

Wellness Taskforce

March 6, 2017

Facilitator: Trudy Gross, Assistant Superintendent

Consultant: Minh Le, President, Wilfred Jarvis Institute

Scope of Work

- Defined problem: students struggle with mental 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

Brief review on advocacy and inquiry: Minh

- Minh shared the process of working as a team, testing our mental model, making changes, ending up with something different that reflects collective efforts
- Influence is built through the quality of inquiry, not the strength of advocacy
- Break through impasses together
- Minh provided a handout on Balancing Advocacy and Inquiry from "The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization" by Peter Senge (copy located in our shared file)

Exploring the collaborative relationship between the Fremont Education Association and the District: Jon Stark, Teacher and FEA Chief Negotiator (writes the contract, puts decisions into language; counselor to the unit), and Jason Heskett, Teacher and FEA President

- Relationship between FEA and District is based on vigilant trust; basic faith that each side will do the right thing; FEA leadership watches carefully, asks questions; this is a process of being sure everyone is on the same page and doing the right thing
 - Began as a financial way of doing business and has evolved into an all-encompassing collaboration; a continuing process since 2000-2001 which allows for a focus on students
 - There is trust on both sides, look into cases when errors occur
 - Good for kids with the understanding of constraints
 - Allows for creative solutions
 - An example of this collaboration: 6 years with no raises and a 4.9% salary rollback resulted in no layoffs
 - There are no top-down announcements; when that does seem to be happening an uncomfortable feeling begins to occur among the membership
- Bell schedules began with teachers creating what works for students at their site; people get comfortable with what they know and use on a daily basis and uncomfortable when change may be proposed; there is an expectation of control and strong voice in any change
- Ongoing respect and cooperative relationship
- Revenue Sharing Practice (not salary negotiation): revenue that is available, subtract the cost and each unit makes decisions about how to distribute the amount that is left over among their members
 - Polly reviewed the “off the top” expenses that are paid for by all units such as food service, support for English Learners and students with disabilities
 - Teachers could work in surrounding districts for a greater salary, in FUHSD there is a feeling of empowerment (“control of their fate”) that is highly valued as an employee and keeps them in the district
 - There may be disagreements but we work together to find a solution
 - Professionalism, rather than protectionism, is the primary goal
- Jason shared that he sees many of the same diverse opinions and values in the teachers organization and the Taskforce: interventions, concern about student stress; if this group can come to some agreement it will assist in the process with the teachers
- Jon shared that one reason teachers may not be more represented on the Taskforce is the District has operated “lean and mean” for a long time; teachers are stretched with a variety of responsibilities; teachers understand and appreciate that Jason is representing them as part of the Taskforce, their decreased representation does not reflect a lack of caring.
- A parent referenced the timeline slide with recommendations to FEA by May 8, his expectation is that Jason will share teacher views within the Taskforce as the drafting process is occurring; would be helpful to share opposing views and not just views that are in line with the Taskforce; he would like information as the process occurs in order to limit surprises after the recommendations are shared with FEA
- A parent shared that many of the areas being discussed are in the control of the teachers such as homework; she is concerned that we may not have recommendations by May 8; she is willing to continue to work with the Taskforce

