08-21 Meeting: Student Survey Development for Duquesne–McKeesport School Consolidation

Date: August 21, 2026

Meeting Notes

Student Survey Development for School Consolidation

- The primary discussion focused on creating a student survey for 6th, 7th and 8th graders from Duquesne and McKeesport to gather feedback on the upcoming school consolidation.
- There is a debate on the survey's focus: should it assess existing school safety or students' feelings about coming together?
- The survey should prioritize students' perspectives on the transition and coming together, rather than evaluating existing safety, which can be obtained from district data.
- Suggested including questions about student wellness and support systems (teachers, counselors) as a less direct way to gauge feelings about the transition.
- Many districts are removing lockers to reduce security issues, making questions about locker space potentially irrelevant.

Refining Survey Questions

- Suggested to revised questions to be more affirmative (e.g., "My school is safe" on a 1–5 scale) instead of focusing on fears.
- The main concern for students is often a lack of academic purpose, which should be a key consideration for the survey.
- Proposed that questions related to students' adaptability, such as making friends easily or adjusting to new teachers, to indirectly assess readiness for the transition.
- PDE will provide the team with the PDE School Climate Survey questions to use as a reference for drafting the final survey.

Community Feedback and Consolidation Process

- There are community concerns from Duquesne regarding the term "consolidation" versus "merger," feeling that "consolidation" implies being absorbed by McKeesport.
- Clarification that "consolidation" is the official term from the school code and the General Assembly, and the process is designed to give Duquesne an equal voice.
- The Duquesne advisory committee is considered well-composed and representative of the community. There are concerns that McKeesport's committee may not be as representative.
- The importance of having community members on the advisory committee to build trust and disseminate information was emphasized.

Next Arrangements

- PDE School Climate Survey questions with the team.
- The team will review the provided survey questions and refine the draft to focus on the transition, academic purpose, wellness/support systems, adaptability, and actionable outcomes.
- Duquesne Team will review district policies on parent permissions for surveys and report back any requirements or constraints.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting with McKeesport to discuss safety, academic aspects, and the survey's emphasis on transition readiness.