

Community Council Meeting
Viewmont High School – Media Center
January 21, 2021

In attendance: Bridget Lee, Jenny Pitt, Tiffany Rees, Karen Romrell, Lisa Cook, Apri Fenn, Malissa Wolfer, Jason Smith, Kellen Jones, Annette Godfrey, Whitney Keller, Porter Johnson, Jack Brown, Ty Hoffman, Neola Jones

Attending via Zoom: Kathleen Bailey, Ben Horsley, Chad Bowles

Excused: Michele Strong, Julie Summerhays, Johnny Garrison, Justin Brooks, Shawn Johnson, Annette Godfrey

Welcome by Jenny Pitt. We are partially on zoom for a few members, so she asked if everyone who speaks could come to the center table to speak clearly into the microphone.

- Jenny explained that each member had received a proposed School Improvement Plan for the 2021-22 school year. Hopefully today we can come up with a School Improvement Plan, with goals that are measurable. Malissa had attached the academic information to show where Viewmont might be lacking.
- Malissa Wolfer spoke on that subject. She stated that last year we did something we had not done at VHS, we developed a Development Coordinator (through a Trustlands request for part of that person's salary). That position is held by Kristin Van Brunt. She is offering staff development opportunities and even doing staff mentoring. Kristin is here to explain to us how that money has been spent.
- Kristin Van Brunt said that one of the main things she's done this school year is putting together a set of missions for staff development every two weeks. She sends out the link to all faculty members and then she presents them in faculty meeting. They basically have a 2-week period to do as many as they want and they earn re-licensure points. Each time they get a set, there is one that is general development, like a podcast that they can listen to. There is always a canvas related one that will help them to know canvas better. The third one is SEL related. It's trying to give teachers a way to destress, and self-care (suggestions like taking a walk or hike). The fourth one is usually some kind of digital tool or engagement strategy to get kids to try something new in their class, such as using Nearpod. The fifth one is Standards Based Learning. Our faculty is in different places on this and this is in bite-sized pieces so that they can get into this bit by bit. She displayed the set that we are working on right now.
- Jason Smith commented that the idea behind this position is that most of the feedback we receive in the past has been that the usual professional development for teachers takes you out of the classroom, and this does not do that. These are bite-sized pieces that teachers can do when they have a little time. The other thing that is positive is that these are local issues that are important to us in this school, she can find out what we need right now. It has been invaluable at our school. It's been "encouraged" this year, because of all that is required of teachers right now, but next year it will go to more of a "required" activity for teachers. It was important to us

that whoever did this needed to still have a foot in the classroom, so she is still experiencing what she is talking about. She works with teachers who have concerns, and provisional teachers. We make it clear that she is not part of the admin team, that she is one of them.

- Jenny Pitt asked if teachers had accepted these opportunities well. Kristin said that teachers have received it very well, and she had not had any negative responses. Jenny asked if the SEL ever includes how to deal with students' emotional issues, but Kristin said that this year it has mostly been focused on our teachers' emotional health. Jenny talked about the positive changes she has witnessed in her time on Community Council. She opened the meeting to suggestions and feedback on possible goals.
- Kristin Van Brunt suggested that Goal #3 is problematic in its wording; regarding stating that we will measure progress on the Aspire test, considering that we were not able to give the Aspire test in 2020. Malissa pointed out that the state will not accept something that we cannot quantify the student achievement. We do not have to use the Aspire test, we can use any other test to measure by. Discussion about the Aspire test, versus using ACT test. Malissa stated that it is important for us to have empowered employees, and when the funding comes from Trustlands it has to be measurable progress by students' achievement. Jason Smith thinks that they will let us choose whether to use this as a Trustlands or a TSSA Goal, regarding standards based or traditional grading. Right now our trending is not good, going towards too many F's, and that is possibly a measurement tool, as well. Educating our teachers will bring our students to a higher proficiency. We need to decide if we use grades, are we using I's F's and D's, or what do you do?
- Goal 3 is on empowered employees, but they are choosing their areas of development. Do we combine goals 3 and 4, take out the Aspire plus language and put in the language about the percent of failing grades? Do we want to measure a decrease in failing grades? Or do we want to measure proficient grades, and then we have the question of what is a "proficient grade? Passing is not always proficient.
- Tiffany Rees asked the question of the difference in students preparing for tests; some kids test better than others, and April Fenn said that in reality teachers are all different as well. Jenny Pitt said that hopefully over time, we will have more people using standards based grading and this will help with proficiency. Jenny suggests using failing grades as our point of measurement. It is agreed that this is a very measurable method.
- Karen Romrell stated that the measurement doesn't have to be increased or decreased, but can also be measurable if it stays the same... especially considering the situation with Covid, where maintaining can be enough? Jason said he is uncomfortable with just maintaining as a goal. He is concerned that it's trending in the wrong direction. He wants to be able to share a goal with the staff, to get their participation and their ideas on how to stop this trend. Kellen Jones asked if this measures at the end of the grading period or is it after remediation. Jason explained that there could be ways that the trend could shift a little through remediation. It could shift a little, but after the end of the academic year, it's pretty much set.
- Malissa Wolfer presented the proposed rewording by Mrs. Van Brunt. There was discussion on the exact wording that would make the goal acceptable to the state. Kathleen Bailey (via Zoom) asked if we could add regarding failing grades. Jenny asked for input from the student officers. The proposed new wording was read by Malissa Wolfer.

- Jenny asked how the council feels about goals 1 and 2 – Discussion on wording there. Karen Findley confirmed that the data used is on the one junior ACT test that they take, not on any other tests that students take.
- Due to the absence of some members and some leaving early, Malissa motioned that we send out the proposed new wording to all voting members by email, and they could “reply all” to make their vote public. This will be documented by email record. The motion was unanimously approved. * Results below.
- Tiffany Rees brought concerns from some parents to the Council, about teachers doing group projects, especially during Covid, where the students should be able to choose their own group because they get held back by the students in their classes. Discussion was had, but Mr. Smith suggested that in the end, students need to work with the teacher regarding their concerns. Mrs. Van Brunt stated that, as a teacher, she would rather have the student come to her rather than the parent.

Lisa Cook made a motion to end the meeting. Jenny Pitt seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

***NOTE: The results of the email voting are as follows:**

Yea: Kathleen Bailey, Ben Horsley, Bridget Lee, Jenny Pitt, Tiffany Rees, Karen Romrell, Michele Strong, Lisa Cook, April Fenn, Johnny Garrison, Malissa Wolfer, Jason Smith.

Nay: none

Proposed School Improvement Plan unanimously approved.