

# Community Taskforce on Student Wellness

## Community Forum

March 14, 2017

Attendance: 28 community members, 7 students, 15 Taskforce members (including Superintendent Polly Bove, Assistant Superintendent and Taskforce Leader Trudy Gross, Principal on Special Assignment-Stakeholder Engagement John Dwyer, MVHS Principal April Scott, CHS Principal Kami Tomberlain, FEA President Jason Heskett, and Facilitator Minh Le) and FEA Chief Negotiator Jon Stark, HHS Assistant Principal Brian Dong and Coordinator of Communications Rachel Zlotziver.

See <http://fuhsd.org/wellness> taskforce for the following documents:

- PowerPoint presentation from the Community Forum on March 14, 2017
- Student Wellness Survey analysis
- American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement on School Start Times for Adolescents
- Time management sheets for each site
- Taskforce meeting minutes and other supporting documents

Attendees were provided a handout of related information which is attached at the end of this report.

Minh Le opened the meeting and invited parents to share why they were in attendance and what they were hoping to accomplish during the forum:

Community member comments:

- Parent shared that they do not believe that changing the schedule will change the amount of stress on our students. The parent shared that they had provided Assistant Superintendent Trudy Gross with a schedule of how their child manages time during the day, and that parents should also be responsible for time management of students.
- Parent shared that they have an incoming freshman at Homestead High School who has already experienced trouble waking up early in the mornings as he has gotten older. Parent shared that they felt an additional 30 minutes to sleep would be helpful for their child.
- Parent of a junior at Lynbrook High School, as well as a graduate, shared that the sleep problem is not a new issue and believes the root cause is how much homework is given by teachers. Shared that her daughter was up until 3 a.m. the previous two nights.
- Parent of a student at Monta Vista High School shared that her children are staying up late doing homework. If school started later it would be easier for them to get more sleep, but homework is also a big issue.
- Parent with a sophomore at Cupertino High School who plays varsity sports, wants to know how a late start will impact sports and away games.

Minh asked the audience to try to frame a question within 1 minute, and a comment within 2 minutes, to help as many people as possible to have a chance to speak. Some of the questions

will not have answers just yet, and the Taskforce will try to address them and share them with you in the future. Minh also shared that there will be a meeting report following the conclusion of meeting.

Superintendent Polly Bove made some brief remarks to welcome the community members in attendance. She shared that FUHSD is currently focused on the issue of sleep deprivation, but acknowledged there are many aspects to the larger problem of student wellness. The Superintendent shared that several neighboring districts have been able to make schedule changes more quickly due to conditions specific to their communities. However, she explained that within FUHSD, she will not make these decisions unilaterally in her role. Instead FUHSD makes critical decisions through a collaborative process with teachers and the other bargaining units. This collaborative culture is extremely advantageous to the District, and allows us to serve our students most efficiently and effectively. The Superintendent also shared the meeting objectives for the evening. *(Slide 2)*

Taskforce member Patrick Yueng (MVHS student) provided an overview of the first community forum and briefly reviewed a timeline of the Taskforce's activities starting in January 2017. *(Slides 3-5)*

- At the last forum, information was shared on Taskforce goals, and it was said that solutions should be aimed at helping all students. The Student Wellness Survey was discussed, as well as what our schools are already doing to address issues of wellness. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) study was also discussed.
- Several concerns were raised by community members, including the amount of homework assigned and what quantity is truly beneficial. Attendees shared that sometimes teachers will post homework late at night and will expect it to be completed the next day. Concerns about time management were also brought up, including the fact that the time management sheets are not always consistently used and some parents even said they have never seen them. Additional concerns involved the pressure to always do more (i.e. AP Classes) and the college admission process.
- The group discussed traffic issues and how a late start may impact traffic if it overlaps with neighboring school start times.
- The decision making process was discussed, particularly the role of teachers and staff in making any schedule changes.
- Today's agenda will focus on sleep deprivation and the possibility of a change to the bell schedule.

Taskforce member Ganesh Balgi (FHS parent) introduced teachers Jason Heskett and Jon Stark, from the Fremont Education Association (FEA). Mr. Balgi also shared some brief comments, cautioning individuals to think twice before advocating for the solution they would wish for their own child for every student in the District, as every student is unique. He shared his past struggle as a parent to understand the role of teachers in the decision-making process of the District and how he had to shift his mentality to understanding why the strong relationship between the bargaining units and management was so critically important for the District.