- o Jon shared that teachers have direct control over the workload in class however he sees it as one component of many other things: peer pressure, student perceptions about what is needed for college entry, etc.
 - o Jason provided the example of another teacher on the Taskforce who calibrates the workload she assigns while needing to keep in mind that she has students in all grade levels, taking a variety of classes (including AP and honors). This teacher shared that she does use a conflict calendar in her classroom but there are challenges when scheduling/accommodating 180 students.
- A parent talked about extra-curriculars and viewing them from the standpoint of what keeps students balanced, part of their wellness; we need to focus on not just the start time, but also the end time
 - o Another parent reinforced that the issue is not just about start time but also end time
 - o Jason responded by saying that he has probably 300 teachers who feel the same way
- A parent shared that she understood we were dealing with sleep deprivation first, that doesn't only mean the start time but also different forms such as 1st period off, block schedule, etc.
- A parent shared that there is a misconception of a couple days of late start is; fluctuation of a couple hours results in "jet lag", an example of this is for students at HHS who have No 1st but 2nd period starts at 7:50 a.m. two days per week; she feels this is not a viable solution
 - o A parent shared that his son has two different start schedules, Dr. Pelayo mentioned that it may not be possible to get up at the same time everyday but said that within an hour should work; within the student's/parents control to manage the time difference in schedule (mitigate 'jet lag' school starts by not sleeping in on late start days)
- Minh reinforced Jason's role as a two way bridge with the teachers association, will help him make the case with the members
- A parent reiterated that it would help to understand what is important to the teachers: student wellness, traffic, having brunch
 - o Jason said all of it depending on what teacher, what they teach, where they live; school related passions in connection with their personal circumstances
- A parent stated that people who have worked in a collaborative environment understand how good solutions come from transparency, there is a need for trust from good communication.
- Three schools (CHS, LHS, MVHS) have 2 days of block, two schools (FHS and HHS) have 4 days of block, those are the types of schedules currently in the District; basic principles could be offered from which to make decisions
- A parent asked, regarding the sharing of teachers across campuses; given there are different schedules would a delay in start time change the complication?
 - o Jason didn't see an added burden; an alignment of schedules, as Polly shared, might assist in the challenge of sharing teachers
 - o Jon shared that more commonality may help with lower enrolled classes such that 3 sections at one campus and 2 at another could be supported; more challenging with 5 schedules. However, he emphasized that the sharing of teachers across

campuses is a miniscule concern compared to the other factors to consider when modifying bell schedules, noting that typically a school will have only 1-2 teachers who teach at 2 schools.

- A student brought back up a point from the beginning: since we know we need 64,800 instructional minutes in 180 days, a solution could be electives in the morning and academics in the afternoon.
 - Trudy segued into the topic of master scheduling stating that this question had been incorporated

4:30 p.m. Review of course selection and master schedule building: Lori and Ben

Questions in preparation for the topic of school schedules and student data:

- How many students take 5 vs 6 vs 7 classes at each high school?
- How many students taking 5 or 6 classes have the 7:35 am or 7:55 am class for each high school?

Located in School Schedules and Instructional Minutes folder

- SchoolBellSchedules_SCVAL_CUHSD: includes information about what is offered during 0 period in districts that have that in their schedule

Discuss information gathered from other districts that have delayed start time and 0 period

Presentation by Lori Riehl, former Scheduling Assistant Principal at FHS, and Ben Clausnitzer, former Scheduling Assistant Principal at MVHS

- Ben shared that the words innovative, collaborative, transparent, etc. utilized in the discussion about the relationship between FEA and the District are present in the master schedule building process
- See PowerPoint presentation
 - Scheduling Philosophy (slide 2)
 - Elements that affect a master schedule: facilities, shared faculty, teacher subject area, # of sections, enrollment, special programs, student course requests (slide 3)
 - Maximizing access to a comprehensive program: evolves each year based on student requests (slide 4)
 - Sample master schedule timeline was reviewed highlighting the outward facing activities that involve students and families and the internal processes between administrators, office staff, teachers, etc. (slides 5-7)
 - Minh asked where would a decision such as all electives in the morning be reflected in the process. This would occur in the spring during the Build/Re-Build process, based on student data and school values
 - A parent asked about how far the school will go to accommodate student course requests, noting that it is probably unlikely the school will hire new teachers to accommodate a popular course. Lori reflected back on faculty and facilities,
 - Bryan gave an example of how accommodations are made over a couple years as changes in student course requests evolve and can be aligned with facility availability. But these changes can't be made quickly; they typically take several years.
 - A parent asked what % of students get their course requests? We guarantee 6 classes, typically those requested, no guarantee for 7

classes; typically students will pick an alternate, if neither can be filled a guidance counselor will have a conversation with the student

