

ELPS District School Council Minutes

April 7, 2023

Noon

Held in person and via Zoom

In attendance: Dori Leyko, Tali Faris-Hylen, Tamara El-Khoury, Scott Boehm, Sara Cunningham, Meg Drouare, Tana Hemsley, Angela Michael, Rhiannon Worgess-Carveth

Called to order at 12:04

March Minutes Approved at 12:05; motioned by Angela, seconded by Meg

Administrative Update – Dori Leyko

- The chief human resources officer will release a survey next week to gain input to create a candidate profile for the next high school principal. The survey will be accessible to staff, students, families and the community, and the information received will be used to create the job posting. The HR director will lead the hiring process, and is working on a draft process and timeline, and will put together a stakeholder committee for the interviews.
- Not many retirements are anticipated this year, but once retirements are submitted they will post positions as soon as possible to draw in newly graduating students for open positions.
- Graduation will be at Breslin Center this year, rather than the MSU Auditorium on Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Friday night graduation has received positive feedback from students, staff and families.
- Continuing to work on safety and security. Have met with consultants who are facilitating detailed plans around infrastructure, policies and procedures. Looking at funding for some things, and will also include staff and age appropriate student training, differing at each school level. The company EL works (Secure Education Consultants) with does critical incident training, rather than only active shooter training. Looking at their offerings and will spend the summer planning the 7 professional development days and will try to determine what applies to all staff and what to only some.
- End of year stuff is starting to happen. The high school has a pep rally Friday to roll out some new PBIS rewards. Also had a guest speaker doing poetry and rapping with many social studies classes.
- Working on plans for staff appreciation in May. Admin team has been doing a breakfast for each school for the past few years, and will continue with that. Working to figure out a schedule, so each school will get a day in May, there isn't enough time to do them all during the official appreciation week. They also have renamed it to Staff Appreciation to include the whole school community.
- Questions:
  - Angela – Who is the security consultant? Dori – Secure Education Consultants in Grand Rapids. They have employees with school backgrounds and employees with law enforcement backgrounds. Our point person is a former director at Oxford Community Schools.
  - Rhiannon – We spoke in the fall about auctions and fundraising and how to be sure councils are doing their best to follow district policies. Are there still plans for you to provide some guidelines to the councils on what is an isn't appropriate for fundraising/auctions? Dori – In the fall, one school was told by their school team that they couldn't have an auction, which led to our discussion at DSC. Took it back to Glenn and Klaudia to discuss and they want to try to provide some education and makes sure schools are aligned. The line in the sand is not no auctions. The line in the sand is when it impacts kids coming into the school and impacts experiences kids have in school. Saw an auction preview that contained many experiences where the highest bidder goes to a kid and friends (principal for a day, etc). Followed up with the auction and their solution is to double every experience item, with one going to the highest bidder, and the other being pulled from an all student raffle. Each student will receive the same number of raffle tickets to put in for whichever experience item they want to try for. Always trying not to let perfect get in the way of better, and appreciate that this is at least better, but would not be a recommended path moving forward. Dori, Glenn, Klaudia and Nick have met and will continue to meet

to discuss guidelines and more equitable fundraising ideas. Plan to work on it this summer to have guidelines to share for the fall. Would like to work with DSC to do this and are open to all suggestions. The hope is to enforce good equity policies but not get in the way of the school councils.

#### Facilities Committee Update – Tali Faris-Hylen:

- Have had 2 or 3 meetings since Tali became chair. These updates are from Billy Hastings, who recently replaced Michael Stahlmann as the Operations and Maintenance director.
- GMB architectural firm is working on a playground package for Glencairn, Donley and Red Cedar to be completed and installed prior to that start of next school year. The woodchips at each school are reviewed each year and will be addressed. Will also look into handicap matting for underneath swings.
- More grass will be planted at each school this summer.
- Ordered a door audit to ensure all accessible doors are working properly and to fix those that are not.
- All custodial positions have been filled except one part time position.
- A mower has been purchased so the district does not have to work with an outside contractor to mow.
- Panic buttons have been installed in offices, a new pool roof at the high school and enhanced lighting in the MS and HS auditoriums.
- Questions:
  - What do panic buttons do? Alert staff, lock all doors. Have also used these for shelter in place where don't need a police response. All staff get alerts when this happens so that admin can contact 911 if needed. These are also used for lockdown drills at each building.

