

HAMPTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
4591 SCHOOL DRIVE
ALLISON PARK, PENNSYLVANIA 15101
MARCH 12, 2018 MINUTES

The Hampton Township Board of School Directors met on Monday, March 12, 2018, in the Dr. Harold Sarver Library, Hampton Middle School, 4589 School Drive, Allison Park, PA 15101. Meeting

Attendance: Ms. Denise Balason, Mrs. Jill Hamlin, Mr. Bryant Wesley, Dr. Michael Loughead and Dr. Rebecca Cunningham, Messrs. Patrick Clair and Jeffrey Kline, along with a few Hampton Township residents. Attendance

Mrs. Mary Alice Hennessey, Mrs. Pam Lamagna, Mr. Robert Shages and Mr. Greg Stein participated via teleconference.

Mrs. Gail Litwiler and Mr. Larry Vasko were absent from the meeting.

No business requiring a quorum was on the agenda.

The meeting was called to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Bryant Wesley, President of the Board, served as Chairperson of the meeting. Mr. Jeffrey Kline, served as Recording Secretary.

Mrs. Hamlin and Dr. Loughead recognized District students for their various accomplishments during the Student Awards presentation. Student Awards

Mrs. Hamlin and Dr. Loughead recognized a senior from Hampton High School who along with his fellow A.W. Beattie classmates, attended the Pennsylvania Automotive Dealer Association Skill competition in Hershey, PA. The students had an impressive finish placing fourth overall. PA Automotive Dealer Association Skill Competition

Mrs. Hamlin and Dr. Loughead recognized three members of the Girls' Varsity Basketball Team for their selections to the WPIAL All-Section First and Second Teams. Girls' Basketball - WPIAL All-Section Team Selections

Mrs. Hamlin and Dr. Loughead recognized a team member from the Boys' Varsity Basketball Team for his selection to the WPIAL All-Section First Team. Boys' Basketball – WPIAL All-Section Team Selection

Poff First Grade teacher, Lisa Milsom, and Poff Library Media Specialist, Erin Prosser, shared the coding and computational thinking lessons that they developed for every elementary grade level to use during Computer Science Education Week, which takes place annually in December. Mrs. Hannagan, Building Principal of Poff explained the purpose of National Hour of Code and Coding Week, indicating that Poff was interested in taking these kinds of experiences and bringing them into the regular classroom. Mrs. Milsom said through STEM grants, Poff has been able to provide its students with a number of coding and computational thinking opportunities. She provided an overview of how the school incorporated coding into each grade level. Mrs. Prosser said she received training from Code.org a few years ago and used that training to help develop some of the activities for coding week and in the classrooms. Logical thinking, collaboration and communication are among the skills the students improve upon through coding exercises. Another one of Poff Presentation

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the outcomes of this week was that a group of fifth grade students created their own morning *Coders Club*. Fifth grader Zach W. explained how he and another student came up with the idea for the club, and Caitlyn G. said Star Wars games, music games and others are among the games the club has created. The students then explained their games to the Board, and Board members had an opportunity to play the games themselves. At the end of the presentation, Dr. Loughead thanked the parents of the students for their support and guidance.

Mr. Wesley opened the floor for public comment.

Comments

Julie Mikus introduced herself as a Hampton Middle School mom and said that a post she made on social media a few weeks ago garnered a lot of attention. Out of that discussion, a group of 20 parents got together to discuss safety and security. She commended the District for what it already is doing, but said she would like to see a very strong “see something, say something” campaign practiced in the District. She mentioned the Sandy Hook Promise as a program that could be enacted here. She noted the program is free. Mrs. Mikus went over the four steps of the program and provided the Board members with an informational sheet about the Sandy Hook Promise program.

School Safety
Concerns and
Comments

Sandy Stritzinger said she has been a Hampton resident for 15 years and her son graduated from Hampton. She has three younger children currently in the District. She said that she wants her children to know that if they are going to change the world, they need to start now, embracing the idea that diversity is reality and each child is unique. She encouraged the District to provide lessons to the younger students about diversity and uniqueness and being more accepting of those who are different. She said children learn through repetition and in addition to these values being taught at home, they should also be reinforced in the schools. She provided the Board with a handout with resources.

Nadine Smith said she is a seven-year resident with a daughter in the High School and another daughter in an elementary school. She stated that she is among the parents who have been working together to come up with solutions to share with the Board. She discussed a few technology options, including an anonymous alert app, which would allow the school community to provide alerts that fall in line with the “see something, say something” concept. She presented additional ideas such as police alert key fobs that call the police with the push of a button and apps for phones that would do the same thing. She noted that communication is the most important piece of keeping students safe; and if the school community feels safe in reporting concerns, that will help tremendously.

