

# Whitney ISD School Health Advisory Council Minutes

November 8, 2023

**Attendees:** John McCullough, Amy Leech, Kristin Emery, Kendra Hensley, Layna Philipp, Amber Seely, Sara Ripley, Amanda Kettler, Dawn Poyner, Crystal Haubert, Brian Blackwell, Judy Bailey, Wendy Kaska, Jan Holt, Sally Hayes, Hope Sandoval, Nicole Corson, Katie Foster, Sheri Hayes, Heather Walker

**Meeting began at 4:00pm**

## **Updates:**

- Great turn out for our employee flu shot clinic
- HOPE walk/run for mental health initiatives put on by HS Student Council was a success
- Capturing Kids Hearts- Recharge took place on October 30<sup>th</sup> and for new employees November 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>
- Had great participation for Red Ribbon Week
- Elementary/ Intermediate Trunk or Treat family night had a great turn out
- Mental Health/Safety Fair for MS and HS will be held on November 17<sup>th</sup>- (8-11am for MS students and 12-3pm for HS students)
- Next blood drive will be held on November 29<sup>th</sup> hosted by FFA

## **Mental Health Interventions- Students:**

- Representative from the Mentors Care Program gave a wonderful presentation about their program, which provides mentors to High School students. Their program helps propel students towards personal growth and development. The total cost of the program is \$50,000.
- Mrs. Hensley mentioned YAM (Youth Aware of Mental Health) which is an interactive program that encourages discussion of mental health topics and suicide prevention to help students develop proper coping skills. We will follow up with this program and report back to the SHAC at our next meeting.
- Opened up the floor for any campus concerns.

## **Bullying Prevention:**

- HOPE Squad- Group of trustworthy peers who are trained by advisors to help prevent youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention. Discussion and handouts passed out with further information. No decision made at this time.
- Whitney ISD currently has one Klara's counselor to help assist our students with significant emotional and behavioral challenges.

- Apple icon was discussed at previous SHAC meeting to be added to student laptops at intermediate campus. Update- Apple icon has been added to laptops for Intermediate students, which allows the students to send direct messages to the counselor. The Intermediate counselor has reported that this has been very helpful for the students.
- Coffee Bean Club- As discussed at previous meeting by Jan Holt, this is a club that intentionally spreads kindness and positive thinking. This has now been introduced at our Middle School campus and the Intermediate campus is in the process of getting a Coffee Bean Club started as well, per Wendy Kaska.
- Continue positive office referrals

#### **Mental Health Check-ins- Teacher Support:**

- Discussion for ways to address issues affecting the mental health of our teachers which included regular team meetings and check-ins with principals/ counselors.
- Continue staff morale boosters such as: Teacher of the week/month, regular potlucks, notes of appreciation/shout outs, surprise coffees/drinks or snacks, etc.. It was mentioned that the little things that are offered to staff members such as coffees/drinks, has been very much appreciated by staff. All campuses are doing a great job working on staff morale boosters and are using some of these staff morale boosters listed above.
- Amanda Kettler, Intermediate School nurse, voiced concerns over repeated behavioral outbursts from the Life Skills classroom and the effects on teachers/staff. Acknowledgment made by administration to address the concern.

#### **Drug Prevention Safety:**

- VOICE program (Viable Options in Community Endeavors, Inc.)- Discussed the possible implementation of this program. VOICE is a nonprofit organization that helps to teach critical life skills and promotes behavioral health and wellness to grades as young as Pre-Kindergarten through an evidenced-based curriculum. This program includes drug/substance abuse prevention as well. This organization is funded by Texas Health and Human Services Commission. The services they offer are free.
  - ❖ Mrs. Leech mentioned the team, OCOF (Our Community, Our Future) which provided multiple resources that she is looking into that could potentially include beneficial programs for Whitney ISD. We will follow up with these resources and report back to the SHAC at our next meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:05pm**