

# Wellness Taskforce

## February 13, 2017

### Agenda

Facilitator: Trudy Gross, Assistant Superintendent  
Consultant: Minh Le, President, Wilfred Jarvis Institute

#### Scope of Work

- Defined problem: students struggle with wellness, school-life balance and stress, and sleep deprivation.
- Definition: wellness is an individual's state of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual balance, achieved through the active management of proper diet, exercise, stress, and illness prevention.
- Structure and mission of the task force: using scientific research, case study and survey information, develop consensus among a diverse group of parents, students, teachers and staff regarding the need to address our students' sleep deprivation, recommend to the teacher's association, with input from the classified association, a number of well-analyzed solutions to implement, and suggest to the District and Board other actions to consider or put into practice.

#### Ground Rules

- Stakeholders role
- Communication and gathering support
  - Taskforce members have a responsibility to solicit input from their friends and neighbors, co-workers, peers
- Group member safety in participation.
- Addressing issues and concerns within the taskforce.
- Meetings will be from 3:30-5:30 p.m.; if additional time is needed it will be scheduled in advance and dinner will be provided

#### Communication:

- Shared resources; support with Google drive from Minh
- Meeting reports to all Taskforce members within 24 hours of a taskforce meeting, 24 hour review; distribution to community members who applied for or were interested in the task force and posting to the FUHSD website
- Written input via the Wellness email address
- Evening forums: Thursday, March 2 (overview) and Tuesday, March 14 (topic specific) from 7-9 p.m. in the cafeteria at Homestead High School; planning one more that may be in connection with a Board meeting

## Welcome

Introductions: Minh

- Name
- Profession
- Reason for participating in the task force
- What would you like to see accomplished by your participation in the task force?

## Discussion

- Minh reminded the group about the need for transparency to the public, balanced with the desire to ensure safety and freedom to participate for all taskforce members. Names are listed on the web site, and comments are reported in the meeting minutes but not attributed to individual taskforce members. We hope this is a good balance for you, and please let us know of any concerns.
- Introductions of members not present last time.
- Math Teacher at CHS. Offer teacher perspective, hopes for compromise of all parties.
- Senior at CHS. Loves her high school and district. Wants to give back to school and impact student wellness. Love to see this accomplished.
- Senior at CHS, student board member. Has been on the taskforce since the start of this school year. Has seen it change and evolve, hopes even better this semester.

Follow-up from meeting on 2/6 and discussion/questions about homework: Trudy and Minh

*Question in preparation for meeting topics:* Do we have some proposed start times? Is there a research base for these particular times/proposals?

- Review of homework.

## Discussion

- Trudy thanked everyone for using the google sheet for recording questions.
- No proposal yet for start times. Use this question as a starting point for reviewing the homework.
- A parent asked if the AAP recommendation was an 8:30 a.m. start time. Another parent confirmed that the recommendation was no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

*Question in preparation for meeting topics:* What are we going to achieve this spring semester and how are we going to achieve it?

- Structure and mission of the task force: using scientific research, case study and survey information, develop consensus among a diverse group of parents, students, teachers and staff regarding the need to address our students' sleep deprivation, recommend to the teacher's association, with input from the classified association, a number of well-analyzed solutions to implement, and suggest to the District and Board other actions to consider or put into practice.
- Review the structure of the upcoming meetings

Meeting schedule: all meetings are Mondays from 3:30-5:30 p.m.\* at the FUHSD office, note location

- February 27 Board Room 3:30-7 p.m. with dinner provided\*
  - Participation in athletics and associated activities (John Dwyer, Steve Puccinelli, and Brad Metheany, Commissioner of the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League)
  - Review survey data
  - Planning for March 2: Community forum on Student Wellness
- March 6 PLC 3:30-7 p.m. with dinner provided\*
  - Review Community Forum on Student Wellness held on March 2
  - Review student data
  - Review of course selection and master schedule building
  - Discuss information gathered from other schools/districts that have delayed start time and 0 period
  - Planning for March 14: Community forum on Student Wellness
- March 20 PLC
  - Review Community Forum on Student Wellness held on March 14
  - Issues or concerns with delayed start time

