

Meeting Minutes - January 23, 2024

Present: PAC members, including Principal, Vice Principal, and representatives from parents and teachers.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Call to Order
 - The meeting was called to order by the PAC chairs and second by a parent representative.
 - The chair welcomed all attendees and formally opened the meeting.
 - The agenda for the meeting was reviewed and unanimously approved by the PAC members.
2. Newsletter and Minutes
 - The second newsletter for the current semester was posted online for public comments, but no comments were received.
 - The newsletter was shared with the school community and made available for feedback on the school's website.
 - No comments or feedback were received from the public regarding the newsletter.
 - The minutes from the previous PAC meeting were reviewed and approved.
 - The secretary presented the detailed minutes from the last PAC meeting.
 - The minutes were carefully reviewed and unanimously approved by the PAC members.
3. Membership Introduction
 - The PAC warmly welcomed Brigith Gonzalez Trujillo as a new student representative who will serve 1 full year (January-January), highlighting the council's dedication to incorporating diverse student voices. Brigith's affiliation with Colombia Junior College, UGA and familial connections to Emory were noted, underscoring the breadth of student experiences represented.

Principal Announcements:

4. Home EC Kitchen Renovations
 - The Home EC kitchen renovations were reported to be 92% complete, with remaining work on cabinetry and ventilation system upgrades.
 - The PAC was provided with an update on the progress of the Home EC kitchen renovation project.
 - It was shared that 92% of the work had been completed, and the remaining tasks focused on cabinetry and ventilation system improvements.
 - It was noted that the Home EC classes will continue to be held in the same location, across from the Art room.
 - The PAC was informed that the Home EC classes will remain in their current location, which has been used for these classes for over 50 years.
5. City Council Meeting
 - Turnout was good; a large number of students attended.
 - Students, DHS, & Dunwoody Police Department showed off good relationship
6. Wrestling Team Success

- The school's wrestling team had a highly competitive season, winning the regional championship for the second year in a row, which was celebrated.
 - The PAC members were informed about the wrestling team's outstanding performance and their back-to-back regional championship victories.
 - The committee members expressed their congratulations and pride in the team's accomplishments.
- 7. Student Award
 - Annie Peng, a student, was awarded a prestigious Congressional medal for her achievements.
 - The PAC acknowledged Annie Peng's exceptional accomplishments, which led to her being awarded a prestigious Congressional medal.
 - The committee members expressed their admiration and celebration of Annie's remarkable recognition and success.
- 8. School Musical Planning
 - There were discussions around the upcoming school musical, including pricing for lighting and sound equipment, and the county's plan to cover the rental costs for the show.
 - The PAC engaged in discussions about the logistics and planning for the school's upcoming musical production.
 - PAC was asked to assist in contacting potential vendors for lighting, sound, and other technical support.
 - The committee was informed that the county had agreed to cover the rental costs for the new venue.
- 9. Graduation Date
 - The graduation date was set for May 19th.
 - The PAC members reviewed and approved the graduation date of May 19th, which was scheduled for a Sunday.
 - This date was selected to accommodate the school's schedule and community needs.
- 10. Testing and ESOL Updates
 - Updates were provided on MAP and ACCESS testing schedules, as well as changes to the ESOL program exit criteria, including the requirement for a minimum score of 4.7 or 4.9 for students to exit the program.
 - The PAC was informed about the upcoming schedules for MAP and ACCESS testing.
 - ACCESS is to test language, Dunwoody Reads is centered around ACCESS.
 - Changes to the ESOL program exit criteria were discussed, including the new minimum score requirement of 5 to exit without additional requirement or 4.7 or 4.9 with teacher approval for students to exit the program.
 - These updates were provided to ensure the PAC members were aware of the testing and ESOL program changes.
- 11. Staffing and Discipline Refinements

- Announcements of staff transitions, including Stacey Blake's retirement and Coach Hill's new role, reflected the dynamic nature of the school's leadership and discipline framework.
- Adjustments in detention policies aimed at reinforcing a constructive academic environment were discussed.

12. Disciplinary Actions and Policies

- **Detention and Vape Policy:** The discussion moved to the enforcement of the detention policy, exploring the need for language assistance for non-English speaking students and families. The effectiveness of the vape policy was evaluated, considering health education as a preventive measure and the feasibility of implementing Saturday detentions as a deterrent.

