

On November 20, 2024, the Communications Conference Committee met in the Syosset High School guidance resource center to discuss various topics with district administrators.

Below is a summary of the question and answer session in the following order:

1. Transportation (p. 1)
2. Lunch (p. 2)
3. Enrichment (p. 2-3)
4. Elementary School (p. 3-4)
5. High School (p.4-5)
6. Athletics (p. 5-6)

Transportation

- 1. Are some of our buses being used by other districts? Parents have been told that certain buses are continuously late because they are coming from a route from another district.**

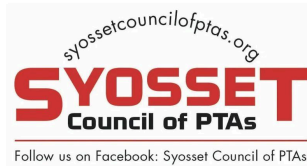
Our school buses are hired in five-hour increments and include three-tier routing for stops at the High School, Middle Schools, and then Elementary Schools. There are a limited number of situations where a bus would be coming from another school district, such as Syosset students going to a special education program in another district or Syosset-based students attending private schools located out of district. Additionally, in the rare case that a bus does not stop at all three schools, they are booked for only two or three hours and may be used by Huntington Coach for another purpose before or after they are used in Syosset.

While any route could have a temporary situation of lateness, continuously late buses need to be reported to the transportation office so that we can work with the bus company to find a resolution. Route times given at the beginning of the year are estimates and any material changes in times are communicated to parents by the transportation office.

- 2. Are Middle and High School school students allowed to take other buses home?**

For reasons of safety and security, students at every level may only take their assigned bus home.

- 3. Update on bus tracking app since our last meeting**



Huntington Coach was recently acquired by Beacon Mobility. Huntington Coach is now in the process of upgrading all of their systems, including their GPS tracking app. We are working closely with them to ensure all routes and stops are put properly into the new system. We hope to have another update on the status of the GPS tracking by early next year.

Lunch

- 1. Parents would like information on our new lunch vendor as well as new lunch offerings. Many families were not aware of the new vendor.**

The District re-bid food services at the end of last school year and Whitsons was the bid winner. We have worked with Whitsons previously. Our new food service contract includes upgrades such as fresh egg sandwiches, fresh (*not frozen*) ground meat, and more plant-based options. We are continuing to offer Kosher and Halal meals under the agreement with Whitsons. Whitsons also has a fully integrated and interactive menu that is [on our district website](#) so students and parents have improved access to nutrition and allergy information.

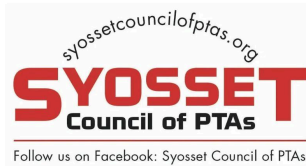
- 2. Since there is a new vendor, have any rules changed about PTA bringing in additional food for special events?**

The protocol established for approval and approved foods brought in from the outside remains unchanged. It is separate and distinct from the food service vendor and was implemented for the health and well-being of students and staff.

Enrichment

- 1. Is there a standard curriculum for enrichment or is it specific to enrichment teachers?**

At the elementary level, Project Beyond teachers build their curriculum as an extension of the grade-level curriculum with their students' strengths and interests in mind. Schoolwide Enrichment classes at the elementary level also offer students a dynamic and engaging learning experience to enhance our core curriculum. These inquiry-based classes provide opportunities for students to explore their interests, develop new skills, increase self-awareness, and challenge themselves. Schoolwide Enrichment encompasses many content areas including ELA, math, science, technology, and social emotional learning. Curriculum writing took place this summer with our enrichment teachers to refine the curriculum based on engagements with students throughout the year.



At the Middle School level, selected students are identified to be double accelerated in math or take accelerated World Language courses. There is also enrichment open to all students during lunch period. At the High School level, the enrichment curriculum is not standard, but students have many opportunities throughout each of their four years to explore their interests and take advanced classes.

Elementary School

- 1. Is there a standard number of students that determines whether classes should have assistant teachers? What happens if more kids move in during the year - do classes have to split at a certain point mid year?**

Board Policy determines the maximum number of students allowed in each class. After October 15th of each school year, if class sizes exceed the established max enrollment, the District will place a class-size-reduction tutor in the classroom. These tutors are certified teachers and not teaching assistants. These numbers also take into consideration the mainstreaming of special education students. In addition, there are students entitled to instructional and behavioral support (via IEP or 504) that may require having either push-in or pull-out support provided by tutors, teacher assistants, or teacher aides. As per the student's identified needs, additional adults may be present in the classroom during and/or throughout the school day. These adults are separate and distinct from class-size-reduction tutors.

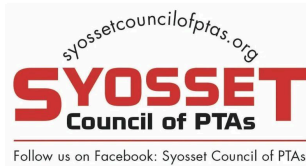
The District's preference is not to split classes once the school year starts to protect student interests. Many students quickly become attached to their teachers and friends, and splitting classes mid-year can be disruptive.

- 2. How is it decided which classrooms have chromebook stations? Can elementary school children leave their chrome books in the classroom instead of bringing them home every night if not needed at home?**

Each school has a different number of charging stations for Chromebooks based on established need and power capability. Parents concerned about their child carrying Chromebooks back and forth to school may ask their child's teacher if that practice can be changed depending on the curriculum.

