

Fowler Middle School
Thursday, March 17th, 2022
7:00-8:00pm

PSO Meeting Notes

1. Called to Order

At 7:03 pm on March 17th, 2022 on Google Meet by PSO President Wendy Jenkins.

2. Welcome & Introductions

3. Attendees

Andy Van Fleet, Marnie Watts-Tupou, Wendy Jenkins, Tonia Banks, Jacquelyn Proper, Heather Robbins, Heather Champion, Jennifer Vasicek, Karyn Vorhees, Sarah Vance, Claire Kolkoski, Christine Simons, Kristi Sloan, Kim Matsler, Evelyn Earys, Sienna V, Ryan Reed, Jenna Palomino, Eric Wagner, and Helen Cadman

4. Old Business

- The minutes of the February 17th, 2022 meeting were distributed and approved.

5. Principal's Report - Andy Van Fleet

- Unfortunately, the district will not be able to provide Outdoor School this year as there were too many shortages with staffing at the schools and Outdoor School site, the logistics of transportation, and students coming and leaving the buildings at different times all of which at a systems standpoint was just too challenging to pull off.
- Exciting to welcome folks back into the building for the Band concert. All parents were invited, students came to show support for their peers and we have a Choir event tomorrow night.
- It's been a difficult week for Fowler students. To clear up the rumors, there have been a few incidents that have taken place such as fights in the halls and at lunch due to social media/gossip, brandishing knives on campus, and inappropriate use of TikTok in the bathrooms. Mr. Van Fleet made a morning announcement that all students will be held accountable for inappropriate behavior as well as lockdown measures were being put into place for the next two days. Has personal concerns with the want from students to capture these incidents through social media and work with their teams to address them.
 - Due to FERPA, the Administration is unable to share details and consequences of the incidents that took place.
 - Administration will do its best to find a resolution for each party involved.

- Suspensions will take place if the student is unsafe to themselves or others.

Questions for Mr. Van Fleet

1. Heather Robbins - Heard through my student that there were two more fights today after first lunch between three 6th graders and another between 1st and 2nd period. I'm hearing from you that today went smoother. Wondering if this is correct?
 - a. Mr. Van Fleet nor Mrs. Watts-Tupou were aware of any fights that took place today. Students were commenting on seeing fights, but when questioned, they were only joking. Students are being asked not to feed into the rumor mills.
2. Jacquelyn Proper - Clarification request were the incidents were fights, knives, or both?
 - a. Mr. Van Fleet confirmed that knives have been seen at school. One was seen in a pocket and one in a backpack, both of which have been confiscated. There was one other event this week where a student pulled a knife on a group of students with the blade pointing backward towards himself.
 - i. Imperative to talk the students through the situation to help them understand how someone could be harmed.
3. Jacquelyn Proper - In a past PSO Meeting, a discussion had taken place on parents not being notified when the building went into lockdown. You and Mrs. Watts-Tupou explained when you'd be able to notify parents in a timely manner and when you weren't able to based on the particular situation. You did promise to do better when the opportunities presented themselves to do so. Where would multiple knives on building property fall within that communication to parents?
 - a. When there is an incident that shuts down the school, absolutely, communication will be sent right on the spot. This week, we had three isolated knife incidents. The consequence is you will be suspended if you bring a knife to school, even if you are not going to use it in a threatening or dangerous way. If used in a threatening or dangerous way, there is a different response to that. At the moment, working on communication to let the community know these are all isolated things, three days in a row, which raises to enough of a level that parents need to know that we are addressing these issues. We go through risk and safety assessments, backpack checks, and random searches.
4. Jennifer Vasicek - How do we define bullying at Fowler and how are kids trained to identify and report it?
 - a. Bullying and harassment are things we never want to see in our school. Generally, in the harassing pieces, there are more patterns that come to be defined. However, harassment and bullying often

looks the same. When a student is intentionally doing something to make another uncomfortable in front of their peers or because they want power over the other student is what is being looked at in the middle school setting. In the morning meeting classes, bullying is discussed, and we try our best to let every student know they have trusted adults in the building. We try to educate the students on the difference between someone being a bully versus just being mean or rude. If the student has a concern, there is a link on their iPad that informs the Administration team to immediately respond, and students can use the Safe Oregon hotline if they would like to report anomalously. We are finding this year that students are struggling with conflict management and how to deal with conflict in an appropriate non-assertive way rather than acting out in physical aggression. We've had more incidents this year than in past years with physical aggression and fighting in general.

