

Community Relations and Student Life /Safety and Wellness Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors, November 13, 2017

The Community Relations and Student Life/Safety and Wellness Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, November 13, 2017 in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m. by Committee Chair Cathy Peduzzi. Also present were committee members Leslie Finegold and Board Vice President Beth Suchsland; Board President Susan Moore; Board members Felix Raimondo and Gary Johnson; Superintendent Dr. Michael Christian; Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Karen Berk; Community Relations Coordinator/School Board Secretary David M. Sherman; Assistant Public Relations Coordinator Kim Newell; Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Assistant Principal/Athletic Director RJ Bretz; Director of Food Services Lori McCoy; Behavioral Health Advisor Felix Scherzinger; PWHS Psychologist Dr. Caitlin Gilmartin; Rosemary Northcutt; Eunice Franklin-Becker and Linda Doll.

There was no public comment on the agenda.

Mr. Bretz presented several ideas to increase attendances at PWHS sporting events and make them more affordable for students and families. First was a season pass for students and families, second was to lower prices by 50 percent, third was to offer community nights for youth basketball groups and fourth was to offer elementary and middle school nights. Sports charging admission at the high school include football, boys' and girls' basketball and wrestling. It was noted that ticket revenue is not a significant portion of the athletic department budget. After considerable discussion it was agreed that community nights and school nights should be created. The committee left it to the administration to devise a mutually beneficial ticket pricing plan.

Mrs. McCoy presented a proposal to increase the efficiency of the lunch line at Plymouth Elementary School. She noted that there were issues with students forgetting pin numbers or ID cards with which to charge lunches and thereby slowing the process. The proposal is for a biometric finger scan that would be associated with the student's account. Mrs. McCoy stressed this was not a finger print and data would be stored on District servers. She added that 2,000 school districts across the country are using the product, including several in state from which she had received positive feedback. Mrs. McCoy added that Disney World and other theme parks are using the system for season pass holders. Dr. Christian added that he used the same product in his previous school district and noted that it improves efficiency. After considerable discussion it was agreed to proceed with a free trial.

Mr. Scherzinger explained the Narcotics Overdose Prevention Education (NOPE) program the District is considering to bring to the high school. Dr. Christian stated that it was the most powerful assembly he has seen. He recommends that it be presented to high school students prior to prom season. There was considerable discussion regarding communication to parents, availability of counselors and more. The committee suggested that the administration gather more data on the program before committing to a schedule.

Mr. Scherzinger and Dr. Gilmartin discussed the mandated Act 71 suicide prevention training for staff. They noted that on November 7, all K-12 Crisis Response Team members – counselors, nurses and psychologists – received professional development, as well as consistent documentation tools, to screen, assess, monitor and respond to students risking suicide. Nationally renowned expert and author of Act 71, Dr. Terri Erbacher provided the training, thanks to a grant from the CCRES Foundation. The remaining secondary certified staff will receive three hours of training through online modules featuring Dr. Erbacher, funded by Surbaru of America through a Colonial School District Education Foundation grant.

The committee was informed that a draft of the Annual Report will be sent electronically to Board members before the end of the week. The administration would like to mail the publication before winter break.

Several themes for the 2018-2019 District Activities Calendar were discussed. Using student artwork incorporating as many students as possible was a popular idea.

The committee was informed of eight PWHHS student trip requests, including a trip to the Hayden Planetarium in New York City, an AVID trip to visit Penn State University, Elmira College and Mansfield University, spring break trips to Florida for the baseball and girls' lacrosse teams, two Ski and Snowboarding Club trips to Vermont and two cheerleading competitions.

Board members were reminded that the Wellness Policy #220 will be on Thursday's Board agenda for a second reading, parent communication regarding the Speak Up Survey has been sent, the Annual Senior Citizen Winter Concert and Luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, the next Community Coffee Hour is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30 and the District is now heavily using social media.

Mrs. Moore inquired as to the number of AED devices in the high school and was informed there are three.

There being no further business or comment, Mrs. Peduzzi adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman
Community Relations Coordinator
School Board Secretary