

Colonial School District
District Operations
Safety and Wellness Committee
Meeting Minutes
1/29/10

Committee Chair Ms. Kathleen Oxberry called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM

Other Committee Members Present: Bernie Brady, Mitch Zimmer

Other Board Members Present: Gary Johnson

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. Maryellen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Terry R. Yemm, Director of Operations; Paul Antal, District Safety Officer; Lori McCoy, Food Service Director; Melissa DeBlasio, Parent

Public Comment on the Agenda: None.

Mr. Antal provided a preliminary plan for the adoption of a program that would require background checks for parent volunteers. The background checks, as presented, would solely check for parents that are Megan's law offenders. No FBI background checks or Pa. State Police background checks would be required. The target date for adoption of the program is September 2010. Ms. DeBlasio presented information regarding a similar plan and offered to provide specific details of the plan to the District. Mr. Antal will work with the Principals at each school through the spring months in an effort to refine the details of the program.

The Committee reviewed the "Mission Possible" safety video and saw the many safety features in place in the Colonial School District. Mr. Paul Antal gave a brief tour of the schools with the video cameras.

Information was provided to the Committee regarding the use of security staff at after – hour's events at each school. A comprehensive list of the events that staffing was provided for was reviewed by the Committee. Based upon agreement and support of the Committee the District will continue to provide security staff for after-school hour events as required.

The Committee reviewed the results of an assessment of District safety practices performed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of the Auditor General. The assessment, titled Safe Schools Audit, was performed in June 2009 in conjunction with the regular cyclical performance audit of the School District. Mr. Antal provided responses and some clarifications to the items presented in the Safe Schools Audit. The District is in compliance with the many of items identified and has determined that several items are not appropriate as they would have a negative impact on the operations of the schools identified. The Committee agreed with the information presented by Mr. Antal.

Information was provided to the Committee regarding the status of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local law enforcement entities. During the fall of 2009, Dr. Cotter worked with the District Attorney of Montgomery County in finalizing a few outstanding issues with the MOU. The District Attorney's office provided some written clarifications to the issues presented by Dr. Cotter. The clarifications were received and accepted in late October 2009. With the clarifications finalized, the District moved forward with obtaining the signatures of the local law enforcement entities, the District Attorney and Dr. Cotter. The agreement, with a term of five (5) years, went into effect on October 29, 2009.

Mr. Yemm presented information regarding the number of American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible parking spaces at each of our schools. The number of accessible spaces, in relation to the total count of spaces, is determined by a formula provided in the 2006 International Building Code. (IBC) A review of the total parking space and accessible space counts provided that all schools, with the exception of Ridge Park and Plymouth Elementary Schools, are in compliance with the IBC. There are two accessible spaces at both schools and, although there has never been a problem reported regarding the spaces, the Facilities Management Department will convert one or two existing parking spaces to accessible spaces at each school as soon as the weather permits.

Ms. McCoy provided information regarding the District's efforts to address the needs of students with allergies to certain foods. In efforts to reduce the potential for cross contamination with peanuts, the District will no longer be making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on site. As of mid-January, we began ordering pre-wrapped peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. Additionally, soy milk is now available for those that have milk allergies. On the nutritional front, Ms. McCoy provided that 200 Colonial Middle School students have signed and taken a pledge to "eat a healthy breakfast every day." They can visit an interactive website, sponsored by the Dairy Council and the NFL, and log their breakfast choices. The site teaches about the importance of nutrition and also gives the students a chance to win prizes. Lastly, in efforts to enhance the academic performance of students and improve the nutritional status of students, the District is trying to increase breakfast participation at PWHS. In mid February, the District will begin piloting a program in which "grab & go" breakfast is offered in the lobby of the high school where students congregate, in addition to the hot breakfast served in the cafeteria.

There being no further business before the committee, Ms. Oxberry adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:59 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry R. Yemm
Director of Operations