Focus Group Code of Conduct – Summary by Karen Ostrick

The PTA participated in a focus group with the Administration to discuss changes to the code of conduct.  The Administration went over in detail the philosophy behind the new code and the important takeaways for us.   The new code spoke to character and good citizenship for students, staff and families.  Additionally, the new code referred to the Growth Mindset approach that the district has been focusing on. This emphasizes that our children can continuously improve even when they previously have shown poor performance.  With that in mind they are using restorative and solutions-oriented practices to help resolve issues and not*just* punishments. As a parent I appreciated that learning an additional option will be provided to a child & family – *like not giving a child an in-home suspension but instead providing them with in-school suspension*, so that the child can work with a social worker & staff members to resolve their issues. Our focus group was intrigued by the concept of restorative practices but wanted to ensure that the administration would be providing a plain language version of the code with definitions and resources, written with parents in addition to placing it in an easy to access location on the website which is now actually in the works.  Another major point they expressed was the education of our educators on the changes.  Our teachers, building staff and administrators will be trained on how to appropriately issue discipline based on the new concept of “restorative practices”.