#### Be SMART presentation – Tamara El-Khoury and Scott Boehm:

- Both parents at Marble and passionate about doing everything they can to curb gun violence.
- Tamara has come before the school board previously to ask that Be SMART be shared with the district. The board did enact a resolution to share info and send an email with info to each family. Few people looked at the info or clicked the link, so looking to continue sharing this information. Legislation and elections take time, but Be SMART is educational and can help now. It is a non-partisan program that talks about safe gun storage. Gun violence is now the leading cause in death for children, and there are more firearms than there are people in the USA. Be SMART tells you how to be a responsible gun owner to prevent guns from getting in the wrong hands. One thing we can do when sending kids to other homes is to normalize asking questions about guns and storage the way we ask about allergies and pets. For example, on a birthday invitation you could say "Tell us what allergies you have, we have a child-friendly dog and our home is gun-free and smoke-free". This approach helps normalize conversations around gun safety. Be SMART will provide free gun locks and answer many questions, excuses and reasons people provide for not securing firearms, and does it in a non-judgmental, non-partisan way.
- Scott is a professor at MSU and colleague of the classroom that the shooter targeted. He's teaching students who have been seriously affected by the shooting and has attended protests and seen student anxiety. It's been hard to see so many people moving back to life as normal, we must make time to work on gun violence. Be SMART is a ready-made non-partisan program that is easy to share. It can be awkward to talk about guns, but if we can normalize it and get this message out to all families, this will be a great first start to build on in our district and community. This is a public health issue.
- Asking DSC and school councils to support a Be SMART presentation in May. Want to share info at each school and encourage parents to attend.
- Questions/Discussion:
  - Are you willing to do the presentation again in the fall? Yes, great idea. Want to do it now before the summer break, but will plan to do another in the fall at the start of school year.
  - Can you include a zoom portion for the meeting? Yes.
  - Is this something that could be shared with/at Hannah Center? Can flyers be shared at each school? Dori will plan to get flyers to all principals and figure out a good way to get them out. Some suggestions are

to make available at kindergarten roundup and in welcome packet/paperwork that each student gets at the beginning of the year.

[\(About Be SMART\) Printable-Be-Smart-Brochure.06.2022 \(besmartforkids.org\)](#)

[Gun Safety Resources | Be SMART \(besmartforkids.org\)](#)

#### Building Updates:

- High School – Still talking about doing a showing of The Mask You Live In and will talk to middle school about partnering.
- Whitehills – Had movie night, which was decent fundraiser. Shared cost on an author's visit with Donley, which went well. Having spring carnival next week, first in a few years. Book fair in 2 weeks and are working on teacher appreciation week. Whitehills historically had an international night where families would staff a table and share about their culture. After speaking with Klaudia Burton, they canceled the event as the thought is that these types of events put a burden on families to educate other families. Going to look at different ways to look into welcoming the diverse school community without putting the burden on specific families. One idea is to staff it with MSU student groups. Whitehills 5K is coming back in August after a few years break.
- Marble – Similar to Whitehills, had a movie night and book fair last month and have carnival and auction in a few weeks.
- Green – Working on an online silent auction with items from when the spring 2020 auction didn't happen. Going to buy a popcorn machine and would like to see what it looks like at other schools when they do their popcorn. Working on teacher appreciation with different ideas for students to do each day: candy day, bring a flower or picture for your teacher, bring a card, treat your teacher or show your best behavior. On Wednesday that week have a meal donated by Carrabbas. Had elections at April meeting and still looking to fill secretary position. Had some leftover bags of chips from an event and donated them to the school to use for a "Friend-chip Friday" incentive in May.
- Middle School – no meeting in March due to spring break
- Donley – Book fair next week with Arts Event one evening. Arts event includes art and crafts with art teacher, dancing and music with music teacher, an instrument petting zoo with high school students, and an activity with the Broad museum. Online auction and carnival being planned for May. If any schools are interested in working together to plan their STEAM/Science Nights, let us know. Donley still looking for someone to plan theirs, but think that working together with other schools helps everyone out, including the groups they are asking.
- Glencairn – not available
- Red Cedar – not available

Next Meeting 5/5, plan to touch base ahead of time to see if enough councils have DSC reps chosen for next year for us to have DSC elections.

Adjourned 1:11

#### Building Reps:

Donley	Rhiannon Worgess-Carveth
Glencairn	Natalie Bertoia
Green	Meghan Drouare
Marble	Tana Hemsley
Red Cedar	Linden Brown-Wren
Whitehills	Sara Cunningham
MacDonald	Meghan Drouare
High School	Angela Michael