

Family Advisory Council to the Superintendent (FACS)

Meeting Notes

May 2, 2023

ATTENDEES:

Christy Bryan-Davis, FS Brookhaven
Lisa Hopper, FACS, Brookhaven
Kathern Willard, FASC, CBHS
Monique Brady, LSIC, Cheat Lake
Elizabeth ter Haseborg, LSIC Mountainview
Crystal Bays, FACS, Ridgedale
Tammy Elliot, LSIC, Ridgedale
Leigh Smitley, LSIC, Skyview
Shanon Wamsley, FS, Skyview
Tiffany Newbold, FACS, South
Ace Parsi, FACS & LSIC, Suncrest Elem
Jesse Mehle, FS, UHS
Dr. Eddie Campbell, BOE
Teresa Nass, BOE
Guests:
Sheri Petite, Principal, Ridgedale
Mike Rogers, Principal, Mountaineer Middle

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM and FACS co-chair Ace Parsi recapped the [March 23, 2023 meeting](#), highlighting the English as a Second Language (ESL) Physical/Communal Access to resources, the topic of keyboarding and the resource Learning.com.

Dr. Campbell reminded the group of the purpose of the FACS group, which is to allow the group direct access to the superintendent to offer input that can positively impact the school district as a whole. The information discussed at the FACS meetings can also be shared back to the schools' Local School Improvement Councils and Parent Teacher Organizations to affect change at the school level when applicable.

Dr. Campbell stated that there are a number of ways for parents to be involved and to make an impact at the school level, but this group will focus on what the school district already has in place, what leaders are planning in the different areas of interest and offer opportunities for input/feedback to be considered in county level decision making in those areas.

Dr. Campbell addressed the agenda topic of "Family Engagement in Schools" and stated that one of the biggest complaints from school personnel is that there is not enough parent/guardian support/participation in the students' education.

Ace Parsi asked if there is a parent engagement coordinator at the county level. Dr. Campbell stated that family/parent engagement happens at the school level.

Dr. Campbell introduced the three speakers on the topic.

Sheri Petite – Principal, Ridgedale Elementary

Principal Petite stated that the Panorama Program summarizes the definition of Family Engagement well. **Family engagement is the shared responsibility of family members, schools, and communities. District and school leaders often consider family engagement a two-way process that begins in early childhood education, persists through high school, and occurs across multiple settings where children learn.**

Principal Petite then presented all the family engagement opportunities offered at the elementary level (which includes input from other schools), offering fun and educational events and activities such as :

PTO Volunteerism – as little or as much time/resources as the volunteer can offer

LSIC Group Participation – Parents are always welcome at the meetings, whether or not they are voting members

Library or Classroom Helper

Tech/Literacy Night

Music Programs,

Arts (Night of the Arts)

Band/Strings/Choir

Talent Night

Diversity Committee, Diversity Wall, Diversity Night

Roots around the World – to teach/learn about culture and traditions of others

Reading/Communicating thru ESL Books for Literacy Opportunities

Math/Reading Night

The following are meetings that are absolutely critical for families to engage in to support their child:

504 plan meetings

IEP meetings

SAT meetings

Principal Petite stated that the possibilities for engagement at the elementary level are endless and those interested should communicate with the teacher or the principal for more information.

Mountaineer Middle School Principal, Mike Rogers then spoke on what Middle School Parents can be involved in at this stage of schooling.

Principal Rogers stated that parents of middle schoolers are moving into the phase of going back to work, so families typically pick and choose how much time to spend on engagement and what activities they will be involved in. Most families choose sports, band, jazz, theatre and those activities that their child spends the most time participating in. Rogers stated in his experience there is not a lot of demand for or participation in academic opportunities such as Literacy Night.

The main communication to parents at the Middle Schools are via the School Websites, Remind and Schoology. These platforms are where the most interaction/engagement with families occur and information can be found.

Principal Rogers stated there is only a small number of parents who serve on the PTO at the middle school level and there has been a positive response by students and families to the PBIS Rewards program.

Rogers stated that the middle school holds a career fair and said that that draws the largest number of participants outside of sports and music programs. Rogers plans to continue the career fair for the engagement as well as exposing students to a variety of career opportunities.

University High School Guidance Counselor, Jesse Mehle spoke the group and mirrored much of what Mike Rogers state about the middle school family engagement.

Many students have chosen what they will spend their time doing, and at the high school level they are responsible for some of the time management.

Family Engagement Opportunities include:

Athletics (always the most popular)

Band/Field Shows/Spectaculars/Parades

After Prom

Honorary Clubs

Christian Teens

Theatre Productions

Robotics

Lucy's Dreamweaver Closet (organized by the counseling department, but driven by parents)

Mehle stated that the socio-economic status of the families is a high indicator of parent involvement.

The higher SES, the more involvement occurs.

It would be great to find applicable ideas on how to engage parents with lower SES. Time and transportation are issues.

Mehle encourages having parents come into UHS as guest speakers, often speaking about their white or blue-collar careers. Mehle would like for students to see themselves in a field that reflects their interests.

Mehle looks at engagement as a community issue, not just a parent issue.

It is increasingly difficult to get students to engage as well. He is currently trying to recruit applicants for Girls and Boys State and there is little interest.

Mehle stated that as adults we feel we are back to normal, but the students three years ago, prior to the pandemic, may not have know what it was like to go through the normal steps. The effects are being seen.

A group discussion ensued to cover what was presented at the meeting thus far to gain feedback from the group.

Elizabeth ter Haseborg, LSIC Mountainview, stated she would like to see LSICs to actually work on the agenda items presented at their meetings. Ms. ter Haseborg asked “How do we get more parents to meetings?”

Dr. Campbell stated that LSICs do not require the same number of meetings for higher performing schools as low performing schools.

Ace Parsi stated that each LSIC could raise the bar for what is expected for number of meetings so agenda items can be accomplished.

It was discussed that we could survey LSIC participants to find out what would make the councils more effective at their respective schools.

Ace Parsi asked if there is anything that the state or district does to engage parents on the county level.

Dr. Campbell stated that engagement happens at the school level and LSICs are unique to each school.

Dr. Campbell further stated that it would be optimal for parents to commit to chairing the LSIC groups. Continual school improvement is our goal and has been since the FACS council began.

Dr. Campbell stated he will bring up the LSIC discussion with principals for the next school year, as many groups have concluded their meetings for this year.

Ace Parsi asked how can LSIC chairs be empowered to be leaders?

It was stated that the LSIC meetings should be more standardized and best practices should be shared across the county.

Dr. Campbell stated that he is not actively involved with school level LSICs, but is not opposed to helping communicate with principals on best practices and sharing anything the state provides.

Ace stated that maybe there should be a survey pushed out to the LSICs for them to provide common practices.

It was stated that the transitional grade levels could use more communication to the parents, as students do not know the ins and outs of the school immediately.

A school-based parent engagement coordinator could help with this communication and transition for students and families.

At this time, Brookhaven has a part-time Title 1 parent coordinator which is a paid position due to the Title 1 status.

It was stated that efforts to engage parents via sports and food, always elicits the best response. Mike Rogers stated that the superintendent's office and the BOE provides all possible support to our students. If there is something needed or if they want to try something, the leadership in the superintendent's office is very supportive.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

family tech night,

Mike Rogers – Principal, Mountaineer Middle School

Jesse Mehle – Guidance Counselor, University High School