- Strategies to address above issues or concerns
- Drafting recommendations regarding delayed start time
- April 3 Board Room
  - Continue drafting recommendations regarding delayed start time
  - Other strategies to address sleep deprivation problem
  - Issues or concerns related to above strategies
  - Drafting recommendations regarding other strategies
- April 24 PLC
  - Solidify the recommendations for FEA
- May 8 Board Room
- May 22 PLC
  - May 8 and May 22 are reserved for last-minute issues and challenges, to prepare for possible presentations or communications to Board, and if we are finished with sleep, we may move on to the next component of student wellness

Topics to schedule:

- Traffic impact; family transportation, buses, transportation for students with disabilities
- Input from sleep “experts”
- Legal advice

- Trudy reviewed the meeting plan as a way to further explain what will be achieved this semester.
  - Highlighted the norm of changing meeting times and stated that the next 2 meetings need more time. Therefore taskforce members are asked to attend from 3:30-7 p.m. on 2/27 and 3/6. Let Trudy know of any conflict.
  - There will be two community forums, both in the HHS cafeteria from 7-9 p.m.: March 2 will be an overview, March 14 will feature more targeted topics on which the taskforce would like input. All taskforce members are welcome, not mandatory; representatives will bring back input to share with the taskforce as a whole.
- A parent expressed concern about the need for a survey specifically regarding the later start. She felt that parents had paid for other extra-curricular activities, and kids love doing them. She asked how the taskforce plans on getting data from students about their feelings about the broad range of extra-curriculars and other activities that they are engaged in including language classes, music, tutoring, and so on. She was also concerned about overall student workload. She believes that teachers don't communicate with each other over homework and don't know how much HW other teachers set. There does not appear to be a plan to address HW volume shared by teachers. She is concerned about the later start but feels there are many other factors that affect kids (e.g. HW).
- A student explained that he felt that it would be difficult to push back school end time but that a difference could be made with start time. He did not feel that it was an option to change the end time for school and is looking for a solution that does not alter this. He feels that students don't need as much time in each class. He thinks that it may be possible to cut out some things in each class and wants to shorten class time.
- Trudy explained that Graham Clark, Associate Superintendent, would be presenting state requirements for instructional time and then the group would be able to look at any time available outside this required time that could be flexible.
- The FEA President emphasized that teachers are working in collaborative teams and are trying to help the situation (i.e. student stress, sleep deprivation, school-life balance). He believes that it is not a perfect system but things are happening. He feels that at CHS a lot has happened; teachers are working together and coordinating over HW reduction.
- Trudy explained that she knows that time management forms are being used during the course selection process to help students schedule time and anticipate how much time they will need for homework for various classes and other activities they are involved in. She said she will put a folder together containing the forms that schools are using to help their students plan their time.
- A principal reinforced that Professional Learning Community (PLC) work is taking place at all sites. This involves teachers working together in collaborative teams looking at their practices, such as ensuring HW is meaningful,
- A principal explained that the focus of PLC work is on conversations between teachers about developing consistent expectations about various things such as time on HW.
- A student explained that he personally doesn't think HW is the most serious issue. He feels that if the amount of time expected to be spent on HW was cut, kids would still not go to sleep any earlier because they have other things to occupy their time such as social media. He emphasized that HW is not the entire problem.
- Trudy agreed there are multiple things that the taskforce will need to look at in addressing the target issues.
- A parent explained that in her experience, the school her child attends had been very transparent and informative with the way they encourage the use of planners and time calculators. She believes that effort is being made by the schools and that education is being provided to students to help them understand and plan for their commitments in school and at home.
- A parent explained that kids make choices and that some of these are not helpful, e.g. some kids have their phones with them while doing HW and yet we know that we are not able to multi-task efficiently.
- A parent agreed that schools are using tools to help students with planning and that these are helpful.

