

## Uintah Elementary School Community Council Meeting

September 17, 2020

4:45 – 6:00 pm

### **Attending:**

Bruce Simpson, Amy Taylor, Ellen Schwede, Jacob Skog, Amanda Funai, Carol Theurer, Erika Hill, Caroline Moreno, Angie Carter, Weston Clark, Jen Foth, Samuel Hanson, Melissa Jansen, Mary Jane Moore

### **Open Meeting**

#### **Presentation From Mary Jane Moore, School Counselor**

##### Positive Behavior Plan (e-cigarette and other substance use by students)

Ms. Moore shares a slide of our positive behavior plan; this is required, must align with HB 58 addressing electric cigarettes in school. SLCS Policy S3 Student Conduct Policy contains this. Each school must create a policy. Ms. Moore is the PB Specialist and will administer the plan. Plan is due to Emily Sutherland on October 9<sup>th</sup>. She will review and submit to the Board. End of year PB plan will be due for the end of the year. As far as input from the SCC, she is open to suggestions. She has a template she is completing for this plan. [Attached] It includes programs in place regarding peer-pressure, positive relationships, and mental health, and those that are being built. Jake is against e-cigarettes in schools. Ms. Moore explains that the Legislature believes we need more explicit instruction about the dangers of these cigarettes as their use is increasingly common among younger children. Bruce emphasizes how under- and misinformed the kids are about the dangers, and thinks that anything we can do now to counteract this is important. The instruction Ms. Moore will provide will be mostly upper grades, perhaps a bit for 3<sup>rd</sup>. Last year she was a District Social Worker, and the use of vaping in school during the day was very surprising. Jake asks if we currently start with 3<sup>rd</sup>; Ms. Moore intends to research evidence-based programs to see what is appropriate for each grade. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade would receive more instruction on peer pressure and positive relationships. Substance abuse instruction is more for 4-6. Ms. Moore welcomes questions to her through email. Caroline asks how much new programming will you need to do for this new law vs. how much does the PBIS plan already have in place? Ms. Moore explains that the PBIS does have some programs that address more peer pressure/mental health/social emotional learning. This particular subset of that plan will be more new, specific education addressing substance use and abuse. She can inform parents when she has located good curriculum that is proven effective.

#### **General Discussion - (approx 5-10 minutes on each topic)**

##### Remote learning attendance policy and excused absences (Erika Hill)

Erika is interested in how, who, and when to notify of absences when we are remote. Bruce instructs that we are going to be updating attendance on Wednesdays. Notifications from Power School have been turned off. Some students are unable to attend certain live meetings and may complete their work and exit tickets later. Attendance will then be based on student engagement from the previous Tuesday. The system is intended to be flexible. Direct questions to teachers, attendance secretary Annie, or

Bruce. Carol says that most teachers are looking at the Zoom meetings to see who is there. If you have internet problems alert the teacher. Amanda asks if a child was ill: should they go back and do the work? Bruce says this is flexible; discuss with the teacher. Carol adds that we need to clarify with teachers: do parents need to call the office so the absence is excused?, and as far as work is concerned, the teacher can decide what back work is needed.