Diane Dixon said she has a son currently in High School and another child who already graduated. She said she has talked to her son, who told her for the most part, he feels safe in school. He told her that metal detectors might make him feel safer, but she noted that she was 50/50 on whether she thought they would make a difference. He also shared with her that bullying is an issue and that communication is very important. She said that while starting compassion and diversity lessons are important for young children, high school students should also be reminded of these lessons. She read a portion of a speech her daughter, who was involved with sports, wrote for a banquet. The speech noted that even as a captain on the team, she felt bullied by others, including parents of other players. She

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said her daughter was in a group, and still felt lonely, so awareness of these issues needs to happen at not only school but at home. She said that kids need to be aware of other kids and feelings, and that would go a long way toward solving some of these issues.

Jessica Dixon said she has two children in the District and has been a part of the parent group mentioned earlier. She said one of the things the group has discussed is the addition of another guidance counselor at the elementary school level. She thanked the Board for approving the hiring of additional teachers for this year, noting that the smaller class sizes have helped.

Michelle Ulrich said she is a part of the parent group mentioned earlier. She inquired about lock-down drills and said the parents would like to know more about them, specifically how often they are held, whether there is any consistency among buildings as to how they are offered and how much direction students are given during the drills.

The following information was presented and/or action taken on items submitted by Mr. Wesley in the President's Report.

President's Report

Mr. Wesley stated that, since the last meeting, the Board had met once in Executive Session to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Executive Session

The following information was presented and/or action taken on items submitted by Ms. Balason in the Secretary's Report.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Balason stated as a reminder to the Board that the Ethics Forms are due for submission to PSBA.

Ethics Forms

Ms. Balason stated that the information on the annual PSBA conference in October is available for review.

PSBA Conference

There was no Solicitor's Report this evening.

Solicitor's Report

The following information was presented and/or action taken on items submitted by Dr. Loughead in the Superintendent's Report.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Loughead stated that computational literacy skills, such as those highlighted in the Poff presentation, are becoming more common in the daily classroom. He indicated that the District will keep working to implement these types of skills into the curriculum while keeping students engaged. Dr. Loughead indicated that the end of the third quarter is approaching, and with that senior students have begun to hear responses from their college applications.

Academic News

Dr. Loughead indicated that the Spring Sports Season is about to begin with Lacrosse starting this week. Dr. Loughead announced that a member of the Swim Team is competing this week in the state competition. Dr. Loughead stated that the Hockey team

Athletic News

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has also made the championships.

Dr. Loughead highlighted the District-wide Art Event, "Hues and Harmony." He stated the two-night event begins, tomorrow March 13th and runs through Wednesday the 14th. Dr. Loughead indicated the event showcases all aspects of the arts from visual, musical and theatrical views. Arts News

The following information was presented and/or action taken on items submitted by Mr. Stein, on behalf of Mr. Vasko in the A.W. Beattie Report. A.W. Beattie Report

Mr. Stein reported that the JOC had committee meetings scheduled for Wednesday and that the regular voting meeting would be held next Thursday. Upcoming Meetings

The following information was presented and/or action taken on items submitted by Mrs. Hamlin in the HAEE Report. HAEE Report

Mrs. Hamlin stated that HAEE awarded two grants. The first grant was to the High School and the other to Poff Elementary. Mrs. Hamlin stated HAEE has begun early planning for the 5K Run/Walk in the fall.

There was no Educational Programs report this evening. Educational Programs

There was no Policy/Legislative Affairs Report report this evening. Policy/ Legislative Affairs

There was no Technology Report this evening. Technology

There was no Transportation Report this evening. Transportation

There was no Personnel Report this evening. Personnel

There was no Student Affairs Report this evening. Student Affairs

There was no Finance Report this evening. Finance

The following information was presented and/or action was taken on items submitted by Ms. Balason, of the Facilities Committee. Facilities

Dr. Cunningham, in conjunction with Hampton Township Police Chief Tom Vulakovich and Hampton Township Police Officer Aaron Zola, provided a comprehensive safety and security presentation. School Safety Presentation

Chief Vulakovich said he has been in the Township for a long time, starting his career as the school resource officer for the School District in 1999 for ten years before being promoted to Sargent. He said when he was promoted, he had great reservations about

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leaving the school resource position because it is so valuable, but said that now as police chief, he is able to devote his entire staff to the schools if necessary at any time.

Chief Vulakovich provided an overview of the first responders in Hampton Township. The Police Department includes 22 officers, and two civilian clerks. The Shaler-Hampton EMS includes three advanced life support ambulances stationed right in the police garage. He said there are volunteer firemen from the North Hampton Volunteer Fire Department who can be called into action if needed during an emergency. He noted the very close proximity to the schools of these resources.

