

Parkland Community Advisory Council

April 8, 2021

CO-PRESIDENTS

Melanie St. Hill
Michelle Wahlmark

SECRETARY

Andrea Scott

ATTENDEES: Benjamin Gulledge, Jennifer Jones, Nicole Mandry, Lisa Petrocilli, Jay Rohatgi, Andrea Scott, Melanie St. Hill, Michelle Wahlmark, Doreen Wynn

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES: Lauren Wahlmark, Sydney Esquieres, Tyler Bartman

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Linda Perlman-McKenna

ADMINISTRATION: Dr. Rodney Troutman

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Melanie St. Hill at 7:02pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion to approve the minutes from March 18, 2021 was made by Michelle Wahlmark and seconded by Lisa Petrocilli.

PRESENTATION:

“Teaching Students Good Citizenship and Tolerance” presented by Kelly Rosario, Diane Niekam and Jason Henry.

An Equity and Inclusion Action Plan is being implemented in the Parkland School District (PSD) to help teach students, staff and the PSD community good citizenship and tolerance. As outlined in the presentation, the PSD believes “Equity is the foundation that frames every aspect of the educational system from curriculum adoption to professional development. An equity lens informs family and community engagement efforts, and is considered an important approach to school culture. The practice of equity is shared across education stakeholders. School leaders approach every decision, practice and policy with an equity lens.” The equity and inclusion framework will be centered around three main areas: Culture, Curriculum and Community.

Four goals have been set to improve school culture with a focus on equity and inclusion.

- Ensure that staff and students understand the effects of trauma on students and strategies to assist students to work through these experiences for a brighter future.
- Build relationships and connections with new students.
- Encourage student voice.
- Attract diverse employment candidates.

PSD developed curriculum and has resources available to explore Social-Emotional Learning (SEL,) which is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

In the elementary schools, Mind Up is a SEL curriculum, framed around 15 lessons to promote and develop mindful attention to oneself and others, tolerance of differences and the capacity of each member of the community to grow as a human being and a learner.

Restorative practices taught through this initiative will strengthen culture by building community, repairing and/or strengthening relationships and restoring harmony within the schools. These practices will be implemented across school settings and embedded into the course content. Promoting equity, trust, empathy, responsibility and mutual respect help give students a voice and choice.

Conferences and a non-traditional approach to discipline will help empower the student to correct themselves. Voluntary mediation, skill training rather than discipline and teaching individuals to resolve conflict promotes empathy, personal responsibility and forgiveness.

Four goals have been set to develop culturally responsive and relevant curriculum.

- Develop a scope and sequence that includes contemporary issues in history.
- Revise K - 12 curriculum to include multiple cultural perspectives.
- Develop a 6 - 12 English scope and sequence that includes contemporary issues in history.
- Provide PSD staff professional development that teaches equitable and inclusive practices.

Two community goals have been set. One is to launch the Equity and Inclusion Community Think Tank, and the other is to translate district publications. The Equity and Inclusion Community Think Tank occurred on November 12th, 2020. This meeting was the first quarterly Community Committee meetings. An open question and answer community event is planned in April. There are many equity/community resources available via TED Talks on Racism, Story Corps, Good Reads and a book study on "Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria" by Beverly Daniel Tatum.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT: Linda Perlman-McKenna, School Director and Board Liaison to the CAC, presented a report highlighting the topics discussed during the March 23rd Board Meeting. For more details of any meeting, please view the minutes and recordings online found on the PSD website.

Staffing Needs '21-'22:

- Dr. Troutman presented a report outlining preliminary staffing needs for the '21-'22 school year based on projected enrollment and the initial survey results from parents regarding their choice of face-to-face or 100% online learning for the Fall of 2021. These needs include professional staff at elementary, middle and high school levels, and district support staff.

Appointment of New Asst. Superintendent:

- The Board elected Dr. Michelle Minotti as the Assistant District Superintendent for a term of five (5) years commencing on July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2026, to fill the vacancy that will be created when Tracy Smith retires at end of this school year.
- Dr. Minotti has made significant contributions to our school district for 21 years. She is currently the Principal of Springhouse Middle School, a position she has held for the past 15 years. Prior to that she was an Assistant Principal at Springhouse as well as at Parkland High School. Before that she was an English teacher at Saucon Valley High School. All that while, she continued her education, obtaining 2 Masters Degrees and her Doctorate in Educational Leadership.

