

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE
DISTRICT WIDE PARENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

LOCATION: To be held virtually Google Meet link: meet.google.com/ukq-fbmu-oew

Those in Attendance: Laura Eber, Dr. Engel, Kelly Galvan, Amy Merkey, Katie Lever, Lori Potkay, Trista Treglowne, Tammy Gruen, Summer Elston, Kellie Schmitz, Anna Stindt, Joshua Wolcott, Kalista Richardson, Alyson Glenz, Brooke Thurman, Stacey Everson, Natalie Rose, Neil Meier, Natalie Rose Doerfler, Patricia Sprang, Alicia Place, Nell Saunders-Scott, Gretchen Knudson-Stuhr, Aimee Witt, Dawn Wacek, Erin Belby

A G E N D A

1. Call to Order
2. Land Recognition Statement
 - National Indigenous Day was on Monday
3. Approve Minutes - September 14, 2021
 - Minutes approved
4. Showcase - Success and Behavioral Coaches
 - a. Kellie Schmitz, Supervisor of Educator Readiness
 - Overview: Many services for best practices, whole child approach with equity & all children need to be successful. Mission for success through collaboration & have students feel welcome & wanted. Coaching, integrated supports, etc. for success
 - b. Josh Wolcott, Lincoln/SOTA II/CM
 - Works with all teachers, all seem to not have enough time, but want to improve. Goal to move work into transformational systems work. Work smarter, not harder. Meetings with grade level teams to help individual students who need extra support. Remove barriers & making connections for students to grow. Tough work, not easy! MS have success coach & inclusion coach (works for all 3 bldgs)
 - c. Summer Elston, Emerson Elementary
 - Each elementary has a behavior coach & academic coach. Their job/goal if for every student & every teacher has a “Yes” moment each day. I.e. of a day: book study, Permission to feel, our emotions as adults, & how to use those to help students. Regulation of children & adults are important. Soft landing time with students, then observation of a child to see what may be a trigger of a behavior to then problem solve for the lagging skill that may be happening. 5th grade classes – Indigenous people unit. Meet with integrated supports. Teach social/emotional learning to each grade, once/cycle. Ended the day building a relationship with student, then help get students to buses.
 - d. Kalista Richardson, Logan High School
 - High School similar to middle school with inclusion coach & success coach. This position is new, but try to get words through students & teachers to make an impact to be better (student & teacher). It’s about all, to use data for standardized testing to see if

changes they have made is making an impact. Wearing many hats & helping adults to connect with each other so they can connect with a student. Bring all students up to an equal level.

e. Questions for presenters

- Can you share about longer-term plan for these roles & funding? Dr. Engel spoke:

ESSER 2 & 3 funds were one-time funds that are being used for these extra supports. Goal: to create systems & build capacities of teachers to do some of this themselves. Already seeing positive things happening in schools. Opportunities in 2 years – new legislature, operational referendum, facility needs.... Want to keep these programs here & look for other opportunities.

- Collect success stories

Josh Wolcott sat with 6th grade team; some students have significant needs, explored problems to see what student needs, but the team took a different direction & start thinking about strengths of student & how to use that to make a plan – new approach for the team.

Kalista brought up that she is a person of color, and the students were amazed that she was a “real” teacher, not support staff. To say that students can say they had a black teacher that made an impact is great. She is hoping she can help other students of color to have goals to come back to the district they went to school at, like her.

Summer had students that are showing mentorship with each other (an older student helped de-escalate a younger student).

5. 2022-23 School Year calendars (5 minutes)

Dr. Engel – drafts; things to consider: input from teachers & administrators. Avoid ½ days, as often difficult for families to work around, whole weeks for consistency, maximize professional development time for teachers – schedule 1 day/month for these days, buildings will determine parent/teacher conferences on their own discretion & needs

- Traditional School Year: 1st day of school on September 1st; last day of school is June 2nd.

Question: could have days off in a larger group, all together?

They have considered that, but it is a balance of factors with spread out professional development, balance with needs of families in community (i.e. food for unstable households), behaviors with long breaks can be difficult at return time. Can re-think & re-consider for the future.

- Year-round calendar is mostly the same as the traditional school year.
- Starts on July 13th
- Full year school has 3 – 3 weeks breaks, with intersession classes offered & have partnerships with BGC for daycare.
- Sept. 19th – Oct. 7th, Winter Break, March 20 – April 11th, (Intersessions) Last school day June 2nd (same as Traditional year calendar).