However, he believes that students need to understand that there's a difference between planning and actuality, the actual execution of tasks and how much time this takes. Kids, staff, and parents need to look at this issue and understand what causes the planned-actual time differences.

- A student mentioned the research behind adolescent sleep patterns and the biological shift in puberty that delays sleep time. Teenagers simply can't fall asleep till 10:30 or 11:00 due to biological shifts in their circadian rhythms.
- A parent explained that kids are encouraged to go and seek help from teachers during breaks and tutorials, but these activities are not wind down time times. She explained that kids spend less time outside nowadays so don't go to sleep so early.
- Trudy mentioned that the goal of the March 20 taskforce meeting is to review the input regarding the issues and concerns being discussed from the community forum on March 14th and to use this to contribute to recommendations that the taskforce will begin drafting.
  - It is anticipated that the body of work and understanding developed by the taskforce and their recommendations to FEA will be solidified by April 24.
  - The 2 meetings in May (May 8 and May 22), may take place to develop a presentation to the FUHSD Board, such as a study session on the topic of a later school start and the culmination of taskforce work on the topic. The Board may be interested to hear how the work and learning of the taskforce has led to the recommendations to FEA.

## Check-in on group status: Minh

- Minh explained ways that the group might manage the “marathon effect” (i.e. people involved in a change effort may proceed at different speeds, the faster movers may feel impatient and rush the slower movers, and the slower movers may resent being rushed by the faster movers) and the frustration and annoyance that some members may feel. He suggested that these feelings may be eased if group members consider that many things that can ease stress, sleep deprivation, and school-life balance are happening (and should be happening) at multiple levels. For example, within a family, a parent and their student can use the time management worksheet to quantify and agree on what they would consider the optimal level of workload for the student. They may choose to opt out of period 1 or period 7 depending on the needs of the student. At various high schools in the District, there are different initiatives going on, such as homework reduction, surveying students to better understand students’ needs, changing the bell schedule, trying a later final exam schedule, or establishing consistency around the use of the time management worksheet with students and their parents. He explained that there are many opportunities for people to “plug in” to each of these different levels to contribute and have an impact. The work of the taskforce is not a sequential process. The fact that different schools have different initiatives going on is good because there is a diversity of experiences they can report back to the taskforce. Our work with this taskforce is at the level of recommending policy recommendations. The implementation will be at the school level with staff, teachers, parents and students and at the family level, parents and students will have information, choices to make, and tools to help with those choices. .
- A parent suggested that things could be done at the one school level, that is, 1 school could move ahead with decisions on some things.
- Polly cautioned that a change of schedule at 1 school could be problematic due to issues such as complications with shared teachers (teachers with assignments at several schools) in situations such as rallies on the same day or the ability of teachers to be on time to classes if time between schools is impacted, and so on. She also mentioned collaboration time at Homestead is not coordinated with collaboration time at the other schools and this already has an impact on teachers and students. Cross district PLC work is dependent on coordination of schedules so there are lots of issues to work through in order to address this situation.

## School Schedules

- Review the current bell schedules for our 5 school sites and requirements for instructional minutes
- Tutorial
- Brunch and lunch: review of food service practices and requirements
- Passing periods

Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Fremont Education Association

### II. Length of day

The duty day for all unit members for all schedules shall not exceed a continuous four hundred fifty minutes period of time, or the equivalent when averaged over ten school days. This period of time shall be scheduled by the administration between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Classroom teachers are expected to be present during all instructional periods, unless other arrangements have been made as set forth below. The duty day shall include a duty-free *lunch of no fewer than forty minutes and a duty-free brunch of no fewer than fifteen minutes* unless modified by agreement between the principal and the site representative.

*Questions in preparation for the topic of school schedules and instructional minutes:*

- Who makes the schedules? Will they implement a suggested delayed start time?
- Are there any classes offered during lunch (with eating in the room) that students could take in lieu of a first period class?
- Do students have a choice of start times?

