



UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS

HOME OF THE BULLDOGS

(970) 506-7000

6525 W. 18TH ST. GREELEY, CO 80634

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WORK SESSION MINUTES

UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Large Conference Room

Members: A.J. Roche, Carol Riggs, Justin Nelson, Jessica Anderson, Scott Williams, Jake Pierce, Ryan Mayeda, Amanda Widel (Faculty Rep), Frank Freeman

Staff: Kyle Schuyler, Jeff Casey, Jennifer Weaver, Katie Jones, David Jones

8:00 A.M. Board Work Session

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

- Call to order at 8:03 am.

2.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- Motion to adopt the agenda - A.J. (Carol) Passed

3.0 DISCUSSION

3.1 SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS SURVEY DATA ([SLIDES](#))

- Jennifer starts things off by giving the board some background regarding the perception survey process. They continue by reviewing the data, where it comes from, and how it compares to last year.

- Ryan observed that the communication process was a high result for the staff, but it doesn't match the perception of the parents. Staff feel good about it while parents don't.
- Scott mentions the importance of having a main contact person at the school. Jessica echoes that as well.
- Katie mentions that we are at 60% of parents are communicating back and engaging with the content, which is a huge increase from the last few years.
- Kyle shares that we might be seeing the fruits of people who are already comfortable with the system. The next step would be to reach the people who are less comfortable and help break down those barriers.
- Scott mentions that one of the low scores on the survey included teaching material relatable to our demographic data. He mentions that this might be worth including in the focus areas on the strategic plan.
- Jennifer mentions that it might be a good idea to make a few focus groups to dive into deeper sections of the data.

3.2 CELL PHONE THOUGHT EXCHANGE

- Jennifer transitions into the cell phone discussion by showing the survey insights.
- Katie continues by sharing a few key survey comments from students, parents and staff. She shares that there is a wide range of comments and a variety of perspectives.
- After reviewing the survey data, Katie and Jennifer transition into some of the research regarding cell phone use. They discuss mental health and how that connects to cell phone use through social media.
- They also discuss the relationship between digital devices and academic performance. Katie makes the point that the studies and research produced mixed results. It depends on the context and the specific uses. She also mentions that there's a digital "sweet spot" where use actually increases engagement. However, after more time spent, that performance will go down.

- They continue the conversation by discussing the “proximity effect.” There’s a study that outlines daily use over specific apps and activities. Then it outlines how the phone affects the user based on proximity to the user. Is the phone on the desk, in a pocket or a bag, or is it in another room?
- Kyle shares a little background about the cell phone policy that they implement at the Middle School. They are allowed to keep them in their locker or their binder as long as it’s turned off.
- Jennifer and Katie transition to sharing data and policy from schools near us, across the country, and overseas.
- Going forward, the goal is to find a balance and the best practices for each level. How do we help students thrive, learn responsibly, and stay safe?
- Jennifer presents a list of possible disconnect and reconnect options that they found and opens up the discussion to members.
- Scott circles back to the slide showing that less than 50% of survey participants think that cell phones are a problem. He makes the point that we need to build consensus throughout the community that this is a problem and needs to be addressed.
- Carol asks how a policy will be implemented. A policy can be put in place, but what actually makes it effective?
- Scott asks how hard it would be to enforce phones off in the classroom? He also makes the point that the staff have to be bought into the policy so that we can enforce it consistently.
- A.J. asks about disruption levels in the high school and the elementary school. Jennifer explains a few scenarios that we are seeing at each level. Every significant discipline issue has had a cell phone aspect.
- Ryan agrees with educating parents, but he also thinks that at some point, the board should take an official leadership step. We should take action to address the issue instead of waiting to build consensus.
- Frank shares that the board needs to take action, but should also help parents and students make that transition.

- Jake asks if the Middle School policy is working and needs any changes. Kyle shares that he would like to keep pushing that forward. He would also like to communicate support to the teachers.
- Members discuss modifying the Middle School policy to fit the other levels. They also discuss implementing an exception framework. The procedure would include phones off during class and specified cell phone use times.
- Jennifer offers to draft a resolution proclamation for the December board meeting. Members also state the importance of making the research available for parents so they can see the need for these changes.

3.3 BOARD GOAL SETTING

- The board started by refreshing everyone on the proposed goals. They discuss possible training dates and potential committees that should have board representation. Next year's election was also discussed. Scott mentions that we currently have a 10 voting member board and he expresses the need for a possible tiebreaker for those times.
- Justin shares that Jr. Bulldogs will continue after a leadership transition. He asks if the board should have representation on that committee as well.
- After all the discussion, they agree to stick with the previous three goals.

4.0 NEXT REGULAR MEETING – December 11, 2024

5.0 ADJOURNMENT

- Motion to adjourn at 10:44 - Ryan (Scott) Passed