Mr. Heskett and Mr. Stark provided the group with some history of the relationship between FEA and District management. Mr. Stark shared that he works on the contract and maintains the

contract language rather than having an outside lawyer do this (Mr. Stark previously practiced law before becoming a teacher). This is a win-win, as the District saves on expensive legal fees and the teachers truly believe in the language of the contract. Mr. Stark shared that things were not always this way, and that in the late 1990s, there was immense disagreement between the management and employees. Out of this disagreement, a new strategy was implemented for sharing new and ongoing funds between the bargaining units (certificated teachers, classified staff, and management). This changed the whole nature and tenor of negotiations for the District. Rather than negotiate the way most districts do, the different groups within FUHSD began to trust each other. The bargaining units have access to all the records and bookkeeping of the District. There is no difference in power between Management and the bargaining units. Information is not withheld, trust became imperative and each side has faith that the other has good intentions. This has now been the process for the last 15 years, which has created a general culture of trust. Teachers feel that they have autonomy in the negotiation process, and this autonomy carries over into other areas as well. Mr. Stark also shared that there is a long history in the District of experimentation at different school sites with schedules, due to the recognition that different populations have different needs. Bell schedules are a negotiated item in the contract. Part of FEA's expectation is that they work cooperatively throughout the year with Management in order to seek continual improvement. Teachers stay with FUHSD because of the culture and feeling of autonomy and involvement, which is not that common in other school districts. Decisions are not made in a top-down way. Mr. Heskett and Mr. Stark take directions from their representative council, which represents all 530 members. Mr. Heskett shared that teachers in the FUHSD are a group of thoughtful individuals who want to do the best for kids. (Slide 6)

Taskforce member Colleen Vandevoorde (HHS parent) continued to update the audience on the issue of sleep deprivation. The presentation touched on the following (Slides 7-9):

- Teens need 8.5 to 9.5 hours a day of sleep.
- When students do not get enough sleep it is not a matter of poor parenting, but mostly a matter of biology.
- Students in the US get less than 7 hours of sleep.
- According to several studies, there is a delay in the sleep/wake cycle and delay in the secretion of melatonin in teens. As students get older, they fall asleep later and wake up later.
- As a result of having too little sleep because they cannot fall asleep at night, kids can experience problems with thinking, driving properly, etc.
- Students that took the FUHSD Wellness Survey reported that they would like to get more sleep, self-reporting an average of 6 hours of sleep per night.
- In the District parent and student surveys, the vast majority of students stated they would like to start school later. Many parents and teachers were also in agreement.
- If the school start time is shifted, there will be ramifications for after school activities, sports, jobs, etc.
- Traffic is another challenge, as is commute time. Parents may also have to renegotiate starting/arrival times at work with their employers.
- Potential solutions:
  - Late start by 30, 45 or 60 minutes

- Choice of no first or no seventh block (not viable for all students, probably for about 80% of students. Some classes are only offered once a day and it is during one of those two periods)
- Time management worksheets
- Reduce daily time at school
  - Breakfast before school instead of brunch, reduce lunch and or brunch time
  - Reduce tutorial/flex time
  - Combine brunch and tutorial/flex
  - Time of day scheduling of classes

Minh introduced District panel: Superintendent Polly Bove, Assistant Superintendent Trudy Gross, Taskforce member and FEA President Jason Heskett, MVHS Principal April Scott, CHS Principal Kami Tomberlain and HHS Principal Greg Giglio. Attendees were then invited to ask questions and provide feedback.