- She is extremely well qualified. Her skills, experience, work ethic, and fine personal qualities will make her an outstanding Assistant Superintendent to help lead the district forward. The entire Board is confident that Dr. Minotti will continue to be a tremendous asset to our organization in her new role and she will complement the leadership team of Dr. Madson and Dr. Troutman.

The Board approved the following proposed budgets for FY 2021-2022:

- LCTI's (Lehigh Career and Technical Institute)
 - General Operating Fund Budget, *and* Academic Center Budget totaling approximately ~\$31M, with PSDs total share amounting to ~\$4.44M.
- CLIU's (Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21)
 - General Operating Budget Totaling approximately ~\$3.28M with Parkland's contribution totaling ~\$205,500.
- LCCC's (Lehigh Carbon Community College)
 - Operating Budget, *and* Debt Service/Leases *and* Capital Budgets Totaling ~\$54.27M with PSD's Appropriation totaling ~\$1.24M.

The Board heard reports about:

- The Community Advisory Council - Ms. Linda Perlman-McKenna
- Parkland Community Library - Mrs. Lisa A. Roth
- Lehigh Carbon Community College - Mr. David M. Kennedy
- Parkland Education Foundation - Ms. Carol L. Facchiano
- Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 - Mrs. Marie Maritch
- Legislative Report – David Hein

Upcoming Meetings:

More details can be viewed on the meeting agenda that is accessible online or by replaying the recorded meetings.

April Committee Meetings:

- P & F Board Committee Meeting – Monday, April 12, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
- B & G Board Committee Meeting – Monday, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
- AAA Board Committee Meeting – Monday, April 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Next Board Meeting – April 20, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. Workshop, 8:00 p.m. Meeting

- There will be no board meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 because the Board will be having a Budget Seminar on Friday, April 30, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Administration Building.

STUDENT REPORT:

Academics:

- Parkland High School will host the SATs on May 8th.
- Students are beginning to prepare for AP exams.
- April 8th is the first day of the last marking period.
- NHS welcomed their spring new members.
- Parkland's Biomedical Science Program honored 24 Seniors at their Drive-Thru Graduation.
- The SAT prep courses started on March 29th.

- Prom announced their theme which is starry night.

Arts:

- The Spring Musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, is going to be livestreamed on the weekend of May 21 through 23. 7:30 on Friday and Saturday and 3 on Sunday.
- Tickets go on sale on May third! (www.ShowTix4u.com)
- Cardboard cutout audience -This is targeted to businesses but ANYONE can participate. When you buy a cutout you are helping promote your business as well as supporting the arts and your local theatre program! (<https://www.parklandsd.org/cutout-fundraiser>).
- Student Mickey Oulette received a silver medal in the National Scholastic Art Competition.

Athletics:

- Track has begun practicing, however many students have been placed on quarantine after exposure to a positive covid case.
- Baseball and softball have also begun having games.
- Boys volleyball is currently in-season, tonight playing Freedom at 5:30pm.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ROUNDTABLE:

- Dr. Troutman expressed how proud he was of all of the students and parents during this challenging school year. He reminds us that we will all be stronger and there are many life skills that have been learned this year.
- The decision to have the PSSA's this year was made because there was no mandate relief for the testing. The testing could have been pushed back to the beginning of the 2021/2022 school year, but they still needed to be done. Instead of having PSSA's in the fall and spring of 2021/2022 it was decided just to keep the PSSA's on schedule for this spring.
- The district will be reevaluating COVID-19 numbers every two weeks to determine if there will be any changes to the hybrid learning schedule.
 - Because of cohorting and the ability to accommodate all students in the school socially distanced, the elementary hybrid model was changed from two days in person to four days in person.
 - Unfortunately, because of limited to no cohorting in middle and high school and not enough room for every student to socially distance themselves during lunch, the secondary hybrid model has stayed the same.
 - PHS is the largest high school in the Lehigh Valley.
 - While outdoor lunch is an option, it can not be consistently used as a solution because on rainy days there is no alternative indoor space.
- If your student is struggling, please reach out to school counselors.
 - PSD has partnered with St. Luke's Health Network and has developed the YESS program to help with student needs.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: At 8:07 pm a motion to adjourn was called. Jay Rohatgi moved, with Nicole Mandry seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Andrea Scott