- i. Administration is seeking assistance from the district on specific language and policy around how social media is used.
5. Jennifer Vasicek - There is a perception out there among the students that there aren't consequences for this behavior, and understanding FERPA not asking for anyone particular incident/student, but there are guidelines, can you walk us through what those are?
 - a. When there is a fight, a suspension is assigned. Suspensions are handled more and more in school where the student isn't on a couch at home playing video games. Instead, they will be sitting in the Administration office working on homework, with the Alternative IA or Campus Monitors room, and escorted around the building for lunch, homework, and proctored testing as needed. Still have access to learning, but not in their normal classes or general population as that is what they are losing with the behavior they had.
6. Jennifer Vasicek - Do you feel these consequences have led to a decrease in the frequency of fighting/bullying, is it effective?
 - a. We have not had many repeat fighters, what has been more effective is to have that conversation with parents, reflective piece with the students, and invest that time with them to come to an understanding of their mistakes and own it. It's a team effort in educating the students, creating a partnership with the parents, and having their support in holding their students accountable.
7. Jennifer Vasicek - Do you have a metric for tracking bullying and fighting? And can that be shared with this group?
 - a. Yes, anytime there is a referral it is entered into our system. End of each year, a report is shared of all referrals that happened

within our school. Anytime leading to a holiday break, we do see spikes in behavior. Throughout the year, anytime spikes of behavior are noticed, Administration will host grade-level meetings to address the students face-to-face to reset expectations and hold students accountable. We are coaching students all year round on what is to be a student, and what is to be kind to each other.

8. Jennifer Vasicek - How did students respond to the question “I feel safe at school” on the School Climate Survey?
 - a. The multiple-choice question was phrased “School is a place which I feel safe” and the choices were: Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree. The Somewhat Agree and Agree would have been rated 3-4. The response range was low as 2.5 to 3.3 by grade, race, and gender. Sixth grade scored the lowest in that category which makes sense. Reviewed School Climate data at our recent staff meeting and identified areas that we could address now to bring those scores up. The last time the survey was completed was Spring 2019. This year is slightly lower than 2019 for that particular question.
9. Jennifer Vasicek - Like to take a moment and share the perspective of a sixth-grader. My son has seen and experienced things this year that he has never seen before. His takeaways are that fighting happens at school, bullying happens at school, and there aren't consequences for any of it. What do I assure him that is not the case?
 - a. That is concerning and will have to discuss how we change that perception as a school and also for the individuals. That is a good question, and not sure how to address it beyond that. Fighting does happen at school and in particular in middle school. Need to determine how we make them feel safe? What would your son or others say would make them feel safe? There is a lot of work being done behind the scenes with parents, mediation, etc. Students don't know or see it unless they are involved, and therefore feel there are no consequences or nothing is happening to change the problem.
10. Jennifer Vasicek - Does Fowler have a Hate Speech Response plan like other schools in the district do?
 - a. All of the schools in the district this year are working on the EASH Plan (Education/Engagement, Accountability, Solutions, Healing) which does have a hate speech component to it. When there is hate speech, it is addressed. Our building is a little bit behind on the development of some of those components that the other middle schools right now, but not by much. As progress is made throughout the year it will be communicated.

11. Jennifer Vasicek - We are all on your side, we are all on your team. How can we help?
 - a. We are now able to bring volunteers back into the building as long as they have had their background checks and demonstrated vaccination status. Extra eyes during hall passing time and lunchtime would be welcomed. We are also open to ideas and suggestions.
12. Tonia Banks - Thank you for listening. As parents, we want to hear that assurance there is a plan to keep them safe and feel safe. Concerned hearing one of the students that may have acted out and sent another student to the hospital recently was described as a “quiet kid”. In active school shootings, that is the same terminology used when describing the shooter. Are we on your radar for those students that fall within that parameter of providing them extra attention and conversation? I’m sure you know what things to look for when that happens. What reassurances as parents do we have to send our schools the next day after such assistance?
 - a. There are a range of consequences that we could share with students. Fighting is not okay. Bullying is not okay. Recording and posting negative interactions is not okay. Those are some of the things we are discussing with the students to let them know we are on it, we are addressing it, and we will continue to follow up on all of those things.
13. What mental health resources or assistance are being provided by Counselors for those students who have a lot going on at home and their parents are unable to get them the services they need? Or are they more academic?
 - a. Our Counselors are very busy, we wish they had time to offer true consistent therapeutic services cause they would have a huge caseload. They work directly with Mrs. Watts-Tupoum the Dean, and Mrs. Van Fleet, and work a lot on the prevention side, mediation, teaching, reteaching, and small groups. Extremely involved with what’s going on with our students. They are in the hall during passing and lunchtime. We do a lot of outside referrals for those students that need additional support.
14. Karyn Vorhees - Different parents have different rules around social media. Is there a way for students to report things that happen on social media?
 - a. This is the million-dollar question at the moment. We can only manage what we see, and what we see is probably only 10% of what is out there. The students have done a really good job of advocating when they see posts they do not like by sharing with our Counselors, Dean, Mrs. Watts, and Mr. Van Fleet. We can intervene and support by having posts taken down immediately.