#### Discussion:

- Parent comment: The survey sample is small (15% response rate for students, 12% for parents), people against the time change may not be well represented in this data.
  - Response: We do recognize there is sample bias as it was an optional survey, and there is validity to the idea that you might complete a survey about a specific topic because of individual bias. However, the survey company we work with does feel this is a valid and random sample. We are finding ways to add to this data and information, including comments sent by the public to the Wellness Taskforce via email and feedback received during these forums.
- Parent question: I would like to ask for clarity on why we had the discussion about the role of the teachers.
  - Response from Superintendent Bove: It is currently in the teacher contract that the bargaining unit votes on the bell schedule. But I don't want teachers to be characterized in making this decision in isolation. Teachers are very concerned about the well-being of their students. Teachers are concerned about homework as well. We wanted everyone to understand that we don't have an antagonist relationship between Management and the bargaining units.
- Student comments shared by a parent: Middle school aged daughter: Humans can't survive without sleep and teenagers can't sleep. High school aged son: Even when I don't have homework I cannot fall asleep until 11 or 11:30 p.m., no matter what I try to do. Parent comment: Parent feels that the survey is meaningless. The fundamental issue is that kids physiologically cannot fall asleep – they are biologically changing and they cannot control this. This is about the entire student population.
- Parent comment: I am concerned that there is a lack of understanding of the population from a different perspective. My child can go to bed by 10 p.m. and get up by 6 a.m. I feel it is preposterous for parents to have to renegotiate their schedules. Also, the students who need to be served breakfast at school are the most needy students and they need sleep too. Kids may also have jobs to help their families, and a shift in the schedule could affect their ability to work after school.

- Parent comment: I would like to echo the last parent’s comments. My son is asleep between 9:30 and 10 p.m. every night, and he gets up at 6 a.m. He chooses no seventh period. I have an 8<sup>th</sup> grader who is the complete opposite of that. The student population is very diverse. It is possible to offer an option, but not force a change for everyone.
- Parent comment: I am all for more sleep, however I have some questions. I looked at some of the studies. In areas with shorter days/colder weather, some kids are not getting enough physical activity to fall asleep. Late start times alone are not enough; you have to balance the imbalanced schedules. Please consider the following: all schools on four days of block/one non-block; a deep dive into the state of AP/Honors classes (i.e. how many kids are taking how many); an increased commitment to the “no homework over break” policy as I don’t perceive that it is consistently applied, a straw poll of the teachers to see where they are with this issue; and a one-year notice to CUSD, SSD and the cities so we can work on traffic issues. I would also like to see a community wide effort when looking at changing start times rather than just our District.
- Parent comment: I am a member of the Wellness Taskforce and I want to assure the group that our members have diverse opinions. Members considering all the issues just mentioned and the Taskforce is well represented on all sides of the issue.
  - Response: There has been some urgency from the community in addressing this issue, but we don’t want to make a change that we have to back away from (i.e. putting a zero period back in). The Taskforce has been looking at all the issues just mentioned. There is a great deal of difficulty in getting six cities on board and all on the same page. But we are not thinking about this simplistically.
- Parent comment: Students are getting a lot more assignments on the computer. Blue light is affecting their circadian rhythm. Schools are so impacted that they really cannot do a no 1<sup>st</sup> or no 7th option.
  - Response: We are considering the possibility of having more active classes first period (*slide 10*). About 20% of students currently don’t have a first, many of whom chose that option. Schools could do a better job of advertising the option of a no 1st.
- Student comment: Education has changed in the last 100 years, so much so that we are being asked to do complex calculus first thing in the morning. It is difficult to absorb that content so early in the day. There is college pressure to take AP classes and we also want to maximize our own learning and take advantage of the amount of time we have to challenge ourselves.
- Parent comment: There are some classes that have a homework submission time of midnight rather than say 10 p.m., which would make more sense.
- Parent comment: I am ok with a midnight submission time for assignments.
- Parent comment: I have a sophomore at Homestead, and went through the Minnesota/Colorado/Wyoming study as well and found it quite misleading. It feels misleading to say the biology of students is changing. Artificial light is a huge factor, from both computers and iPhones. I feel like people are hung up on this study and misleading aspects of it.
- Parent comment: We all have choices. As parents, we are the ones who have to help our students make good choices. I refused to let my daughter take three AP classes in one year and it was tough on our relationship. She later thanked me for not letting her overload her schedule, as her friends who did were struggling.