- Are there requirements from the teacher's union about breaks?
- Why HHS' 7th Block (8th) time is not counted in HHS Instructional Minutes report for those days?
- Why FHS' Fri is called out as Tutorial in FHS Instructional Minutes report, when there is no instructional block before the 'Office Hour' block?
- What is HHS 7th Block (8th)? Why is it needed in addition to the 7th Daily?
- HHS has the latest start time among all 5 schools. If HHS start time needs to be pushed out by 30-60 min beyond 7:50 am while ensuring the school ends by 3:10-3:15 pm, then for which programs/classes would HHS be willing to reduce duration and/or which programs/classes will have to operate in parallel (i.e., reduce choices for students)?

Graham Clark (Associate Superintendent of Administrative Service) provided a presentation on school schedules and state instructional minute requirements.

- The state requirement for a school instructional year made up of 180 days and 64,800 minutes was explained.
- Graham explained that this requirement was in place separately by grade, however it is a challenge to meet this requirement for some grade levels because of the different instructional activities that students at each separate grade are involved in, e.g. senior students have fewer actual instructional minutes than some other grades because they are not involved in standardized testing, etc. and these minutes need to be made up in creative ways.
- CHS schedule
  - The single block schedule was explained, i.e. all 7 periods are offered on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, while Wednesday and Thursday have block periods (longer periods) with even periods on Wednesday and odd periods on Thursday.
  - Wednesday is a late start for students because teachers are involved in a collaboration time before school.
  - A parent pointed out that the instructional minutes of class periods are different at different schools.
  - A principal clarified that although there are some differences between the double block and single block schedules and minutes per period daily, this is averaged out over the course of the school week.
- FHS schedule
  - The double block schedule at Fremont was explained, i.e. block periods are held on 4 days per week with only Monday having all 7 periods.
  - Tuesday and Wednesday include a 40 minute tutorial called "Flex Time".
  - The principal explained how the Flex time worked and also mentioned that office hours are provided on Friday morning as another time for students to be able to seek support from teachers.
  - The principal explained the contractual requirement for teachers to not exceed 450 minutes per day, averaged out over two weeks.
  - Graham mentioned the difference between student instructional minutes and teacher contractual time.
  - The principal explained that flex time is required time for students and that student attendance is tracked with a system of scanning ID cards.
  - Minh asked a question about the 7 minute passing period at FHS. The principal explained that FHS is a big campus and that the 7 minutes allows reasonable time for students to get to classes across the campus.
  - Graham explained that passing period between instructional blocks is counted in the instructional minute calculation and that there is no state limit on the amount of passing period time that may be included in instructional minutes.
  - An FHS student explained that she had attended another school with a 5 minute passing period and that this was not enough time to move between some areas of campus, go to the bathroom,

etc..

- A student suggested that the 52 minute class period time at FHS was excessive and that time could be cut. Graham responded that this could likely not be cut due to the 64,800 instructional minute requirement.
- Graham explained that rallies could not be counted in instructional minutes if they were voluntary and students were not required to attend.
- There was discussion about rallies and the inability of schools to require that all students attend because they did not have venues large enough. A parent suggested use of the football field. Principals responded that they had occasionally used the football fields for rallies in the past.
- HHS schedule
  - Graham mentioned that HHS is different from the other schools in that it holds teacher collaboration/student late start on Mondays.
  - HHS has a double block schedule.
  - On Mondays, students attend all 7 periods.
  - HHS offers an option for teachers to hold a daily 7th period (“Skinny”) or a block 7th on 2 days.
  - There was discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of the “Skinny” 7th period.
  - HHS offers tutorial 4 days per week.
  - Graham explained that district wide, 7th period is less popular. Many students prefer not to attend a 7th period. This can cause problems with room capacity at other times of the day.
  - A parent expressed concern about the lack of time for HHS students in the skinny 7th period.
- LHS schedule
  - Lynbrook has a single block schedule.
  - All 7 periods are offered on Monday, Tuesday and Friday.
  - Wednesday (even) and Thursday (odd) are block days.
  - LHS has a daily 7:35 start time (except Wednesday for teacher collaboration - 9:15 start.
  - An assistant principal stated that many students prefer to have no first or 7th.
  - LHS has 2 days that include a tutorial period for students. Student attendance is not tracked during this time and students are free to make their own choices about where they would like to be.
- MVHS schedule
  - Monta Vista has a single block schedule.
  - All 7 periods are offered on Monday, Thursday, and Friday
  - Tuesday (odd) and Wednesday (even) are the block days.
  - Graham explained the similarities between the single block schools and the double block schools.
  - A parent made an observation that there are big differences between tutorial times at each school, e.g. HHS offers 4 days/week while the other schools only offer 2.