Problem is that we have no control over shared posts and bringing those down especially when they are on an anonymous site. Currently advocating for stronger district response when students are being inappropriate with social media.

15. Karyn Vorhees - Do other middle schools allow phones during break periods?
 - a. Most students are just wanting to be with their friends at the moment, very few are on their iPads or phones.
16. Helen Cadman - A school in Eugene requires students to hand phones over when they enter the classroom. If a parent needs to get a hold of a student, they can call the main office. Wondering if this is something to consider in truly limiting students' access to their phones during school hours?
 - a. In neighboring school districts like Beaverton, West Linn, and Wilsonville cell phones are off for the entire day. There are a lot of problems that impact the learning environment and cell phones are a major issue at the moment, and I'm curious to see if TTSD will take a similar approach.
17. Sienna V. - Her family is transitioning from having students in a very small K-8 school to a full public middle school and experiencing social media and fight issues has been hard to work through as a parent. Her previous experience as well is where the school required no phones during school hours.

6. Vice Principal's Update - Marnie Watts-Tupou

- Nothing more to provide this evening.

7. New Business - President, Vice-President, and Treasurer

- Presidents - Wendy Jenkins and Tonia Banks
 - i. Heading into the end of the school year, and time to start thinking of board members for next year. Wendy will not be here next year, if you are interested, please let her know. Elections will be held within the next two months.
- Vice-President, Heather Champion
 - i. Nothing to report at this time.
- Treasurer - Claire Kolkoski
 - i. Budget - Profit and Loss as of 3/17/22
 1. Total Income: \$6,400.00
 2. Total Expense: \$1,400.00
 - a. Net Revenue of \$5,000.00 for the past month.

- Pledge Drive - Heather Robbins
 - i. Pledge Drive was launched on Monday. Mr. Beck and leadership students took over advertising at the school with great posters, a slide presentation, and QR codes.
 - ii. We now have 8 students join teams, at the moment 8th grade is in the lead. Anyone who creates an account and becomes a team member by entering their name and grade is considered participating in the contest.
 - iii. Please share and post this event on your social media.
 - iv. Drawings are postponed until Monday after Spring Break to determine winners within each grade level. Students asked for gift cards to Dutch Brothers and Starbucks which we have in \$5 increments. The second drawing will be on Friday of that week.
 - v. The grade that has the highest percentage of participation (members joining their grade level teams) will earn a doughnut party.
 - vi. We have raised \$435 to date which is 10% of our goal.

- Dining Out - Wendy Jenkins on behalf of Tracy Johnson
 - i. March: Joes Burgers - earned \$81
 - ii. April: Society Pie
 - iii. May: Crumble Cookies
 - iv. June: Menchies

- Spring Online Auction - Heather Champion
 - i. Everything is up and running with notifications to be sent out when we return from Spring Break.
 - ii. A little over \$10,000 in donations were received
 - iii. Items were priced marked up 25% of the estimated value
 - iv. The auction dates are April 1st-9th

- 8th Grade Celebration - Wendy Jenkins
 - i. Tiffany and Andrea of the Student Store were brainstorming ideas, and don't have anything to share as of yet, but will keep you posted.

- Caring Closet - Kim Matsler
 - i. Collected items are in her car to be dropped off at donation centers soon.

8. Meeting Adjourned

- The next PSO Committee Meeting is scheduled to be held on April 21, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.