

Family Advisory Committee to Superintendent (FACS)

3/23/2023 Meeting Notes

6:30-8:00 PM

BOE Administrative Offices

1751 Earl L. Core Road

Attendees:

Brandi	Ammons	FS MHS
Mary	Bartolo	FS Brookhaven
Dr. Eddie	Campbell	BOE
Duana	Crum	FACS MHS
Katherine	Fisher	FS Mountaineer Mid
Norma	Gaines	BOE
Christine	Gossett	LSIC Mountainview
Rebekah	Harlan	FACS Eastwood
Lisa	Hopper	FACS Brookhaven
Lori	Hunter	FS Ridgedale
Teresa	Nass	BOE
Tiffany	Newbold	FACS Skyview
Ace	Parci	FACS/LSIC Suncrest Ele
Charlene	Scott	MHS LSIC
Leigh	Smitley	LSIC Skyview
Elizabeth	ter Haseborg	ESL Presentation
Chris	Urban	BOE
Joseph	Viathofer (sp?)	FACS Skyview
Kathern	Willard	FACS C-B

Co-chairs Ace Parsi and Duana Crum opened the meeting by reviewing the agenda and the goals of the meeting.

FACS Goals:

1. Deepen connections and understanding among different groups of participants, primarily between parents, educators, and administrators.
2. Attain a deeper understanding of key issues raised by parents in this month's survey results: ESL in Mon County and Keyboarding Skills in the curriculum
3. Suggest some big ideas for consideration relating to the topics of ESL and keyboarding.

Duana Crum clarified the FACS membership status and stated to the group that in fairness to all to all schools, the meeting representation for each school will include the FACS school representative, the Faculty Senate Chair and the LSIC Chair. The Faculty Senate and LSIC Chairs can send a representative to the meetings in their respective places, if they are unable to attend.

Dr. Campbell explained to the group that the FACS is an advisory council that provides input/feedback on current issues relevant to the county. The FACS meeting discussions will be considered when making decisions affecting students/families/staff as a collective. Dr. Campbell

stated that school specific information should be addressed by the school administration and the LSIC groups.

Dr. Campbell introduced Norma Gaines, Director of Federal Programs & Elementary Education to address how English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners go through the intake process at each school level.

Ace Parsi stated that the reason for the discussion is that he has communicated with ESL families who have not necessarily had a positive experience with the intake process and they do not all feel welcome. Mr. Parsi suggested that a county-wide cultural event/celebration be held that could make ESL families more comfortable as a group and invite non-ESL families to participate.

Ms. Gaines stated that after students are enrolled, the intake process occurs within two weeks. Families are contacted to obtain all the information required by the state. Families are also connected with the schools Outreach Facilitators who help with the adjustments. MCS' Outreach Facilitators have an understanding of resources available for families and do what they can to assist.

Ms. Gaines stated there are language barriers with families, but translators are ready to assist when needed. The list of volunteer translators is available in every school office.

Charlene Scott asked who would have the translator list. Gaines stated that all SAT Coordinators should have the list and she would make a point of sending out the information again as a reminder.

Ms. Gaines stated there is also a service called Language Line which is a new translation service available to schools. More education is being provided to key personnel who will likely utilize the service for families. The training is beginning at North Elementary first.

Presenting families with a survey was suggested to obtain more feedback on their experiences in order to facilitate better outcomes.

ESL Teacher Elizabeth ter Haseborg stated that even though it would be ideal to have ESL families participate in surveys, it is her experience that they do not have a high response rate for many reasons. She recommended that the Panorama Survey include more questions that may reach ESL families in a familiar way.

It was noted that some parents choose for their children not to use ESL Services and some parents are illiterate which also creates a barrier in communication.

The group asked about the Remind and School Messenger translation tools. Chris Urban, Director of Technology stated that the Remind can already translate at this time. School Messenger's translation tools have been used in the past, but there were so many complaints, she had to turn off the function.

Ms. Urban will check to see if the School Messenger functionality has changed since that time and offered a possibility of re-introduction of the tool for 2023-24 depending on the quality.

Brandi Ammons asked if signing up for Remind/School Messenger could be taught to families during the intake process.

Chris Urban stated that families would be able to download the app during intake, but would then need to wait for their student's WVEIS Information to be recognized before the apps could be used.

Norma Gaines stated that any student having translation issues should be put in touch with a SAT Coordinator.

Elizabeth ter Haseborg stated that ESL parent engagement is currently low, even though they know there is a meeting or event.

It was stated that schools can do more to engage students and families – especially secondary schools. i.e., Mentorships for ESL and “2 for 10” (Adults check in with students for 2 minutes per day for 10 days)

It was stated that on speech evaluations, evaluators don't know if some parents are answering questions incorrectly due to the language barriers or for other reasons.

It was suggested that a company be hired to translate newsletters/menus etc.

It was suggested that WVU may have translators who could provide services.

Brandi Ammons suggested that High School Students who could possibly be tapped as translators for families/students who speak/know their native languages.

Elizabeth stated that even if all resources are available, ESL families struggle with access or affordability of transportation. If MCS could obtain a grant for this purpose, it would help.

Ms. Urban then addressed the group regarding the agenda topic “Keyboarding Overview Kindergarten through Grade 12”.

Ms. Urban stated that although keyboarding looks different than it did years ago, students and families have their own unique styles and approaches to completing tasks using the keyboard.

That said, the state has purchased access to Learning.com, a keyboarding learning opportunity that teaches students adaptive keyboarding.

Elementary Levels use Learning.com as a station as part of their daily learning.

Grades 3- Middle School also use Learning.com and progress reports can be generated.

Life Is Tech, another keyboard learning opportunity will be rolled out during Summer Avalanche for K, 1, 2 students.

Ms. Urban stated that more formal keyboarding will be emphasized in 2023-24.

Ace Parsi requested more parent guidance on how to support the kids with technology such as Chrome Books, understanding Minecraft and offering Family Technology Night.

It was suggested that Technology Night be held at one school for all families in the county who are interested.

Dr. Campbell wrapped up the meeting and thanked the presenters, “who are the true experts on Monongalia County Schools’ day-to-day school curriculum, which is why I asked them to be at this meeting to address the topics.”

Dr. Campbell thanked the group for their ideas and questions and asked members to take the information back to their LSICs and PTOs for school level conversations about topics that affect them directly.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

The next meeting will be held on **May 2, 2023 at 6:30 PM in the Boardroom**, 1751 Earl L. Core Road, Morgantown.