- Parent comment: Students need to know that perhaps the UC system and colleges do not want them to strive that hard at the expense of their sleep. We need to help convey what the colleges really want. It feels that parents are pushing children too hard. We need more parent education programs.
  - Wellness Taskforce member response: I feel that UCs are looking for students that perform well on tests and meet UC requirements, but also students that can make it through the four years. You must be able to get through in four years so they can uphold their statistics. They have less mercy for students going through challenges.
- Parent question: What are the next steps? I understand there will be a lot of discussion with teachers and at each of the sites. Coming from industry, we normally come up with options A, B and C – with no right or wrong answer. Everyone is here to find out what the final process is.
  - Mr. Heskett: I recently ran a survey with the membership and am compiling that data to present to the Taskforce at our next meeting. Ninety percent of teachers responded.
  - Teacher timeline for voting is in May, if a change were to be made by the fall. The District would like to have a variety of options for teachers to consider. The Board would then have to vote to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
  - The District expanded the size and diversity of the Taskforce because we weren't hearing all the voices and perspectives. Later this year, we plan to move into other components of the defined problem.
- Parent comment: I am a Homestead Parent and two days a week my child already doesn't get out until 4 p.m., so I am concerned about a later start and later release time. I am also concerned about Marching Band practice beginning early in the morning if the schedule shifts, when there is already so much practice time scheduled. Question: Why is the late start time so urgent to be decided and how will the success/failure of any change be measured?
  - Response from Principal Giglio: Band practice cannot start before 1<sup>st</sup> period, it is too early and neighbors would not be happy. I have been talking to band about a lot of these issues and how much practice time there is.
  - Response from Superintendent Bove: Just as some people are asking what the urgency is, there are other people that are asking what the delay is. Also, many neighboring districts have made this change (however with school start time mostly prior to 8:30). It was important for us to explore if this was the sentiment of our community or not.
  - The District would readily admit if the decided upon solution was not successful. But we do run that risk when we are focused on one issue in such isolation.
  - How do we measure if kids are not getting more sleep? We would need to survey and have kids self-report. It could take several years to determine success or failure.
- Parent comment: No matter what we do, if the mindset of the parents and students is still to push and overload their schedules, the problem will not be solved. We need to educate PTAs and hold parent education classes.
- Parent question: It was said that 20% of kids have no first period. How many requested it and didn't get it? How many requested no seventh?

- At CHS: 357 students requested no first period, 353 got no first period. The ones that didn't get no 1<sup>st</sup> requested a class that was only offered 1<sup>st</sup> period. Parents would have preferred that the administration check if they would rather have the no 1<sup>st</sup> than keep the class, and we can work on that in the future.
  - Much larger number of students request no 7<sup>th</sup> period.
- Parent comment: It seems like more students want to get out early.
- Parent comment: A lot of students don't choose the no 1<sup>st</sup> option at Homestead because they are told that will limit their elective options. And students can't choose both a no 7<sup>th</sup> and no 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Parent comment: It feels like that is a choice that the family has to make.
- Note: at Homestead you can only have no 1<sup>st</sup> period 3 days a week because of block schedule.
- Parent comment: I see students that seem half asleep while driving or biking, so I am concerned about safety.
- Parent comment: I'm a Fremont HS parent and we already have two days that are a later start. My student gets the same amount of sleep either day. I also am wondering why lights cannot be used in winter on the fields.
  - Response from Superintendent Bove: We have a Good Neighbor policy, which limits our use of lights due to lawsuits.
- Parent Taskforce member comment: This Taskforce is unique to our district, and it really feels that the District is listening to the community. I asked my daughter's friends to share their opinions about this topic. They thought a later start would be great, but only if they didn't have to get out of school later than they currently do. Information is not trickling down to the students, and they are worried about changes to their schedule without their input. I am concerned that we are pushing too hard to make a change for next year.
- Parent question: Is the only option to start an hour later?
  - Response: No, we have not narrowed it to a single option. We are trying to make common start and end times, but right now that is not the case.
- Parent question: A lot of the issues seem to come from Homestead. Do we know how students at schools rank in happiness across the district?
  - Response: Homestead actually has the latest start, but it is not possible for HHS students to have the no 1<sup>st</sup> option across the entire week. The petition also started with families at HHS. HHS also has 4 tutorials, so kids get their homework done during the week and this reduces stress.
- Student comment: I am a senior in leadership, FBLA and two sports. I understand a lot of the parent concerns, but I agree that each student is their own unique individual. I am also frustrated that as students we are outnumbered by parents. Student perspective will not always match with parents' opinions. There is too much emphasis on each parent's individual child and I don't think a regulation that would be across the board for all students is the answer to this problem. Any significant change needs to be a mandatory vote by students as we will be majorly impacted. We come here with personal biases, but need to keep in mind the students who do not have representation here.
- Student comment: Regardless of the decision made, there will be pros and cons. Not everyone will be happy. I would stress that students need to learn how to prioritize,

because right now many students prioritize their academics and future success over their health in the present.

