discussed in more detail in the forthcoming meetings and reminded parents that March 9, 2017 is the next meeting and encouraged parents to please make plans to attend as well as the meetings in the upcoming months.

1. **PSJA Behavior Expectations & Recess-Ruben Garcia**

Ms. Flores introduced Mr. Ruben Garcia and the topic that he was going to be addressing. Mr. Garcia first of all thanked Ms. Flores and Mr. Noyola for inviting him to share. Mr. Ruben Garcia said he would be sharing on the school environment and recess at the schools. Mr. Garcia shared that in the summer of 2015 Mr. Noyola and himself along with the administrators from five schools within the district met to decide on three expectations for each of the schools and the district as a whole. The expectations that were decided upon are: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. Mr. Garcia shared in the schools the way in which being respectful would look like is the students following directions and using appropriate language, being responsible is having students reporting promptly, having the proper materials, having materials and having a positive attitude for learning independently or collaboratively, being safe are having students maintaining hygiene, walking on school grounds, keeping hands, feet, and/or objects to themselves. The five schools that are part of this study began in August 2015 and are in the last year of this study. Mr. Garcia said these expectations have to be chosen by the students on a daily basis that they will be respectful, responsible, and safe. Mr. Garcia went on to say that these choices are not just important at school but as well outside of school in their home and within their community. Mr. Garcia shared when he speaks to the students he reminds them that choices they make are their choices good or bad, but the consequences are not choices but rather choices that are made by others for them. Mr. Garcia said that when expectations are discussed they must be very specific so the student is clear on what is being asked of them. Mr. Garcia informed the committee that on average it takes a child eight times to learn something new; while to unlearn an old behavior and replace it with a new behavior the new behavior has to be repeated on average 28 times. Mr. Garcia shared that the school rules are aligned to the district wide expectations. Mr. Garcia shared that the expectations cannot be expected for students to know but rather have to be taught to the students in every part of the school. For example, if the expectation is for the students to walk in the hallways, to the cafeteria, to the computer lab etc. they must be told to walk from point A to point B instead of saying to students don’t do this or that, tell students what you want them to do; the key is to be specific in the expectation you are wanting the student to accomplish. The expectations are for the staff as well as the students if the adults model for the students and reciprocate the expectations of being respectful, responsible, and safe the students will then know and begin to reflect the expectations as well. Mr. Garcia said don’t just tell the students the expectations, but let the students know that you are proud of them for following through with the expectation. For example, “thank you Jose for walking in the hallway and maintaining your safety”. These expectations are not only applicable in the school setting, but also in the home at the grocery store, when visiting friends or family; parents to can reinforce these expectations with their children. For example, when you go to your grandparents’ house, you are respectful and greet everyone in the home. The rules of the school are taught in line with the district wide expectations students cannot be expected to know the rules until they are taught specifically what the rules and expectations are in every aspect of the school. Mr. Garcia said that these expectations will be shared with all other campuses in the district to begin to be implemented aside from the pilot campuses in the near future.

Mr. Garcia shared recess is defined as unstructured physical activity and play. Mr. Garcia went on to share that we all have human rights and children also have human rights and recess is a right for every child. This is also a goal in SHAC to attain the right for every child to have recess. However when students go out to play there also needs to be expectations in place on how to play during recess. Mr. Garcia shared how at one campus students are taken to the playground and shown what the expectations are in the playground at the beginning of the school year, after Christmas break, and again after Spring Break so students are reminded what the expectations are of the playground each time they go and play. Mr. Garcia shared how every person at the school including parents play a role in reinforcing the schools expectations. Mr. Garcia shared a study that over the past 20-25 years recess has been cut or eliminated due to academic tests and preparing for tests students are withheld from recess for tutoring. According to the study 32.3% reported a decrease of recess. Mr. Garcia shared that recess is crucial and necessary and should not be withheld for punitive or academic reasons; but rather studies have shown that it is worse for students academically. Mr. Garcia shared that American Academy of Pediatrics state recess is important for a child because a student is more attentive and better able to perform cognitively and develop social skills that are not otherwise acquired in a classroom setting. Recess whether in or outdoors makes children more attentive. In a study it was found that 4th graders were less fidgety and on task more when they had recess and would perform better on literacy tasks after they had recess. Children are able to develop communication, negotiating skills, problem solving, cooperation, sharing, as well as coping skills by developing their own games and own rules to the games it is not to say that there is no supervision, but rather letting students figure out how to develop these skills through unstructured physical activity and play. Mr. Garcia shared recess was originally studied in Finland and Texas Christian University (TCU) brought this study to 5 schools in Texas to have recess more in the school day and were able to see the results of the students being more focused and less fidgety in the classroom and less distracted and side conversations were less and students were able to retain the academic information and perform better on academic tests. The benefits of recess included achievement, social relationships, and lowering the risk of obesity. The benefit of recess is that it may improve behavior. Mr. Garcia shared that academic studies show that recess before lunch shows that students are more likely to eat all their food and have less food thrown away and their behavior is more likely to be improved because they have already used their energy and will not be talking but eating their lunch because they have already had recess. Mr. Garcia shared it makes it a little more difficult to have recess before lunch because students will have to have available a manner in which to wash their hands, but the benefits of having students have recess before lunch outweigh the obstacles. Mr. Garcia shared that studies have shown that at least recess one time in the day of at least 15 minutes was linked with better teacher ratings of class behavior. Mr. Garcia shared that students need to be reminded of the expectations during recess and allowing students to problem solve issues that may arise as long as nothing bad is happening helps them develop and improve their social skills. Mr. Garcia shared with the committee who supports recess: American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association for Sports and Physical Education, National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Department of Education, and the National Association of Elementary Principals. Mr. Garcia shared that you will have 2-3% that are going to need more support and it will take time but said that we all need to be vigilant with all new research and be willing to learn from it. The research recommends at least 60 minutes a day of recess. Mr. Garcia said in the process of incorporating recess it may require a mentality shift of how recess has been used or approached in the past, but it is achievable. Mrs. Flores shared that now that the committee is aware of this information it is important to take it back to their perspective campuses and find out if there is recess and if there isn’t ask if it is possible to have recess so that in the next meeting it can be discussed what can be done to implement and achieve the goal of having recess at all elementary schools. Mrs. Flores asked all parents to make sure they signed in and to indicate which campus they are representing because it is important to have representation from every campus in the district.

1. **Next SHAC meeting 11:30 a.m. March 9, 2017 Pepe Salinas**
2. **Questions & Committee Comments**

Ms. Garza reminded the committee of the upcoming meetings and the hosts for each meeting.

1. **Adjournment**

Mrs. Flores thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.