#### Reflections on first week of remote learning (chair)

Jake did not realize how much asynchronous time there would be on Wednesdays. Things went fairly smoothly for his son this week, who was trouble-shooting easily, and teachers were getting in touch quickly for problems. Amy echoes these sentiments; she was impressed with how flexible the kids were, and how much actual learning took place this first week. Carol compliments Amanda's son for trouble-shooting on the spot. Angie clarifies that Wednesdays were intended to be more independent work, leaving time for small group meetings with the kids and communicating on a smaller scale. She uses the Teams feature to stay in touch with the kids. The kids will have three additional asynchronous days this year to help make up for the missed week. Bruce confirms this. Teachers will be touching base in more personal ways once every two weeks at least. Jenny loved Wednesday; she was able to plan work meetings while her kids were taken care of and there was no need to manage Zoom meetings. Angie describes it as a day to regroup, for everyone, teachers, students, parents. Melissa says that her son was delighted to do some math in a breakout group, working with a few friends. Will there be more of those? Carol says it will depend on the teacher and what's going on. Angie explains that kids can communicate with each other on Teams as well. Everything on Teams is recorded, so behavior is monitored, and the kids are told this. Weston asks about 504/IEP accommodations. How is the school addressing these? Bruce responds that these are one of the things that is coming up to touch base with these students and parents. Many things on the 504s don't necessarily work right now, but some other things do. These will be discussed with parents. Bruce is the 504 point of contact. New teacher Taylor Gufstason is reaching out to IEP families for input. She and her para Ms. Mortenson are working on providing support the best way for each student. They are trying to work this out individually. Several students have come in nearly every day this first week; others meet regularly in breakouts or small groups with Ms Gustafson. We have hired at least one para per grade level to help support teachers and distance learning. Angie confirms that legally we're required to meet the needs of those students. Bruce emphasizes the need to look at things individually and be flexible. There will be other changes if perhaps we do move to a hybrid method. Samuel adds that he has heard from other schools that being remote has actually allowed some parents with kids who are immunocompromised to come in and get things done, whereas they would not if we were in person. Weston thanks everyone for their work on this.

#### Yearbook and community event discussion rolled over from August (Jennifer Foth)

Jenny sent an email a few weeks ago to the teachers. Only got feedback from one (there is a lot going on). Interstate is working out really well. She already has access to the site, and it's not going to be hard to get it laid out and ready to go. She'll get in touch with teachers in a few weeks when things have calmed down. There are many ideas out there right now. Bruce reports that last night's PTA meeting threw out the idea of a PTA Instagram page to get photos. Jenny likes the idea, but worries about parents who don't have as much access will be underrepresented, whereas in a normal year, she always visits every class at least twice to cover everyone. Perhaps teachers could do some sort of assignment so we get something from every kid? Melissa jumped in to mention that it came up in conjunction with the

fun run. Could they come up with a hashtag maybe, that could promote that content to use it. This would be voluntary content, and would be an easy way to collect this. Bruce says SIC can discuss getting some blurbs and written content from kids. Angie thinks most teachers would be willing, but would welcome whatever Jenny wants rather than have the teachers make something up. Angie would hesitate to make it an assignment. Jenny asks, an enrichment assignment? Carol says kids could photograph their art and send it in. Amy jumped in to compliment how great the yearbook has been and Jenny's hard work is evident. Jenny sent a shorter message to teachers with a few items to select from. Melissa asks who might manage an IG page – Jenny is willing to take this on. She can use the same gmail that is set up for yearbook submissions.

## **Reports**

### Principal

Bruce thanks everyone, teachers, parents, students – this week has been challenging but also rewarding. Everyone wants what is best for their kids. We knew there would be bumps in the road, but we just needed to start and get the kinks worked out. Keep the perspective that this is still only the 4<sup>th</sup> day of school despite the calendar date. Some issues have nothing to do with us – tech glitches etc. One helpful thing is to assume positive intent from everyone, and then also to communicate, with a view to problem solving. No one aims to get anyone in trouble; we want to support each other. One parent shared with him that for many of us our resilience is spent. Bruce agrees, and when that happens, we can be short with others, or less of who we'd like to be. We can keep that in mind and work to support each other. The 25<sup>th</sup> is the extra asynchronous day. The next is the day before Thanksgiving, and the final is the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, a Friday. These are to make up for the three extra days we didn't get a waiver for. The extra four days we lost last week are still under discussion.

### SIC

Carol says SEPs are coming up October 7/8, from 3:00 – 7:00. Those will be on Zoom. For the three makeup days, the teachers are required to provide four hours of work for the kids. Scheduling for SEPs is open now, through the 24<sup>th</sup>.