13. Facilities and Maintenance

- **Bathroom Conditions:** The unsatisfactory condition of bathrooms, especially during events, was addressed.
 - The council proposed a schedule for regular checks and maintenance, and the need for student education on respect for school facilities was stressed.
 - The condition of the gym and auditorium bathrooms during events was a point of discussion. It was noted that supplies were often taken by students, leading to shortages.
 - The custodial team was commended for their efforts, and the importance of maintaining good hygiene standards, especially during half-days and exam periods, was stressed.

14. Student Support and Recognition Programs

- **Support Programs:** The introduction of the "Wildcat Keepers" grant and RTI program was seen as a positive step toward providing targeted support for students with academic and behavioral challenges. The council discussed setting clear goals and finding mentors from within the community to reinforce the program's impact.

15. Parent and Community Engagement

- **International Night and Parental Involvement:** A strategy to improve communication with parents included the use of QR codes for easy access to school policies and updates. Plans for International Night were discussed, with the goal of creating a more inclusive event that celebrates the cultural diversity of the student body.

New Business and Continuing Topics:

16. Skipping Policy (Expanded).

- The council expressed concern over the rise in truancy and discussed a multi-tiered approach to the skipping policy.
 - The policy aims for progressive discipline with an emphasis on corrective actions and parental engagement.

17. Staffing and Operational Concerns

- **Operational Efficiency:** Staff concerns regarding detention administration and the impact of lunch duty on planning time were discussed. Proposals were made

to redistribute responsibilities to maximize instructional time and to explore alternative disciplinary measures that do not impact teacher availability.

18. Extra-Curricular Activities and Programs

- Spirit Days and Scholarships: The PTSA report included plans for curriculum night, spirit days, and scholarship awards. Emphasis was placed on creating events that foster school spirit and recognize academic excellence.

Student Pathways and Academic Programs:

19. Academic Challenges for International Students

- The council discussed the issues facing international students, such as credit transfer and appropriate class placements. Strategies for identifying and placing these students in challenging programs were considered crucial for their academic development.

20. Facility Use and Event Planning

- Exam Scheduling: Ideas for optimizing facility use during exams, such as implementing half-days, were discussed. These changes aim to minimize disruption and create a conducive environment for students during exam periods.

21. Strategic Initiatives and Focus Areas

- Graduation Rate and Academic Support: The "Grind for the 9" initiative to improve graduation rates was outlined, including additional tutoring opportunities through the ROAR program. The council focused on mentoring at-risk students and bolstering academic support services.

22. Academic and Student Support

- Newcomers Program
- Designed to provide actual credits for new students, integrating them into general classes.
- A concern was raised about students not reading at grade level and the elimination of basic read/write classes. The necessity for a study skills class within special education was suggested to support these students.

23. ELL Integration

- The integration of English Language Learner (ELL) students was discussed, with Mr. Brooks, a beloved figure in the community, leading the initiative.
- The importance of creating pathway classes as electives was emphasized to help ELL students acclimate and succeed in the school environment.

24. Curriculum and Community Engagement

- World Language Program
 - An update was provided on the World Language Program. Despite the county not allowing for a second Carnegie unit, the middle school proceeded to offer Spanish 2.
- The morale regarding the new and old business concerning the curriculum was reported to be good, indicating positive feedback from students and parents.

PTSO Report:

- 25. The PTSA reported on upcoming curriculum nights, spirit days, and scholarship offerings for students with high GPAs.

- The newsletter language project is underway, and there are plans for a significant senior week event, ensuring it does not conflict with regular school days.

26. Student Issues and Pathways

- Hispanic Student Engagement
 - The meeting discussed the lack of after-school involvement from Hispanic students, mainly due to transportation issues and the cost associated with services like Uber.
- The first priority was set to be academic, with ROAR providing 35 minutes for tutoring, though it was noted that this service is not available in the afternoon when it may be most needed.

27. Course Creation

- The council considered creating courses to address basic communication skills for students who are 6 weeks into regular high school and find it challenging.
- The idea of electives and pathways was put forward to help these students feel more integrated and supported in their academic journey.

Teacher Report:

28. Teachers Concern

- Teachers expressed discontent with having to perform lunch duty, as it interferes with their planning period. It was noted that planning time had been lost over the past four years.
- There was advocacy for a built-in flex time to better accommodate teachers' schedules and allow for improved student support.

29. Meeting Adjourned

- Lisa Seigle made a motion to end the meeting, and it was seconded by Marjorie Steinbrenner. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Items:

1. The PAC agreed to assist with contacting vendors and securing support for the school musical production.
2. The school administration will continue to work on improving attendance and engaging the Hispanic community.
3. The disciplinary policies and procedures will be further refined and monitored to address the identified issues.