Since 1999, the Chief said that proactive planning for emergencies has been ongoing. What that means is the responses and tactics for dealing with emergencies changes based on current needs. In addition to Officer Zola, who is assigned as the School Resource Officer in the District and stationed at the High School, there is also a Juvenile Probation Officer (Officer Jim Miller) from Allegheny County stationed at the High School, since 2001. He also noted that first responders receive SIMTAC training every year with West Deer to prepare them for active shooter situations. The SIMTAC training is not the only training officers receive for these kinds of situations. Officers also receive training in legal updates, CPR, First Aid, AEDs, Fire Arms, and ALICE. He said there has been a huge commitment of time and money toward ensuring the police and other first responders are prepared to handle any crisis.

Chief Vulakovich said as police officers, there are legal constraints to what they can and cannot do with students, including being able to search bags or cars without probable cause. The School District does not have those same constraints, so being able to work together has made a huge difference in how quickly some issues can be resolved.

Officer Zola provided an overview of his role as School Resource Officer. He said having a visible presence in all five buildings is an important part of his job. Shift officers also will visit schools throughout the day to provide an additional presence. Officer Zola highlighted his work in being a participant in lock down and safety Drills across the district to ensure consistency of practice and to give feedback to the crisis teams, as well as his facilitation of yearly ALICE training for all staff in the District.

Chief Vulakovich explained ALICE training and said he agrees 100% with what this training teaches. He said the days of Code Red lockdowns are over, and this is the new way of thinking. The steps of ALICE are:

- A - Alert
- L - Lockdown
- I - Inform (this includes informing staff and students in clear language so they are aware of how to react)
- C - Counter (moves and procedures staff and students can use to counter an active shooter situation)
- E - Evacuate

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The program has been in the schools since 2015 and he, Officer Zola and Dr. Cunningham are all certified trainers in ALICE. Dr. Cunningham noted that ALICE is a non-linear response, meaning that the best course of action may change with the scenario. Sometimes it is better to lock down in place, and sometimes the best response is to evacuate the building.

The Township is going to host a Community ALICE Training day on July 22, noon to 4 p.m. at the Hampton Community Center. The free training is available to those who register. Chief Vulakovich said the ALICE training can be used in any public place, including office buildings and movie theaters. A means of registering for this free training will be available in the coming months.

There is also a student training component to ALICE. Dr. Cunningham said one of the things the District is looking at for this spring is to provide more extensive training for the students which is developmentally-appropriate and research-based. Because the program is non-linear, everyone in the building needs to be trained, including staff and students, so they know whether the situation calls for sheltering in place, or fleeing the scene. She said the developmentally-appropriate approach for children is the difficult part of this program, especially for the youngest of students. Dr. Cunningham said the Township Police and the administration are working together to find the most appropriate way to provide these lessons. Students have already practiced emergency drills, but the last component is to bring all of the emergency preparedness together in a more cohesive plan.

Dr. Cunningham highlighted the different types of drills in the school system, including fire drills, all-weather drills, transportation and bus safety drills, lockdowns, and evacuations. She indicated that last January the first responders (including Fire, Police, and EMS) conducted a walkthrough with the building administration and District personnel at the High School and at the Middle School. We learned valuable information in those walk-thoughts which have helped shape plans going forward. Additional walkthroughs with the first responders are planned for March 26 and March 27 in each of the three elementary schools. Dr. Cunningham also noted that all of our schools have interdisciplinary building-based crisis teams which meet during the school year to address safety and security issues in the building.

Dr. Cunningham continued the presentation by indicating that while the team would be sharing many things tonight, there are some components the District is unable to make public in order to ensure the safety of the students and staff. She started by explaining that the District casts a wide net when they think about different types of plans for safety and security; such planning includes fire, hazardous materials, earthquakes, missing persons, flooding, transportation incident, or different types of chemical, biological, or radiological incidents. She relayed that these plans are shared with faculty and administration, as well as the Police Department, Fire Department, and the Shaler-Hampton EMS

Dr. Cunningham also outlined proactive approaches with communication, such as classroom telephones, cell phones, a walkie-talkie system, and bull horns in order to help facilitate communications. The District has also, over the years, installed a security

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camera system which includes 218 cameras around the schools. Classroom teachers, principals, and secretaries have “go-bags” in the event that they need to evacuate the building, and the nurses are receiving updated and expanded mobile carts to store first aid and medications for the students. Dr. Cunningham further elaborated on the AEDs which are in all the buildings, and highlighted both the UPMC “Stop the Bleed” training at the high school last year, as well as Dr. Brophy’s work on the science of addiction with our students. She referenced and encouraged the audience to attend the next Community Opioid Summit on April 12 at 7:00 pm at the Hampton Community Center.