### PTA

Melissa reports that there was some discussion of fundraising options. One main idea was to get a marquee. Ms. BC proposed "COVID has left its marquee on us". They are getting information on cost etc. Fundraising is on the back burner this year due to all the special challenges. Board members were all voted in and approved. Bruce adds that an email was sent out as far as having lists for each classroom, for parents who'd like contact information for other kids in the class. They might go out next Monday. Ellen mentions that in lieu of a fun run, there will be a unicorn scavenger hunt around the neighborhood. Low-key, but a good excuse to get outside. There will be unicorns to put in windows for kids to look for. Alli Crockett is arranging participation prizes for the kids. It is probably the week of the 19<sup>th</sup>, give them a week to hunt for them.

## **Motions**

### Elect chair/vice chair

Bruce brings up membership on the Council. Bruce had an audit on the trust lands by the state. He asked if we need to have a certain amount of people on the committee. The rule is two more parents than employees. It's good to have specific guidelines on who has been voted in, and we'll want to establish procedures and guidelines such as saying what percentage do we need to ratify/pass something? Roberts Rules of Order are commonly used in many Councils. They also suggest that you don't elect everyone during the same year so that not all offices come up at once. It would be helpful to make these more formalized in the notes so we can have a track record to show our decisions. One person did fill out an application form. Jake mentions he joined last November. Longest institutional memory is Caroline. One year there was only one person interested in each position, so they scrapped elections, and haven't conducted them since. There has been good participation since then. Bruce confirms that we can't operate this way, but Jake adds that we've provided notice, and we don't have any candidates for open positions other than those who are already on the Council. Bruce agrees, and says simply that we need to formalize who is on the Council for this year. We need to record who are the actual voting members, and establish thresholds for ratification etc. Also, how many times must you attend meetings to be considered a voting member. These should be on the website. Caroline says these conversations have been had; they may not have been formalized on the website. She thinks that what we've been doing is working pretty well, and that we do not go too overboard on formalizing things, or elections. Carol is also a long-standing member, and it has always been put out there, but then we never need them. Jake says we need to distinguish between voting on items, and voting on members. Jake asks if anything has ever been written down, like by-laws? Carol says they are just those in Board Policy. Caroline recalls that missing more than two meetings disqualifies a voting member; Jake confirms this. The base level for a committee that is not a high school is four, but we can increase that. Carol says that in the past when an important issue will be voted on, the Council makes sure the representation is appropriate from each category. Carol suggests a minimum of a certain number to make a vote valid, and Jake concurs. If this threshold is met, we can conduct business. Jake wants to make this a motion, to formalize this "rule" without getting overly complicated. Carol says ideally we would have students from lower and higher grades. Erika reminds that last August there was interest from kindergarten parents, but complicated information on elections may have been spooked them. Bruce suggests we make a motion that the current people attending the meeting are the Committee for this year. Amy asks if that this is those attending, barring Samuel and Mary Jane. Jake seconds, a vote is taken. Motion passes. Ellen nominates Jake as Chair, Erika seconds, all vote in favor, none against. Amy nominates Caroline as Vice Chair, Jake seconds, all vote in favor, none opposed. Ratification threshold: Jake reports that a quorum is more than half, and a quorum conducts business.

### Meeting dates and times for 2020-2021

Jake moves to continue meetings on the second Thursday of the month, barring extenuating circumstances.

22<sup>nd</sup> October (conflicts with SEP and fall break 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks)

12<sup>th</sup> November

10<sup>th</sup> December (tentative)

14<sup>th</sup> January

11<sup>th</sup> February

11<sup>th</sup> March

8<sup>th</sup> April

13<sup>th</sup> May

10<sup>th</sup> June (tentative)

### **Final items**

#### Update on lights with neighbors

Bruce thinks they have been taken down. Bruce hasn't gone at night to check, but no news is good news on this. The rope chain across the entrance has cut down a lot on people going back there.

#### New evening custodian

Terrell, our evening custodian, graduated and got an IT job and is moving on, so we are getting a new evening custodian next week.

Angie thanks Jake for organizing and communicating clearly, which is so vital to running a good committee.

Jake moves to adjourn, Amy seconds.

### **Adjourn**