Questions:

- Why is Spring Break over a weekend, not committed to a full week off?
More consistency for students with classes & balances of needs.

- Each school building to decide the days their Conferences will be scheduled. Will there be days off?
No, evenings are typically easier for families. When we offer midday conferences, there are few families that choose them. Will continue to offer virtual options as families have found that more convenient.
- Do districts try to align their school calendars?
Yes, have tried, but each district has different priorities, so challenging for all to have the same schedule. Point well taken & considered for future.

6. Tax Exempt Filing Reminder - Patty Sprang, Executive Director Business Services

Every year, revisit tax exempt status, that tends to be forgotten. If fiscal year ends June 30th, the 990N needs to be submitted by November 15th. Patty will send out information again, for those PTO's that transfer to new members of the board. Post cards usually come to the school. Some of that was missed due to COVID. Find out when your fiscal year ends...if December, then 990N is due in May. Contact Patty Sprang with any questions. She is happy to help. psprang@lacrossesd.org

7. Sharing Concerns - Items must be of District-wide concern. No individual staff, school or student will be discussed.

- Mask compliance is still difficult in schools. Dr. Engel was impressed with 9 buildings and things were pretty good. Many reminders going out & reminding of mitigation strategies to keep students in schools.
- Update on busing?
Busing is still difficult with sports. Middle schools are struggling with team dynamics. Demands & communications have been made to GoRiteway by District. Lack of bus drivers is state wide & nation wide. Some of the coaches for smaller teams have been able to drive athletes with large vans. Better than nothing, even though not perfect... They are continuing to work on it to improve the situation.
Are there other ways to get other drivers? Can they get school district benefits? Can city buses transport kids? Valid concerns, looking at bigger, structural changes & examining options with the cities & city buses. Taxis have been used to meet needs for federal obligations of transporting students in certain situations.
Bus company has been in violation, but school district lawyer has also brought up: Where are we going to get buses/drivers/mechanics? Other companies don't have drivers available. This is a problem across the entire state.
Does the bus company need to pay more? How can they not have drivers?
They have raised their wages significantly & offered bonuses...still tough.
Middle School Sports option: can parents drive their children & friends to & from games? It is an option, with paperwork signed and vehicle inspection to limit liability on the school to take students to a school activity. Still reduces comradery, but trying to do the best in a bad situation. Parents can work with Activity Directors on this option.
Anything in the bus company contract prohibit school district to purchase a couple of buses? Is there money the school district can have? School needs certified drivers,

which is the big challenge. A \$4000 bus is not reliable, but an \$80,000 bus would be. There are solutions the school district is working on with the bus company.

- Responsibility release is no longer a practice being used at the high schools. If a teacher is not involved in large group study halls, why are we doing this? Especially if students are walking out anyways. Would like to see more structure for phasing out of responsibility releases. Stacey Everson: continuing to review and work with Principals. Any student who is interested in a different opportunity, is being worked on through Student Services, Counselors, Principals - maybe prefer more time in the music room or art – could be an option to make better use of their time than study hall. Students could explore work-based opportunities, job shadowing, etc. The aim is to have students taking more elective classes. Looking at other options, military, additional career explorations? Check with Student Services, Counselors or Principals. There are many opportunities in the schools that can take place during a class period.
- There is still a disconnect between grading in Skyward & Canvas that is frustrating for parents. The IT departments from Skyward & Canvas are working on this with the district. They should be communicating, but are not. The school district is still trying to get that worked on.

8. Administrative Updates

a. Superintendent Update

COVID goal is to still keep kids in school as much as possible and keep them safe. Our current mitigations have worked to limit close contacts.

Visiting a test-to-stay protocol, where close contact students would be able to be tested each day, but yet could stay in school. This adds slight risk, but examining it, to ensure safety & resources to be able to do this effectively. Have to have system in place before we would begin offering it as an option.

Survey will go out Oct. 18th for long range facility plans. Look at declining enrollment problem the school district has been facing over the years.

9. Joys & Shoutouts (10 minutes) - Fun things happening at a school or Upcoming PTO fundraisers.

- Happy Birthday Katie!!!
- At Emerson – Pulled Pork-Q next Monday
<https://tickets.elevatedpresence.com/emersonpto/>
Monday, October 18th 4-6:30 p.m. or until gone English Lutheran Church 1509 King St Enter on 16th St. / Exit on 15th St.
- Thanks to teachers & staff! They have gone above & beyond to keep kids in schools this year!

Meeting adjourned at: 8:27pm.