- o A current junior said that she has not had an issue over the past 3 years in receiving the classes she requested including two special programs
- o Bryan reinforced the effort not to offer singleton classes (i.e., classes with only one section) during the same period which can constrain student choice
- o Ben shared that anecdotally he sees 90%+ of students get their first 6 course requests.
- Lori shared that most often teachers would like to continue to teach the same subject(s), there are times when course needs change which necessitate changes in what courses will be taught
 - Jason shared that ultimately the administrators work to match teachers with what they want to teach
 - Polly shared that this works best given that most of our schools are over 2000 students
- o Minimizing conflicts and maximizing access (slide 8)
 - Description of singletons: classes for which there is only 1 section
- o Review of the process to minimize conflicts (students having to choose between two courses) class-by-class (slides 9-12)
 - Begin with singletons; classes with greater numbers of sections, such as English, will be loaded into the program last
 - Placement decisions made with a team including teacher leadership
 - A student clarified the rationale for minimizing conflict: 1st period rather than conflict with a class; prioritize courses over time of day
 - A parent asked how a late start would impact the scheduling process, conflicts, etc.
 - Ben responded that as a school district committed to a 7 period day there would not be a change
 - Lori and Kami shared there could be an increase in the number of students who request No 7th course
 - A parent pointed out that fewer students may request No 1st with a delayed start as part of the schedule
 - Ben talked about whether there is a threshold to when to maintain or problem solve a conflict, there has been an approach of 1 student was too many in order to maximize student access
 - Bryan shared that as the process continues there becomes no place where there are no conflicts so the decision making process, supported by overall values, is key
 - A parent commented on this as a highly constrained process, degrees of freedom decrease as the process advances; he reiterated that we don't look at which constraint is more important but return to the guiding principles
 - A classified staff member talked about the set of classes that are

dictated by graduation requirements, A-G eligibility and that we have a need to institutionalize a mental health class, not just the current physical health classes; if the district values mental wellness, can the district mandate

- o Trudy shared about the section allocation and needing to review priorities of what classes are part of a comprehensive school system; she mentioned that education in the area of wellness was the most common write-in response by staff on the student wellness survey
- o A parent shared the Freshman advisory that started at HHS this year; potential to offer instruction in areas such as mental health, etc. (offered during Friday tutorial, groups of 20, classified and certificated staff are involved)
- o Number of classes students take, SY 2016-17 (slide 13)
 - A parent stated that, at HHS, the administration told parents and students that if they choose No 1st Period, that would reduce their chances of getting the electives they want. So parents and students end up not choosing No 1st Period for that reason.
- o Discussion question (slide 14)
 - A student shared there's only so much we can do given the constraints, singletons need to be considered
 - A parent shared that it is her understanding that students choosing to have a 1st period assists in getting all classes but determined that this discussion of multiple factors would show that to be a myth
 - Kami shared that one of the ways she thinks about this is when you have 3 teachers in art that's 15 sections, she would not be able to schedule 15 sections of art all in the morning due to a number of logistical factors
 - A parent shared that there are pluses to offering classes such as art and PE in the morning, she does see and knows from her experience and the presentation that there are too many elements, student and staff needs; she asked if there are situations where individual considerations can be made to support mental health needs of a student
 - Ben shared that if a student might be in distress, very rarely would no action be taken, such as changing a schedule
 - A parent asked about students requesting an open period
 - Bryan shared that a free block is not "offered", it is preferred that students are scheduled continuously; there are times when students have an open block, sometimes they have made this request
 - April agreed that when students make a request for an open period, discussion not through the course request, they work to address the request
 - Kami shared that a "hole" was rebranded as a "study period"; students may come in and make the request; provides a break, downtime to balance a load
 - Minh asked what is the answer to scheduling electives in the morning and academics in the afternoon

- A parent stated that if a late start were put in place, there won't be a strong need to schedule electives in the morning anymore.
- A teacher shared that she teaches Algebra 1 and Algebra 1 restart, the biggest part of student success is working with her outside of class, some of whom are athletes, she doesn't want to take away from brunch and lunch; students rarely choose to come before school starts
- April shared that philosophically it is a problem to prioritize the schedule or certain classes over others, all courses are equally important which is true to what a comprehensive high school means

Review Community Forum on Student Wellness held on March 2 and prepare for March 14th: Trudy and Minh

Trudy began with an overview of highlights from March 2:

- Homework
- Time management
- Advanced Placement classes
- UC and college admission process
- Local school start times and traffic
 - Traffic impact : family transportation, buses, transportation for students with disabilities (Trudy creating a document including information about CEQA and legal input)
- Athletics/Extra-curricular activities
- Concern was expressed about the “Root Cause” of student stress (e.g., UC admissions standards, etc.)
- It was pointed out that there were no student sleep-related studies with a CA focus included by the AAP

Those who were present shared the following...