- 3. How is the elementary curriculum working in conjunction with the secondary schools as kids move from one level to the other?**

Elementary school curriculum in the intermediate grades focuses on progressive steps to prepare students for transitions to middle school. This includes spiraled NYS standards that build upon each other. As you can see from the [3-5 Next Generation ELA Standards](#)



[at a Glance](#) and the [6-8 Next Generation ELA Standards at a Glance](#), standards are incorporated with increasing rigor and expectations as students move through the grade levels to adequately prepare them for middle school and beyond. Programs that are selected address Next Generation Standards and are research-based approaches that are designed to meet the needs of all students.

High School

1. What is the role of group work and group tests in High School classes as it relates to comprehending material and or receiving grades?

At the high school, we take a holistic approach to evaluating student comprehension and grades. Group work, tests, and other forms of assessment are all part of a broader strategy to support student learning. Teachers utilize both summative assessments, which evaluate learning at the end of a unit or course, and formative assessments, which help guide and support students throughout the learning process. Our teachers are well trained in these practices to ensure a balanced and comprehensive approach to grading. If you have specific concerns or questions about your child's performance, please reach out directly to the teacher, as they are best positioned to provide detailed insights and work with you collaboratively.

Various modalities of learning can be utilized to support the understanding of material. As students navigate their own learning they need to know where they are and where they are going. Collaborative tasks allow students to determine their level of understanding before, during, and after assessments as the student has been given feedback about their own strengths and weaknesses. As students consider what they have not yet learned, don't yet understand, and/or are not yet able to, they become more resourceful to gain the tools to increase independent proficiency. Independent tasks work alongside collaborative tasks to ensure such proficiency is in place. As the student continues to reflect, he/she can better connect to what they can do independently, what mistakes they make, and/or how to use feedback to grow. Such opportunities in the classroom alongside self reflection allow the student to reduce stress, use hints/extensions to keep thinking, and increase proficiency on high stakes assessments because of this awareness.

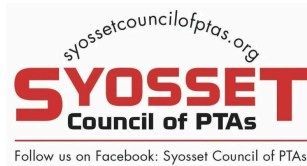
2. What is the current structure of subject area coordinators and department heads at the High School?

Below is a list of the current High School leadership broken down by focus area:

Discipline - Shai Fisher (*Administrative Assistant*)

English & Social Studies - Matthew Loew (*Assistant Principal*)

Family Consumer Science - Raymond Gessner (*Assistant Principal*)



Fine & Performing Arts - Dr. Christopher Hale (*District curriculum coordinator*)
Math & Business - Dr. Meghan Parenteau (*Assistant Principal*)
Physical Education & Athletics - Scott Stueber (*Director*)
Science & Technology - Irina Kimyagarov (*Assistant Principal*)
Special Education - Mary-Lou Sapienza (*Director*)
Student Management & Discipline, Library Services - Dr. Daniel Kim (*Assistant Principal*)
World Language & ENL - Dr. David Balsamo (*District curriculum coordinator*)

3. Would you consider having High School parent pickup after 2:30pm so buses can use all circles and clear traffic in that way?

While we understand the concerns about traffic flow and school buses, it's important to allow parents the flexibility to pick up their children at any time throughout the day. Restricting parent access until after the buses leave at 2:30pm could inadvertently create unsafe conditions, as students may attempt to meet their parents on nearby roads, increasing pedestrian traffic when buses are departing. Our priority is always student safety, and we believe it's important to manage the traffic flow in a way that minimizes risks for all.

With the passage of the Facilities Improvement Bond, the community supported the addition of a bus docking station behind the High School, which will allow for afternoon buses to depart in a single wave. We expect this to clear up traffic more quickly and make dismissal faster for everyone.

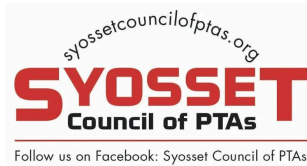
Athletics

1. Do sports teams cap roster size?

For the most part, the athletics program tries to keep as many kids on every team as possible. However, this can often lead to some kids having fewer opportunities to play in games. Several of our teams must make cuts currently, and given growing numbers on every team, we may be required to limit rosters further to ensure the numbers are manageable and safe.

2. What is the process of evaluating HS coaches and what feedback is taken into account?

After each season, the District's athletic director meets with each Varsity head coach to discuss and evaluate every season, including addressing concerns related to coaches at every level. We discuss goals for each coach and team within the program, and recommendations are made for how to improve the climate and culture of the program. If



any areas of concern or improvement are identified, the athletic director will meet with the coach to discuss concerns and set expectations for the following season.

3. Is there a formal review process for each coach?

Currently, we do not have a standard written evaluation for coaches. It is something we are open to incorporating into our program.

4. What training do coaches receive with respect to knowledge of the sport, team dynamics and team management?

All of our coaches are either certified physical education teachers, certified non-PE teachers who are required to complete coaching classes within five years, or non-teachers who must apply for a coaching license. These individuals are required to be fingerprinted and background checked. They also must complete first aid, CPR, and AED certification every two years, an Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse workshop, School Violence workshop, and the DASA workshop. All coaches are also encouraged to attend local, regional or even national coaching clinics.

5. Is there a structure for communication between players and parents with the coaching staff? (*i.e., some parents openly approach coaches and forge a relationship that could be seen as beneficial to the player*)

All coaches communicate with their team using SportsYou or Google Classroom. Student-athletes and parents are encouraged to have the student speak to their coaches when an issue arises. If that is not successful for any reason, the parents are encouraged to email or call the coach to address any concerns. The next step is for the parents and/or the student-athlete to contact the Athletic Director.