- Parent question: Can we reduce instructional minutes?
  - Response: We are currently at the minimum, so we cannot reduce instructional minutes.
- Parent Taskforce member comment: one of the things that came out of Palo Alto reshuffling their day was the 10-minute passing period as opposed to 5 minutes.
  - Response by Superintendent Bove: Palo Alto created longer passing periods which provided more space and time for students to make meaningful connections with their teachers.
- Informal question posed to students in attendance: Would you be in favor of any reduction to lunch or brunch?
  - Response: The students present did not want lunch and brunch times reduced by any amount of time.

Trudy wrapped up and reminded the audience that they can stay connected to the work of the Taskforce through the FUHSD website and providing their email address to her (*Slide 11*). The Healthy Mind event on Monday, March 20 from 7:30-9 p.m. at Fremont High School was highlighted (*Slide 12*).

Minh adjourned the meeting shortly after 9 p.m. and let all attendees know to look for the meeting report on the Wellness Taskforce website in the next week.

# **Community Taskforce on Student Wellness**

## **Community Forum March 14, 2017**

### **The Defined Problem**

- Students struggle with mental wellness, school-life balance and stress, and sleep deprivation
- The Taskforce recognizes that these three components are inter-related
- During the 2017-18 school year the Taskforce will explore the areas of mental wellness and school-life balance and stress which would include the following areas expressed as concerns during the community forum on March 2:
  - Limiting student sign-ups of courses that may be highly demanding in and outside of the school day (for example, Principles of Business in connection with Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Journalism in connection with working on the school newspaper, and Advanced Placement (AP) classes)
  - Homework: amount and purpose including consideration for breaks, etc.
  - College admissions process
  - Mental wellness/Stress management programs

### **Overview of Requirements for Instructional Minutes**

Instructional Minutes are governed by the California Department of Education.

- Grades 9-12 require 64,800 minutes per year across a 180 day calendar

The following areas of a school schedule can be counted as instructional minutes

- Tutorial placed between class periods
- Passing periods between classes
- Required rallies
- Mandatory testing

The following areas of a school schedule cannot be counted as instructional minutes

- Tutorial at the start or the end of the school day
- Brunch
- Lunch
- Optional rallies

Penalty for not offering required instructional minutes

- The district could lose revenue. Some districts have been fined as much as 1.1% per day of their state funding for the amount of time they fall short of the required minutes.

## **FUHSD Food Service: Current Information and Future Considerations**

Currently each school site provides a 15 minute brunch and 40 minute lunch; both teachers and staff have breaks and lunch incorporated in their collective bargaining agreements.

### **Eligibility for Free & Reduced Meals**

<b>School</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Free &amp; Reduced</b>	<b>% of Eligibility</b>
<b>CHS</b>	2315	154	6.7%
<b>FHS</b>	2011	651	32.4%
<b>HHS</b>	2391	317	13.3%
<b>LHS</b>	1766	75	4.2%
<b>MVHS</b>	2334	39	1.7%
<b>Community Day</b>	69	28	40.6%
<b>Districtwide</b>	10,886	1,264	11.6%

### **Federal lunch program:**

- According to James Richner in the Nutrition Division of the California Department of Education the breakfast mealtime is a “vague requirement” and is usually up to our discretion as long as there is a reasonable time between breakfast and lunch or brunch and lunch.
- They usually require 2 hours between meal periods; they can work with a district if another plan is proposed, there is a process to complete.
- A district may open before school for breakfast and then do a “Second Chance Breakfast” which is what we call “brunch”.

## Transportation Considerations

The Wellness Taskforce has been asked to consider the impact on neighboring schools of any proposed change in bell schedule at FUHSD school sites.