Graham explained how instructional minutes are calculated and recorded.

- The principal or executive assistant usually compiles the instructional minute calculation.
- The calculation needs to incorporate regular and special days.
- Graham reviewed the rules for defining and calculating instructional minutes.
- Graham explained that during 2008, the state relaxed the 180 day requirement due to the state budget crisis. For several years, schools were allowed to reduce their student instructional calendar to 175 days. This was so school districts could furlough teachers for up to 5 days in order to save money. Last year, the state reintroduced the 180 day, 64,800 minute requirements. FUHSD has maintained a 180 day instructional calendar.
- Graham explained the contractual requirement for teachers to have a 40 minute duty free lunch. Neither lunch nor brunch may be included in instructional minutes or required contract minutes.
- Standardized testing time causes challenges for meeting instructional minute requirements for

different grade levels because testing occurs in some grades only.

- Graham explained again that the minimal instructional day for students is 64,800 minutes and 180 days, with 240 minutes being the minimum day and an absolute minimum of 180 minutes (utilized in cases of emergency).
- A district administrator clarified that the 240 minutes is a daily average calculated over 2 consecutive days, however no day is allowed to be less than 180 minutes.
- Graham explained that if a school day cancellation occurs, special permission is required if the 180 day requirement is not met.
- There was discussion about the required days (180) and minutes (64,800) detailed in the Education Code.
- Graham explained that more days means a higher cost to districts due to teacher and staff salaries. The teacher work year is 185 days. This is different from the 180 days for students because 5 of these are non-contact days for students (professional development and teacher work days).

Graham reviewed the instructional minute calculations for each school with the taskforce.

- Graham explained the instructional minutes summary and how this was calculated separately for each grade (9 - 12).
  - Graham explained how rally schedules, emergency drill schedules, and other special schedules all needed to be included separately.
  - Graham discussed how an excess occurs at each school above the 64,800 minute requirement, however, this is usually a very small overage and is not really something that can help solve the problem of extra time/sleep for students.
  - Polly explained that basic aid school districts like FUHSD don't get more revenue for lost days as Average Daily Attendance (ADA) schools do.
- A principal explained how instructional minute plans can change during the year.
- Graham explained again the difference between teacher contract time and student required instructional minutes.
- A parent asked about whether or not there was a requirement for all students to take 7 periods. Graham explained that the 64,800 minute requirement assumes kids take all 7 periods because the schools offers this. Whether they take them or not is not a consideration.
- A parent confirmed that the 64,800 minutes is about accountability for the school and not for the students.
- There was more discussion about rallies. Most schools don't include rally minutes in their instructional minute calculations because they do not require students to be there - they are voluntary activities. If rallies are required activities, then schools can count the for instructional minutes.
- There was more discussion about special days that impact required minutes, e.g. standardized testing days, finals days, grad practice, etc.
- A parent explained that according to brief calculations that he had made, that there is limited opportunity to make adjustments to the start time that would make a significant difference for student sleep if the end time stays the same because there is very little excess in school instructional minutes.
- A student agreed that the challenge of the issue is impacted by the restrictions of instructional minutes.
- A parent cited information from the American Association of Pediatrics that concludes that a student's day is better with a later start because they become more efficient in everything they do.
- A parent expressed concerns about kids missing class time due to sports if the decision was made to start later and end later if sports contests started at the same time.
- An assistant principal explained that any student could request no period 1(except at HHS when period 2 starts at 7:50 a.m. 2 days per week) and start at 8:30 if they wanted to as there is

no need to take 7 classes. She asked if this is a problem that is already solved as the solution of choosing no 1st period is already an option.