Mental wellness is a vital component in the equation of school security and safety. Dr. Cunningham discussed the various resources which the District has in place, including Dr. Jay Thornton (School District Psychologist); the school counselors at all building levels; the Student Assistance Team (SAP) which provides an extra layer of support for students who are having difficulty with attendance, grades, or at-risk behaviors; and the Maximizing Adolescent Potential (MAPs) University of Pittsburgh representatives who are our SAP liaisons this year. Dr. Cunningham relayed that the buildings have Child Study Teams which provide an extra layer of support for struggling students, and how the buildings have partnered with the Highmark Caring Place for students who are grieving. Emily Born is our school-based liaison from the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health, and can be a great resource for parents who are working through complicated issues at home or with their child. The District and parents also have the ability to use CACTIS and resolve for mobile crisis situations both at school and at home, and they can both access Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) as well as ChildLine for more serious issues. Last year, our middle school and high school teachers all received mandated teacher training on suicide awareness and prevention in order to help them recognize signs and symptoms of suicide. Finally, Dr. Cunningham noted that the District also has Lytle EAP which is an employee assistance program for any faculty and staff who may need these additional services.

During the next part of the presentation Dr. Cunningham highlighted the High School’s School Counseling website, which has resources for such issues as drug and alcohol, addiction, suicide prevention, and mental health. The website also has a bullying form which can be downloaded and completed, faxed, scanned, or emailed to a building principal, guidance counselor, or trusted adult in the schools. Additional forms are also available in the School Counseling Office and the Main Office.

From a facilities standpoint, Dr. Cunningham described the captured vestibules and the visitor procedures for all buildings. SchoolGate Guardian is now being used in the Middle and High Schools, and will be on-line at the elementary schools in April. It is used to screen and check in visitors to the buildings and requires visitors to present a valid photo ID to be scanned prior to admittance to any District building.

Dr. Cunningham also explained the District’s stance on determining whether something is a valid threat. She said every threat is taken seriously unless and until it has been ruled a non-threat. The first step in the process is to ensure the accuracy of information and details.

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District personnel and law enforcement work together to evaluate the situation and fully investigate the facts. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the safety of students, including searches and lockdowns, which are conducted by school staff. Parents will be notified if and as appropriate. Dr. Cunningham said student safety will always come first, so parents may not be notified immediately of a situation until students are secured. She also said that information that is provided to the parents may be limited due to the fact that open cases are protected under the criminal code, so some information cannot be disclosed or it will jeopardize the investigation and possibly infringe on a student's legal rights.

If there ever is a situation where buildings need to be evacuated and reunification is necessary, that information will be shared with parents as soon as plans are in place. Dr. Cunningham said oftentimes the safest thing for students is for them to be transported by their school buses to their home. In the event of an emergency, the campus may be locked down and additional cars would not be permitted to arrive on campus so that we would have space for emergency vehicles, police, fire trucks, etc. to arrive and get to their destinations. In those types of situations, the students would be secured, the District would call transportation, and the District would relay plans of reunification to the parents.

As far as future actions, Dr. Cunningham said that there is a continual review and updating of plans and communication protocols based on best practices and real-time information. First responder walkthroughs are planned on March 26 and March 27 for our elementary buildings, and we are anticipating that we will receive additional information from those events which will help shape procedures. Additionally, we are looking at the evaluation and implementation of research-based, developmentally appropriate K-12 student training with respect to ALICE and will be looking at resources which enable that training to be done in a manner consistent with student needs. The northern area superintendents will continue to plan and coordinate best practices in school safety and security. Additionally, the Hampton Police Department is planning an active scenario for their department in summer 2018. Dr. Cunningham also encouraged all parents to register for and attend the community ALICE training on July 22, 2018 at the Hampton Community Center in order to develop skills to keep themselves safe whether they are in schools, the mall, the grocery store, the movie theater, or the post office. She encouraged parents to communicate with their children, report any unusual activities to the police or administration, to be vigilant, and to be proactive, especially with mental wellness.

In closing, Dr. Cunningham thanked the Township and the Hampton Police Department for all of their hard work and ongoing collaboration and noted how vital these relationships are.

Mr. Wesley opened the floor for additional public comment.

Comments

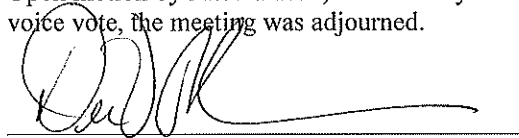
Upon conclusion of the presentation, a question and answer period followed. During the exchange, many individuals did not identify themselves for the public record. The questions presented were all addressed by Dr. Loughhead, Dr. Cunningham, Chief Vulakovich and the Board.

Question and
Answer Period

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Upon motion by Ms. Balason, seconded by Mr. Wesley and carried unanimously by voice vote, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment



Denise Balason, Secretary