Minutes of Regular Meeting

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

Pearland Independent School District

A Regular Meeting of the Pearland Independent School District School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) was held on **Monday, November 2, 2026**, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

   Dr. Lisa Nixon welcomed members and thanked them for attending. She introduced the meeting topics, which focused on bullying prevention, the district's bullying investigation process, and behavioral threat assessments. The presentations were intended to help SHAC members better understand how the district responds to student concerns, supports students, and maintains safe learning environments.

2. **SHAC Co-Chairperson – Traci Chiappetta**

   Dr. Nixon officially recognized Ms. Chiappetta's willingness to serve as SHAC co-chairperson and thanked her for accepting the responsibility.

3. **District Bullying Mitigation Plan – Superintendent Dr. Larry Berger & Student Ambassadors**

   Dr. Larry Berger shared information about the district's efforts to address bullying as part of its strategic priority for student well-being and health.

   Student Ambassador Feedback

   Dr. Berger discussed a workshop with approximately 80 student ambassadors in grades 8–12. Students identified several concerns, including confusion about what legally constitutes bullying, the influence of peer relationships and campus culture, inconsistent adult responses, and fear of reporting incidents due to possible retaliation or being labeled a "snitch." Students also recognized the influence of social media, home environments, and a lack of empathy.

   Student-Led Solutions

   Students are developing three initiatives to help address these concerns:

   1. Bullying vs. Not Bullying: Student-created videos, graphics, and scenarios to help students recognize bullying.
   2. Bystander to Supporter: Encouraging students to support peers who are being targeted rather than watching or participating in negative behavior.

3. Mentorship/One Caring Adult: Helping every student identify a trusted adult on campus they can approach with concerns.

Student ambassadors are developing materials that will be shared throughout the district.

Strategic Scorecard and Accountability

Dr. Berger explained that the district is revising how bullying is measured. Rather than focusing only on reducing the number of reports, the district will place greater emphasis on whether reports are addressed appropriately, students receive a response, and families feel informed throughout the investigation process. Parent surveys will also be sent following investigations to gather feedback and identify opportunities for improvement.

Dr. Berger emphasized the importance of creating a campus culture where every student feels welcome, supported, and accepted, and where kindness and respect are expected of all students.

4. Review District Bullying Investigation Report

Dr. La'Kesha Henson-Vaughn, Executive Director of Intermediate Schools, reviewed the district's bullying investigation procedures. She explained that administrators receive annual training and that all bullying allegations, including anonymous reports, are investigated. Investigations may include student and witness interviews, teacher observations, and other available evidence. Reports are documented using a bullying checklist and formal investigation report.

Determining Bullying

Investigators consider five questions:

1. Was there a single significant act or a pattern of behavior?
2. Did the alleged behavior occur?
3. Was there an imbalance of power?
4. Did the behavior occur at school or during a school-related activity?
5. Did the behavior cause harm or create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment?

Dr. Henson-Vaughn noted that a single significant act may constitute bullying and that physical size alone does not establish an imbalance of power.

Documentation and Follow-Up

Investigation findings are documented and reviewed by campus and district leadership. Confirmed bullying incidents may result in consequences under the Student Code of Conduct. The district also maintains investigation records, may reopen cases when new evidence becomes available, and protects the confidentiality of all students involved.

Dr. Henson-Vaughn emphasized that even when an incident does not meet the formal definition of bullying, it is still addressed through appropriate responses such as counseling, restorative practices, relationship-building, disciplinary action, and parent communication. The district generally does not facilitate joint meetings between families and cannot share another student's confidential disciplinary information.

Dr. Nixon facilitated a discussion using two scenarios to help SHAC members understand how the district applies the five investigation questions. SHAC members asked questions about repeat offenders, reopening investigations when additional evidence becomes available, and educating students, parents, and staff about the difference between bullying and other unkind behaviors. Dr. Nixon and Dr. Henson-Vaughn reiterated that the district wants students and parents to report concerns, even when an incident may not meet the formal definition of bullying. Members also shared a recommendation for the parent education program "Hey New Shoes," which had been presented at Rustic Oak Elementary and received strong parent participation.

5. District Threat Assessment Process – John Palombo, Executive Director of Safety & Operations

Mr. Palombo, Executive Director of School Safety, reviewed the district's prevention-focused behavioral threat assessment process. He explained that concerning behaviors do not automatically mean a student is dangerous; the purpose is to identify potential risks, understand student needs, and provide appropriate support.

The five-step process includes identifying the concerning behavior, gathering information, conducting a full assessment when warranted, determining the level of concern and appropriate response, and providing ongoing case management when needed. Threat levels range from no threat to imminent. Assessment teams may include administrators, counselors, teachers, mental health professionals, and law enforcement.

Depending on the student's needs, supports may include counseling, mental health referrals, academic assistance, regular check-ins, increased supervision, and positive behavior interventions. Parents are important partners throughout the process. Assessments involving students receiving special education or Section 504 services consider the student's individual needs and existing plans.

Mr. Palombo reported that the district completed 99 threat assessments during the previous school year, with approximately 18–19% requiring full assessments. Two cases continued into the current year for ongoing monitoring and support.

School Safety and Community Resources

Mr. Palombo also discussed the state's Sentinel system, which allows threat assessment information to follow students when they transfer between Texas districts. He clarified that immediate threats may require separate investigations involving law enforcement, parent contact, and possible legal consequences.

Dr. Nixon shared that Pearland ISD provides wraparound services and partners with Gulf Coast Center and other community organizations to connect students and families with additional support. The district considers individual student circumstances when making school-based decisions, while recognizing that legal decisions are outside the district's control.

6. Questions and Member Discussion

SHAC members were encouraged to ask questions and share concerns throughout the presentations.

Discussion reinforced the importance of:

- Encouraging students to report concerning behavior.
- Teaching students the difference between unkind behavior, bullying, and threats.
- Maintaining open communication between families and schools.
- Taking statements involving self-harm or violence seriously.
- Supporting students through appropriate interventions and resources.
- Working collaboratively to maintain safe and supportive school environments.

7. Next Meeting – Monday, February 1, 2027