- A parent expressed the need to increase efficiency in other after school programs as well. She believes there is no control over the amount of practice time that coaches require of athletes and others in after school activities, e.g. band. She believes these inefficiencies are built into after school activities because there is no hard finish time. Finish time depends on individual coach desires.
- A student explained that some students have to take a 1st period if they are in a particular class that is scheduled during period 1 and at no other time during the day. In some cases these may be mandatory classes such as AVID. Therefore she doesn't feel the problem is solved.
- A principal explained that facilities can be a problem. In athletics, there's a maximum time allowed for practices and games but in band there is not. Schools are supposed to monitor the time athletes spend in their sports through their school Athletic Directors (ADs).
- A parent said that she believes coaches don't follow these rules and cause after school activity time to be extended, including Saturdays. She suggested that these additional practice days and times be optional.
- Graham provided instructional minute requirement information from the California Department of Education website. He again explained the change from 180 days and 64,800 minutes to 175 days and 63,000 minutes during the economic downturn around 2008.
- He explained that the penalty school districts incur by not providing students with the required number of minutes is to lose their funding apportionment, i.e. schools could lose 1.1% of the money that they are entitled to for each day lost.
- Special closures that are beyond the school's control may receive state dispensation, e.g. probably the Oroville school district (currently) due to the evacuation of the city.
- However, errors in calculations would not receive any special provisions or allowances and could incur the full 1.1% penalty.
- A student said that she very much appreciates the variety of classes that students are offered in FUHSD schools. However, one of the problems is that this variety and choice makes it difficult to make decisions about courses to take. She explained that she thought many students take 7 classes because they are interested in the subjects and content. However, this ties back to the problem of kids wanting to learn in an engaging environment but are conflicted with the time required to be involved in this type of environment.

### **Wrap Up: Trudy**

- February 27 Board Room 3:30-7 p.m. with dinner provided\*
  - Participation in athletics and associated activities (John Dwyer, Steve Puccinelli, and Brad Metheany, Commissioner of the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League)
  - Review survey data
  - Planning for March 2: Community forum on Student Wellness

Community Forums: 7-9 p.m. in the cafeteria at Homestead High School

- Thursday, March 2 (overview)
- Tuesday, March 14 (topic specific)

### **Discussion**

- Trudy explained details of the next meeting on 2/27 in the FUHSD Board Room. Due to the amount of content, taskforce members were asked to be available until 7:00 p.m.
- Minh asked if anyone would like to speak for 10-15 seconds to share any key takeaway or new learning:
  - A parent shared that she now knew that the 2 community forums would be held at HHS.

- A parent said she would like to make a philosophical observation; that the main conflict in students is a desire to pursue academics versus a desire to pursue after school activities. She believes that if students wish to do one or the other then this seems to be OK, but if kids want to do both, then a problem/conflict is created that is difficult to solve.
- A parent would like this conversation to include coaches, ADs, and activities staff, to involve them in the solution and share that there is a need and desire to include them.
- A parent shared that she is concerned that although students may take 6 periods and start later, they will still often miss part of their 6th period if they are in athletics.
- A parent expressed concern that there currently seems to be no connection between athletics, band, and the academic requirement of 64,800 instructional minutes for students. Teachers do not seem to be working together with coaches to look at the time impact on kids. This is a complex issue.
- A student asked if the taskforce will be addressing mental health and sleep issues as well.
- Minh replied that the group will get to the 3 areas summarized; wellness, which includes mental health, sleep deprivation, and stress and school-life balance in due course.
- A student asked that the taskforce focus on students involved in athletics and look at what they have to deal with.

#### **Action Items**

- Minh and Trudy will develop an agenda ensuring all the questions members asked and recorded on the taskforce google spreadsheet will be addressed.
- Trudy will post some items and information in the taskforce google folder so members can prepare themselves ahead of time, e.g. schools with later start schedules in our athletic league (SCVAL - Santa Clara Valley Athletic League)