

ELPS District School Council Minutes
February 3, 2023
Noon
Held in person and via Zoom

In attendance: Sara Cunningham, Angela Michael, Rhiannon Worgess-Carveth, Dori Leyko, Glenn Mitcham

Called to order at 12:07

Introductions

January Minutes Approved at 12:08; motioned by Sara, seconded by Angela

Administrative Update – Dori Leyko

- Administration has been spending most of their time working on development of the Safety Plan that was presented at the special school board meeting 1/30/23, and beginning implementation of the plan and communication of updates. The high school is planning to send out an update this week on procedural changes they are making. Have had a fabulous week at the high school with no incidents, lots of staff have stepped up to help.
- Mr. Mayfield is out with health related issues, hoping to know more about his status next week. Mr. Lampi, a Spanish teacher with an interest in administration has had a guest teacher for his class all week so that he could assist with administrative duties temporarily.
- There has been lots of outreach from parents this week and great interactions with students. The home athletics events this week went really well, and the high school is looking forward to the dance next Saturday.
- In addition to updates at board meetings, will continue to provide updates in Sunday emails for the whole community.
- Questions:
 - Sara: Who is the appropriate contact if there are issues with bussing at the elementary level? Related to overcrowding. Dori: Rich Pugh is the director of Transportation, and the appropriate contact. Rider counts happen at the beginning of the year, but may need to happen again as things change through the year.
 - Sara: Have heard of some staff concerns at the middle school. Is there going to be an effort to move changes that work well at the high school down to the middle school and elementary levels as well? Just want to be sure middle school staff will be able to share ideas and concerns as well. Dori: The safety plan was developed with staff from the high school, so any new plan would involve stakeholders from the middle school and elementaries, but there may be some carryover from the high school plan. Working to get the high school plan implemented, steady and stable before moving to the lower levels, but then plan to follow the same process to look at the middle and elementary schools.

Update on Academic Teaching and Professional Development – Glenn Mitcham

- Elementary:
 - The big academic focus this year has been the implementation of Bookworms, the new reading/writing curriculum that was reviewed last year. The old curriculum was out of date and ready for replacement. It is going great, but is a heavy lift for teachers and not simple to just pick up and run with. Mornings of Professional Development days for elementary teachers has been spent in Bookworms learning and training.

- Spent last summer and into this year rewriting parts of the curriculum that were not up to district's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) standards.
- Also implemented a new data structure, to improve how to make sense of all the data that comes in and use that data to inform teaching. Working to streamline how to look at district data with an admin team and come up with goals at that level, then do the same thing at a building level, grade level and classroom level to set appropriate goals for each. Looking at how students are doing in the moment, but also how they are growing over time compared to others who did similarly in the fall. Have implemented Data Days for admins to spend the day meeting with grade level teams and instructional coaches to dig into the data they have.
- The district is also working hard to implement an instructional support plan for students who are struggling. Working on a process to give teachers the ability to bring forward a student who needs help and get some support for them. A group will figure out strategies for a struggling student, then they will follow and evaluate the progress. This process is ready to pilot in the spring.
- Middle School:
 - The social studies and science curriculum are both new this year. For the social studies program, the teachers went through training in August and have been rolling it out this year. There have been some technical difficulties where they occasionally haven't been able to login, which is an issue because the curriculum is very computer dependent. They have been working on improving that with the curriculum supplier, and it is otherwise a great curriculum. The science curriculum uses a different training model, where a trainer comes in and teaches each unit to the teachers, they do the unit in class, and then learn the next unit, and so on. It is going well and seems to be a great science curriculum.
 - Similar to the elementary level, the middle school team is working on processes to help support students. They are using a system called Early Warning Intervention Monitoring System (EWIMS) that takes into account grades, behavior and other data to monitor how to support students and figure out which systems need attention. EWIMS has a lot of potential as a way to be more proactive in helping students.
- High School:
 - A new course is starting next year called Exploring Education. It will be an elective open to 9th-12th graders, for students who are considering the idea of teaching as a career. It will give them more information about what the career is all about, and will include students going into classrooms. There is a companion program starting in 11th grade at Wilson Talent Center, so interested students could continue on the path in 11th and 12th grade. Legislature provided the funding, course sequence and objectives for this course.
 - The high school is working to re-sequence English course offerings to condense coursework required for students who want to accelerate their English course to ultimately take both AP Literature and AP Language courses.
- Professional Development:
 - The staff have 5 Fridays for Professional Development this year. The full days are working better than trying to fit in professional development after teachers spend a half day teaching.
 - Elementary teachers are primarily doing Bookworms training for their PD time, while there are more options available for the secondary level teachers. The core choice this year is a DEI course with Justice Leaders Collaborative, which includes looking inward and then provides a wealth of info on how to be effective when working with marginalized students. The next step for this course is using a curriculum tool that lets you take a course curriculum through a rubric to determine how socially just your curriculum is. Other secondary level PD course include a social emotional learning course that includes learning how to work on yourself and how to better impact students.

- Feel like these initiatives and courses are important and making a big impact already, and hope to keep these PD opportunities going so that staff can take different course each year and all get all of these concepts.
- Additionally, as part of PD days, there are work groups in each school that have dedicated time during each PD day to work as a group. Previously work groups like these would have had to meet outside of school time, so they are providing some time to the staff to participate in these as part of their work day. Each group has 5-10 members, so this gives them time to plan and work together.
- Some examples of elementary groups are PBIS groups that work on data to figure out where students are struggling with positive behavior and how to address and improve; a staff and student wellness group that focuses on social emotional learning for students and for staff; and a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) group that is looking at academic interventions and how to support struggling students.
- Middle school and high school have bigger staff so there are more work groups in place, for example EWIMS; Teachers Leading Teachers, with a focus on social justice; a physical building spaces team, a safety team, a community outreach team, a PBIS school culture team, and staff and student mental health and wellness teams.

Questions:

- Sara: Are we going to have to add days to the end of this school year? Middle school students are worried that if they miss one more day they will have to add in June, due to a couple of unexpected closures. Dori: School days are determined at the district level, not based on an individual building, so the additional days off at the high school and middle school do not impact the district total. District wide there has been one snow day, so we are fine on number of days at this point.
- Sara: When does information about high school, course options, etc come out? Glenn: The counselors will go to 8th grade classrooms this spring to explain all the options for high school.
- Angela: The DSC has been quiet through everything going on recently, but if there is anything DSC can do to alleviate uncertainty or communicate information, we are available to share info out. Please let us know if there is anything we can communicate or any way we can help. Dori: The draft Safety Plan is on the ELPS website and will be sent out in Friday HS updates, as well as the survey. The first few questions in the survey are related to the plan, which is why the survey is included within the Safety Plan itself. DSC can share those posts out.

Skipped Building Updates due to limited information this month.

Next Meeting 3/3

Adjourned 12:45

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