

Sequoyah HS School Council Meeting

Date: 11/10/2023

Time (called to order): 7:38am

Location: SHS Student Center

Meeting called by: Bob Van Alstyne, Principal (BVA)

Attendees: Inga Clark (IC), Paige Sims (PS), Chanda Schwab (CS), Rachel LaChine (RL),

Other attendees/observers:

Zach Lawson (ZL), Hilary Cassidy (HC), Heather Mitchell (HM), Larry Blase (LB)

Absent council members: Kevin Maher (KM), Stephanie Judkins (SJ), Cora Hodgins (CH)

Presentation(s):

- ZL- the district is providing enough laptops (to supplement what we currently have) to cover every student in the high school. The decision has been made to give the laptops to the classrooms and not to each individual student to protect laptops and reduce potential for damages.
 - The teachers will receive a survey asking about not only their need, but also their space- is there enough room for a cart or just a small station with fewer laptops?
 - Laptops should arrive to SHS campus December but won't be distributed until 2nd semester. We currently have a total number of 1120 in the building, receiving 1024 = total 2144.
- HC- Trying to be more intentional on how teachers are using their technology, ensuring that classroom's have space for laptops and that needs are being accommodated.
 - We don't want to add a burden on students by having to be accountable for the device throughout the day, so they will stay in teacher's rooms.
 - INTENTIONAL with students and placements of devices, for example - ISS or PE may not need an entire cart, but a small station of devices.
 - Focusing on professional development for teachers and best instructional practices and how they can be supported with technology. All laptops and classrooms will have the same practice for laptops and assigning them for students. The goal is for a seamless transition into each classroom on how laptops are assigned and distributed within the room.
 - By getting teachers and students to transition into best practices and have seamless use of technology will protect instructional time.
- IC- If students are bringing their personal laptops can or should that continue?
 - HC - It's a personal choice for students, but it should no longer be a necessity.
 - BVA- Our goal is that laptops would be the "go-to" technology rather than students having to use their cell phones, again trying to help students eliminate cell phone distractions (a topic mentioned previously by KM).
 - Substitutes will not be allowed to use laptops as a part of instructional plans, the responsibility and potential damages should not be a part of substitute's day. If assignments are on Canvas students may have to revert to their phones, but the goal would be for teachers to plan around technology.
- LB- If a student needs a laptop at home will these laptops be available to them?
 - BVA - we have another set of laptops that are designated for those students, they fill out a form and can get one from Carey Blalock; those laptops will not be affected by one-to-one roll out.
- PS- What is the process for security of the laptops regarding websites and blocked programs?
 - BVA- district IT department monitors those and ensures that all laptops are protected.
 - HC- Explained Go Guardian and professional development offered for the staff.
 - BVA- the utility of Go Guardian allows teachers to not only monitor their screens, but also is a true instructional tool. Teachers can send messages, provide extra support and scaffold for students without calling attention to them, comment on students in real time while they are working.

- HM- November registration has been moved up due to a change in our current scheduling program – Aspen will no longer be used; we will be shifting to Synergy in February. By having class placements determined earlier and in Aspen before the Synergy shift we hope to have less obstacles loading student schedules
 - Rising 9th graders are scheduled based on a rubric to help with academic placements. When it comes to the electives HM and counselors will be visiting each 8th grade social studies classes to discuss classes and electives. 8th graders fill out an interest survey and rank potential electives.
 - When creating a master schedule, they try to consider all factors with different types of classes, how many honors or AP classes and electives that conflict, how can we try to accommodate all students' requests.
 - Teachers will begin to have individual conversations about what classes to take the following year, trying a more rigorous class, choosing a pathway, etc.
 - Elective night Wednesday November 29th from 6:30-7:30 for parents and students
 - In January SHS counselors will meet with all students in their English classes to look at transcripts and determine placements to finalize schedule requests

Report from the Principal: (BVA presents)

- BVA- regarding laptop rollout, please know the goal is to make sure that a plan is in place and not roll out laptops the minute they arrive on campus. We want to make sure everything is in place for returning on January 8th. Surplus of furniture, rearranging classrooms can be done in December so that January can be a smooth transition for students and teachers – Main focus is intentionality of this opportunity.
- Early registration in November not only helps with Synergy transition but will also help identify teacher allotments and class sizes.
 - We have 4 teacher allotments that are funded with ARP money that will end this year. No teachers have submitted paperwork to retire, so scheduling classes will also provide insight on which 4 teachers/subjects will not be re-hired due to loss of ARP funding.
 - Hopefully the district will be able to identify a new source of funding for the loss of ARP funding, not just for Sequoyah but for all teachers in the district using ARP allotment.
 - Graduation Success Coach – Carey Blalock – the position was also used with temporary funding and that allotment ends this year. Hopeful to find a new source of funding because her position has drastically increased our student's success.

Old Business:

- IC – referencing course registration and college/graduation requirements along with SAT/ACT registration, how can we better inform parents of these requirements? Can we have an informational parent session?
 - BVA- We plan to have a community night in the spring, one of the parent sessions can be about registration needs and requirements. It would be great to have parental support in these sessions, like those that have recently gone through the college application process

New Business:

- IC – After reading the Superintendent newsletter and learning of the additions to Creekview and Woodstock (new facilities and expansions) why is the 35-year-old building of Sequoyah not being updated? The new Cherokee budget has increased to a 181 million dollars renovation, when it was originally budgeted for much less, 108? SPLOST budget reports shows that there is a surplus of almost a million a month, where is that money going? How can we support Sequoyah?
 - BVA- as the community continues to grow, you are right, we will need more space, it is our hope that Sequoyah will be able to add an annex, but it is not on the budget at this time
 - CS- how is it going with room relocations and students not able to get to East?

- BVA- we still have two classrooms that are used strictly for relocations, but we are having to use teacher's rooms when they are on planning or lunch.
- CS- Sequoyah needs an annex so that all students have access to all programs. What if a student wants to take healthcare and has a mobility limitation? Why don't all students have access to all courses? Where is the 60 million dollars of extra SPLOST money going towards?

Next meeting date: February 9, 2023, SHS Student Center, 7:30

Adjournment: 9:08am

Approval of the Agenda

Approval of the Minutes