FUHSD	CUSD	Kindergarten- 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade/ 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> grades	Middle School	Late Start/Early Release
Cupertino High School	Sedgwick Elementary	9 a.m.-3 p.m./ 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.		Tuesday 9 a.m.-2 p.m
	Bethel Lutheran School	8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.	8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.	
Homestead High School	West Valley Elementary	8 a.m.-2:05 p.m./ 8 a.m.-2:35 p.m.		Tuesday 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
	Cupertino Middle School		8:10 a.m.-2:54 p.m.	Wednesday 9:35 a.m.-2:54 p.m.
Lynbrook High School	Miller Middle School		0 period 7:45 a.m. 1 <sup>st</sup> period 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Wednesday 0 period 9:05 a.m. 1 <sup>st</sup> period 9:48 a.m.-3 p.m.
Monta Vista High School	Lincoln Elementary	8:55 a.m. – 2:55 p.m./8:55 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.		Tuesday 8:55 a.m.-2:55 p.m. for all students
	Kennedy Middle School		0 period 7:25 a.m. 1 <sup>st</sup> period 8:20 a.m.-2:48 p.m.,	Wednesday 0 period 8:50 a.m. 1 <sup>st</sup> period 9:30 a.m.-2:48 p.m.

The district consulted with staff from David J. Powers & Associates, Inc. and an attorney in a law firm that represents the district, Dannis Woliver Kelley, about the possibility of a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) impact resulting from later start/end times. Currently school sites begin the day between 7:35-7:50 a.m. and end between 2:55-3:55 p.m. The District wants to examine CEQA requirements in cases of delayed start times between 30 to 60 minutes which could result in start times between 8-8:30 a.m. and ending between 3:30-4:00 p.m. It is believed that the change in start/end times being examined would be exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

Reasoning: the school is an existing facility, and changing the school hours would be a minor change to the existing operation. In addition, the project involves no expansion of use. The project would not physically change or alter any structures, but would make a minor modification to its curriculum by shifting the start and end times.

It is recommended that the district file a Notice of Exemption with state, as it did in the case of the Lynbrook Supplemental School Assignment Program.

**Students with Disabilities**

The FUHSD is part of a Joint Powers Authority with neighboring districts to provide transportation for students with disabilities. If a late start were to be implemented there would be coordination with the vendors who provide the transportation.

**CURRENT SCHEDULES AT EACH SCHOOL**

Events	CHS	FHS	HHS	LHS	MHS
Start Time	7:35	7:35	7:50	7:35	7:35
2nd Period	8:30	8:34	7:50	8:25	8:25
End Time	2:55	3:15	3:10	2:55-3:05	3:00
Brunch Start	10:20 - 11:05	8:59 - 9:26	9:55 - 10:25	10:20 - 10:50	9:05 - 10:35
Lunch Start	12:25 - 12:45	11:11 to 11:30	11:55 - 12:15	12:25 - 12:45	12:25 - 12:45
Passing Pd. Leng.	5	7	5	5	5
Sched. Per week	3	5	3	4	4
Tut. Per week	2	2	4	2	2
Tutorial in Min.	40	40	30	35	30
Instruct. Min./wk	1735	1765	1835	1845	1850

**COMPARISONS**

Events	Gunn	Palo Alto	Los Gatos/Saratoga*	Los Altos/MV	Mission San Jose
Start Time	8:25	8:15	8:15	8:10	8:00
2nd Period	9:55	8:15	8:15	8:50	8:56
End Time	3:35-3:45	3:25	2:10-3:45	3:30	3:57
Brunch Start	9:45-10:00	10:00-10:15	N/A	10:00-10:10	9:54-9:58
Lunch Start	12:40-1:20	12:05-12:45	12:00-12:35	12:00 - 12:45	12:20 - 12:58
Passing Pd. Leng.	10	5	5	5	6
Sched. Per week	5	3	3	4	3
Tut. Per week	2	2	5	1	2
Tutorial in Min.	50	100	35	30	34
Instruct. Min./wk	1795	1810	1812	1795	2115

\*Current schedule implemented for the 2016-17 school year, previous hours at Saratoga HS were 7:50 a.m.-3:15 p.m.