

ACE Meeting Minutes

The purpose of the Advisory Council for Education is to provide a systematic representative public involvement in educational decisions under consideration by the Board of Directors.

Monday, March 5, 2018
6:00-7:30 p.m.

Call to order

Mary Levesque called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Members Present

Ryan Barci, Arianne Blackburn, Sarah Blake, Sara Cofer, Kathy Ehman, Jen Fuller, Pedro Gonzales, Ryan Johnson, Sheri Kelly, Mary Levesque, Cheryl McGuire, Kimberly Meno, Hanna Novy, Gary Sabol, Chrys Sweeting

Members Absent

Maggie Bagwell, Linda Bollinger, Lisa Coghill, Angie Donaldson, Yvonne Gallardo, Cindy Glunt, Jillian Gooding, Natalie Hollifield, Joy Johnson, David Mathieson, Casey Miller, Virginia Muniz, Jomo Simpkins, Matt Washburn

Guests Present

Brian Lewis, Will Nelson, Julie Shaughnessy, Josh Perrigo

Approve minutes

Sheri Kelly made a motion to approve the Feb. 5 minutes. Ryan Barci seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

Restorative Justice Practices

Will Nelson, Julie Shaughnessy and Josh Perrigo from Weston High School gave a presentation to the committee on Restorative Justice Practices. They had a lot of behavioral problems at the school. They introduced Restorative Justice last year. Since the introduction of Restorative Justice, the number of discipline problems has dropped dramatically.

The Goal of Restorative Justice

- Create a restorative and inclusive school climate rather than a punitive one;
- Decrease suspensions, expulsions, and disciplinary referrals by holding youth accountable for their actions through repairing harm and making amends;
- Include persons who have harmed, been harmed, and their surrounding community in restorative responses to school misconduct;
- Re-engage youth at risk of academic failure and juvenile justice system entry through dialogue-driven, restorative responses to school misbehavior.

This has forced Weston staff to shift their thinking. If a student does something, it's not an immediate consequence. They try to work it out with the other person through peer to peer conversation and conflict resolution.

Weston regularly holds restorative circles as a means to solve issues and build rapport amongst students and staff. The circles give everyone involved a chance to speak without interruptions. Suspensions have been significantly reduced since the implementation of Restorative Justice practices.

We knew this wasn't going to be a quick fix; this was a journey. We will continue to push forward with Restorative Justice.

PBIS

Weston has been using Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) for the past three years.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

- PBIS is based on principles of applied behavior analysis and the prevention approach and values of positive behavior support. (pbis.org)
- Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline are essential for supporting teaching and learning.
- PBIS goes further by emphasizing that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and working together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize success for all students.

At Weston, they push the positives. Students help create expectations for the school. When a student is given a referral, they use the referral as a paper trail as a pattern of behavior. It's a tool used to look at patterns.

Response to Intervention (RTI) Pyramid

- Strategies used to help students in different tiers
 - Remove behaviors from grading
 - What the kids know and what's been getting in the way, academic and behavioral
- Tier 1- recognizing positive behavior
Tier 2- referral to PBIS team
Tier 3- Small-group learning
- The goal is to get them down to the bottom tier.

Both Restorative Justice practices and PBIS are school-wide approaches that seek to:

- Engage parents, students, teachers, school staff, and administrators
- Enforce positive behavior
- Avoid labeling of students • Uplift students' strengths • Establish a routine

Sheri Kelly said that this has a positive effect on community. Employers would love to see young people going through this, conflict resolution, providing mental training for the kids, Bring back humanity into the schools, no technology involved, active listening and talking, teaching empathy, data shows that it works!

Kimberly Meno asked if other schools could model this program? Will said there are many things that have made it successful. Restorative Justice PBIS together. The staff has to believe in it.

Hanna Novy said it would be beneficial to share it among others in the district.

Sarah Cofer asked how does it work when safety is an issue? Same process? Will said that you need to restore the harm. Circle determines what the consequence is. Weston believes kids need to be in school, not out on a suspension. Trigger for incident wasn't what they thought it was. The learning was important. Addressing the harm done, and bringing balance back to the community is the most important aspect of Restorative Justice. Julie mentioned that a component of RJ is being in the same circle and working through the conflict that occurred in the first place to cause the harm that had been done. Another very important consideration is that the restoration of balance is in the eyes of the victim and offender, (and perhaps the greater community), but not necessarily in the eyes of the staff. Our purpose is to guide the restoration of balance and not dictate what that looks like from our experiences and expectations.

Ryan Barci asks restorative questions of his students. Ryan acts as a facilitator. He finds it to be extremely powerful. When the kids are in our care, support the process, have them discover it for themselves. Having to own what you did. They have to figure it out for themselves.

Safety and Security Website

Dr. Chrys Sweeting and Brian Lewis talked about the new Safety and Security section on the district website. Section includes:

- SafeSchools Tipline- Brian gave an example on bullying
- What to know when you visit a school
- Be schooled for emergencies
- Comprehensive Safe Schools Plan
- Drills
- Emergency Management and Response Team
- Facilities Advisory Committee
- Hazard Mitigation Plan- Review natural hazards we're subject to in our area
- Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- School Resource Officer
- Staff Training

Brian said there's going to be some protocol and practice changes, make sure they'll feeling safe and secure, teachers are being honest with us, continue to involve students in safety discussions.

Sheri Kelly said it's important to keep everyone in the loop, important to inform parents about what's going on.

Arianne Blackburn said to not be afraid to let the middle and high school students know what's going on. She's had very good discussions with teachers about what they would do in an emergency.

Focus Group

Brian Lewis said we will be conducting a series of focus groups with community members. We will be collecting opinions, beliefs and attitudes about issues of interest. Brian asked the committee to send any questions they'd like asked in the focus groups to Gary.

District Updates

- Suessical is awesome!
- Classified Employee Week next week
- Accountability Index- publishes list of three year trend of growth

Sheri Kelly made a motion to adjourn and Hanna Novy seconded the motion. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 9