- Isabelle commented on her desire for a teacher statement because the community noticed that teachers were not present
 - Clarity of the teachers' position would be helpful
 - Jason stated he would be in attendance on March 14 and is checking with Jon Start
- How can we increase students' participation to get the input from students? The students who were there stole the show, and we could use more students at the next forum.
 - A School Loop email to all students inviting them to the next forum could be effective at getting more student participation.
 - Can we emphasize that parents bring their students with them?
 - We could ask IDC to attend or ASB students from each school.
 - The announcement being on the homepage of a site may not be enough. It does not cause a student to feel invited.
 - A lot of the parents' concerns were individual concerns and it's hard for them to have a broader perspective.
- Is there a way to manage community members' comments throughout the session?
 - The number of hands increased significantly when Minh said, “5 minutes left”

- o Have scheduled question periods throughout (e.g., 10 minutes of questions for every X minutes of presentation)
- At the last forum, an informal survey was done on the 28 attendees to find out their opinions on whether we should delay start. However, this is a biased and statistically insignificant sample. Can we do an unbiased, statistically-significant survey of stakeholders? A gentleman attending the last forum brought up this same issue, that so far, our surveys have been biased due to self-selection.
- Recap concerns that have been discussed that we cannot control (e.g., the UC admissions)
 - o Acknowledge it, but explain that we're not addressing that right now
 - o Could this be on posters with post-its around the room & people can comment there as opposed to aloud??
- Do we want to have focus questions? Or break out groups?
- We could provide a list of things that we're taking into account if/when we change the schedule/move the start time back.
- Can we provide the community with the other schools' schedules so that they have a bigger context?
- Change the scope from just HHS or MVHS to include the entire school district
- Seeing a table with start & end times for each school might be helpful, not as overwhelming as seeing every schedule.
- The effect of having no 1st is different... free 7th
- Constraints on after-school athletics, scheduling, and practice times, etc.
- Can we share the constraints with the group that we learned over the course of the wellness committee meetings that we now know how much flexibility we do have. We learned what we cannot do by law.
- Can everyone go through these details in small groups & review a packet of information & clear up confusion & answer questions to have a more productive discussion after that.
- Present survey data re: the late start from each of the 3 groups
- Important to share what the topic is with some specificity
- Be conservative on the presentation time to allow for more time for input & questions
- Colleen can attend & speak; Jenny will try to get there; Benaifer can attend as well
- Can we start on time, but spend a few minutes by surveying the audience for their main reason, question, or concern for attending. This will allow meeting to start on time and audience to get engaged while those arriving late settle in.
 - o Can we have something showing what we have already discussed as people walk in (e.g., during the 1st 10-15 minutes) with people standing near key topics & collecting comments
 - o People on the TF can have a button or name tag facilitating & mingling with post-its & taking down ideas, comments
- "Eruptors" can speak to Minh or Polly
- Put things to the side that are NOT the topic but recognize their existence
- 15 minutes will be about relationship with teachers' association
- Is there a way to share with the community that if we start at 8:30 when we would end?
 - o A majority of parents are concerned about when school starts & ends; not the middle
 - o What a 30 minute to a 60 minute delay would look like at each site?
 - o *Squeezing the school day* scenarios? Present ideas for squeezing the school day?

- o Is this an option? What is the quality of the time students' spend in class?
- o Maintaining the cushion for teacher care
- o Paly & Gunn went from 5 to 10 minute passing periods with great success (supported by student survey following implementation).
 - Patrick doesn't see that students want this additional passing time. A parent concurred, that students may not need additional passing time based on interviewing other students. A parent thought that they would adjust to a longer passing time, and find benefits in it.

Wrap Up

- El Camino Hospital Health Mind Panel
 - o Monday, March 20 from 7:30-9 p.m. in the Shannon Theatre at FHS (flyer in Google drive)
 - o The following presentations for students are scheduled at FHS during the school day
 - Period 3 – Dr. Huseni, a sleep specialist will be speaking with students about the importance of sleep
 - Period 4 – Dr. Britney Blair and Dr. Rie Lebus will give a presentation on healthy sleep
 - Periods 5 and 6 - Dr. Nahal Zakerani will speak about overall teen mental health including managing stress and school/life balance
- Next meeting
 - March 20 PLC 3:30-5:30 p.m.
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

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

- April 3 Board Room *3:30-7 p.m.
Input from sleep "experts" (maybe be a document based on consultation and answering TF member questions)
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