

January SHAC Meeting

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

Austin ISD Board Room

Attendance:

Members

Cynthia Soliz – Chair

*Julia Hoke (psychologist, parent, SHAC Secretary)

Alisa Miller (parent)

Lisa Flores (parent)

Jackie Platt (parent)

*Swati Avashia (parent)

*Mandy Carpenter

*Liz Jacobs (physician, parent)

Michelle Mejia (parent)

*Susanne Kerns (parent)

*Dolly Lambdin

Courtney Perry (teacher)

Jeff Davis

* attending via Zoom meeting

AISD Staff

Shechem Sauls (AISD, School Mental Health Coordinator)

Michelle Rusnak

Loree LaChance

Ryan Cengel (District Dietician) + Regina, Intern

Caroline Chase, Assistant Director SEL

Pam Martin, Elementary Counseling Coordinator

Trustee Amber Elenz

Visitors

???

Called to order – 6:51 pm

Introductions – Members and Guests

Community Comments

None

Items from members

Cynthia Soliz – Issue held over from last month: What data is AISD research department collecting with regard to school closures/changes?

Susanne Kerns – Does AISD have a bathroom/facilities policy for transgender students? Is this district-wide or a school-by-school policy?

- Loree LaChance: Handled on an individual basis; goal is to make the solution less isolating for transgender students (i.e., not requiring students to visit the one gender neutral bathroom on campus)
- Not every school has a gender-neutral bathroom/facilities policy; new schools are being built with gender-neutral bathroom
- Alisa Miller - Each individual student can request that accommodation; it may or may not be granted (seems to depend on the school)
- Cynthia Soliz – this is an appropriate issue for SHAC to discuss; does this have to go to the board?
- Lisa Flores – TASB released guidance around issues related to bathrooms for transgender students (https://www.tasb.org/services/legal-services/tasb-school-law-esource/students/documents/legal_issues_related_to_transgender_students.pdf)
- Cynthia suggested that AISD Equity Officer might be our contact for this issue; we can form a work group around this issue, but we need
- Michelle Rusnak & Dolly Lambdin – in the past, a subcommittee could do research on an issue and bring a recommendation to the SHAC; Cynthia stated that we could do this process with a work group
- Loree LaChance – She has experience in a different SHAC with this process; groups can be formed around specific topics and these groups can meet and bring recommendations to the SHAC, which can be sent to the board of trustees

Dolly Lambdin, Liz Flores – Recommendation that we get information on equity issues related to health, to include disability status and SES

Reading and Approval of Minutes

December minutes were reviewed

Lisa Flores motioned and Courtney Perry seconded; approved by voice vote

Reopened Community Comment

Cynthia read community comment agreement

Jared (?) Brackenridge – Shared public comment

District School Changes Student Transition Plan

Pam Martin, and Caroline Chase

- Research into change process, neurosequential model of the brain, other school district's experience with this process
- Developed a plan that involves school counselors and SEL team
- Multi-tiered system of support

- Have met with counselors at all schools that will be affected this school year – provided them with the plan and asked them to provide feedback and identify resources needed for their specific school
- Plan was shared with SHAC members
- Alisa asked if students whose schools are closing would be given priority transfers; Pam said that transfers would be honored (i.e., given preferential transfers); she can clarify this issue with the assistant superintendent
- Lisa Flores – In 1st tier of support, how do school counselors work with students with students who receive special education services, especially those with intellectual disabilities?
 - Pam Martin: General education counselors are supported in working with students with disabilities; students receiving special education can access all the other supports (e.g., SEL, cultural traditions) with accommodations; if these supports are not sufficient, ARD can request a special education counseling evaluation
 - Lisa Flores: Gave specific example of parents of students with developmental disabilities
 - Pam Martin: Stated she will follow up on these questions and follow up with Lisa and the SHAC
 - Lisa Flores: Concern about counselors and other MH professionals consulting about “open cases,” what is the caseload for mental health professionals in the district?
 - Caseloads vary (per Pam Martin)
- Mandy Carpenter – In addition to students with intellectual disabilities, concern about how students with autism will manage this transition; she is concerned about lack of training for teachers in AISD related to ASD
 - Pam Martin – these questions may need to go to special education department
- Courtney Perry – question about what it means for counselors to collaborate with LMHP’s (social workers); Pam Martin provided clarification on this item
- Loree LaChance – Advocated for including nursing staff in the collaboration process, now that nurses are full-time on campuses; important to address the somatic aspects of students’ responses to school changes/stress/trauma
- Cynthia Soliz – is transfer deadline (currently 1/31/2020) going to be extended for students affected by school changes/closures?
- Michelle Mejia - How will parents and staff be supported in the process? Parents may lose trust in the district during this process, could leave the district; also importance of making public the work that AISD is doing to support students and families
 - Leonor Vargas (coordinator of parent support specialists) is involved in this process
 - Pam Martin: parents have been provided with resources about how to support their students
- Lisa Flores – what percentage of support staff are bilingual (English/Spanish), culturally proficient, and/or from marginalized groups being affected by these changes?
 - Pam Martin – provided detailed information about whether counselors at each schools are bilingual; also LMHP’s for these schools are bilingual
- Answer from Gilbert Hicks – Special consideration, including extension of the transfer deadline, is being extended to families at affected schools

- Courtney Perry – Will schools be packed up early or after the end of the school year? How will this affect students?
 - Pam Martin – This is a facilities question, but teachers will be provided with individualized support needed for packing up classrooms
- Dolly Lambdin – plan doesn't seem to consider change in school climate moving from small schools to large schools; How will this affect teachers, students?

District Reports

Michelle Rusnak – training is scheduled for human sexuality; one teacher and one administrator from each elementary school will be trained and then will go back to train their campus (train-the-trainer model); website for human sexuality curriculum is up and running; Cap 10K is on April 5 – Austin ISD PE team will be involved in the race and providing opportunities for all students to engage; updates to elementary health lessons are ongoing (using BrainPop); working on developing and offering a middle school health course for 7th/8th graders

Loree LaChance – continuing to see more and more kids as compared to past years; have done a lot of trainings for nurses, including providing Stop the Bleed training for all staff at Travis HS, bus drivers, and other staff members; diagnosis of measles in Travis County has prompted redistribution of information about measles to school nurses

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm