

HSC Meeting, 11.15.23

Principal's Update

Ms. Dinday shares updates since our last HSC meeting. Information is provided regarding campus community & culture—specifically highlighting our new Marin Humane Society therapy docs program, which began today—academics and sports.

Counselor's Presentation

Cheryl Jacobs and Ashley Marty: topic - navigating middle school.

Their presentation begins with a video “Understanding the Teen Brain”. The video highlights the building of the human body, the rise of hormones, and the effects on the brain. It points out that with the brain, one’s prefrontal cortex develops much slower than other parts of the body. This is concerning because hormones promote that students seek out dangerous behaviors and taking risks.

Ms. Jacobs shares that students process events and interactions heavily through their amygdala. This is in contrast with parents, whose brains are fully developed. We come from a reasoning position; they are coming from an emotional position when interacting.

Two goals of adolescence: forming independence, and forming identity separate from the primary caregiver. Ms. Jacobs explains that the middle school counselor’s role is to support students with these goals in a safe way. In addition, Ms. Marty shares that school counselors also want to partner with parents to support their child/children.

The presentation then moves to describing the programming that the counselors have in place this year, including Web Day, the Wellness Center (introducing Wellness Center advisor, Maggie Wells Lyons), monthly SEL lessons, inclusive clubs (e.g. SLAM, QSA, Beyond Differences, and Wellness Ambassadors). Ms. Marty then describes what individual and group counseling looks like, as well as how referrals to counseling are processed.

Ms. Marty shares a list of ways to support your teen’s academic success, including using Aeries Parent Portal, the Panther Press, and the Bulletin. In addition, Ms. Jacobs and Ms. Marty describe the pros and cons related to monitoring Google Classroom and Aeries gradebook, one of the cons being in increasing students’ anxiety due to the frequency in checking live gradebooks, which are constantly in flux.

Ms. Marty also shares the importance of proactively using students’ study hall time on Tuesdays & Thursdays. There is a conversation around monitoring technology use. Parents express a challenge in monitoring technology because students multi-task when using technology, using it in both good and damaging ways.

Parents also to confirm that phones (and smartphones) should be off/not used from 8 AM until 2:56 PM. Administration and counselors confirm this.

How to Talk so Teens Will Listen and Listen So Teens Will Talk - Ms. Jacobs and Ms. Marty will be presenting tools shared in this book in our January 17th HSC meeting.

HSC President informs us that the slides will be shared with families via their weekly ParentSquare HSC post and in the school's weekly HSC meeting.

Mary Lee then shifts to additional elements of the HSC monthly agenda.

Our treasurer explains that we are currently \$3,000 down. We have to push the sales of current spiritwear items.

Ms. Lee shares that eighth grade parents are usually supportive of donating money towards graduation supplies.

Ms. Lee shares that she's working on creating a spiritwear link on the HSC website to help promote sales.

Ms. Lee then reviews proposed changes to the [HSC BYLAWS](#). Ms. Lee mentions that HSC secretary Susanna Farber will be reviewing the change proposed to defining a quorum.

Ms. K Fiest asks if Executive Board should have a DEI representative to better align with elementary schools. Ms. Lee motions to expand board to include DEI rep Ms. Fiest seconds, approved unanimously.

Holiday Gift Giving. Discussion on how to solicit funds for teachers staff. All agree to begin communications to the school community 11/29. Group agrees to the following allocation: 60% to teachers, 40% to support staff and administrators.

Ms. Lee presents options the executive board reviewed for additional gifts from HSC and school (Family Gift Drive to Marin Foster Care, Hygiene bags to Ritter Center, etc.) Group consensus to focus on spirit wear sales and funding our wellness center through a community building event. Too many asks of families in December and with CanDo's campaign in January.

Ms. T. Levy speaks about the One Book, One School event. Can tie into the Wellness Center Fundraiser. Book is "Refugee" appropriate and available in Spanish. Protagonists are refugees from Jewish, Syrian, and Cuban refugees who are all connected.

Possible Timeline of selected book events; January (bookfair) > Feb (morning coffee and discussion)> March (evening celebration and community building event)

Group discussed the Wellness Center ask. Desire to know what the money will be used for or get a wish list.

Committee Updates:

DEI: Teri Bleiweiss to meet with DEI leads from elementary schools on 11/16 to discuss collaborating on additional events.

Staff appreciation report by Lindy Burgon: No staff lunch in December. Will provide baked goods and cash gift. 12/19 tentative date

Snack Shack: Jennifer Ishi reports \$76 earned at last two volleyball games, Expected to increase once basketball season starts. Need volunteers

Book Fair: Jennifer Ishi has a full Committee. Meeting this afternoon

6th Grade Rep: Susanah Gaspar talks about possible dance. Mary Lee was asked to survey student population to gauge excitement. If not a dance, what alternatives can we provide?

Spirit Wear Sales: Ms. Ishii. can kick off early December. Hanukkah starts Dec. 7 - good to kick off the season then

Date change for December HSC meeting due to conflict in schedule (band concert). New Date: December 13th, 6:00pm

Mary Lee motions to adjourn the meeting at 10:48am, Teri Bleiweiss seconds, all those left standing are in favor :)