

Student Achievement Committee
December 15, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Laura Errington
John Kilcoyne
Colleen Duggan
Linda Dansa
Jackie Gow
Danielle Kalinski
Amy Brodfuehrer
Karen Pasternak
Mary Frances Snyder

Focus: Social-Emotional Health

Guests:

Amy Brodfuehrer (FHS - SPED teacher and Standards Leader)
Jackie Gow (Big Tree Reading Specialist and Standards Leader)
Danielle Kalinski (FMS Assistant Principal)
Mary Frances Snyder (FHS SPED Teacher, Standards Leader)
Karen Pasternak (FHS Teacher, FHS NHS Advisor)

Colleen welcomed everyone to the meeting. She noted the end-of-quarter data from the high school that demonstrates the importance of our focus (social-emotional health). She referenced the Leaders in Training program at FMS, as well as the student mentors from our National Honor Societies and Student Government. She stated that she is excited with the information she has received on the possible mentoring program.

Amy described the collaboration happening at the high school between our National Honor Society and Student Government. To date, we have approximately 50 students interested in working with younger students. Danielle noted that this number includes students in the National Junior Honor Society and Leaders in Training students at FMS. It was stated that most students were interested in working with elementary students, but some students at FHS expressed a willingness to work with middle school students. John added that for the high school it would be nice to tap into our recent Frontier grads (technical, college) to support current high school students who may be at risk.

Danielle noted the possibility of students getting together in groups. Laura asked how we could identify mentees, and Jackie suggested tapping into our social workers. Linda

suggested that our psychologists and social workers could build a list of at-risk students for each building. Colleen stated that she is meeting with our principals tomorrow and will ask them to work with their psychologists and social workers to build a list of at-risk students. She also suggested that there are student teachers who are unable to find a placement and we could possibly look into enlisting their support. Mary Frances stated that many of her students are curious what this work will entail, and the group emphasized the importance of giving them guidelines and boundaries.

Karen stated that there are so many groups who want to do this, but we all need to come together. She suggested that NHS students stick with academic/literacy support and noted that they are currently recording read-alouds to share. Karen reinforced the concern with privacy issues and parental consent. Jackie stated that at the elementary level, it would add value for mentors to help with the academics but she sees the issue more as social-emotional development and support. She described how this could be done with social workers facilitating and through use of Google Meet breakout rooms.

John asked if the mentoring program could be broken out into two pods (social-emotional and academic). Colleen suggested considering having our NHS students giving academic support, while remaining mentors could support either academically or social-emotionally. In addition, the social-emotional “pod” could be supported during the academic day.

Colleen made the analogy between the mentoring program and a “big brother” or “big sister” approach with students. Danielle stated that their purpose would be a project, and they could be given sentence starters and prompts they could use. She noted the example of “would you rather” as a game that could promote conversation.

Colleen stated that in matching students up, we must be mindful of the needs of the mentee. Karen asked if we are talking about having one mentor to a group of students or supporting one-on-one.

Colleen shared the “check and connect” phase we used last Spring when we closed. She stated that a districtwide “check and connect” would promote the importance of the Frontier family. Colleen asked if ten children per building would be practical, and this seemed to be well-received by the group.

Colleen suggested we craft messages and guidelines for our mentors. Mary Frances asked about the proposed schedule and timing (after hours, etc.). Laura stressed the importance of getting parental consent. Danielle also noted the importance of establishing boundaries with regard to appropriate topics of conversation.

Colleen summarized the next steps for our group. We will begin support occurring during the school day with a teacher facilitating the mentor/mentee meeting. Jackie stated that breakout rooms would not be a good idea for the start of our work. She suggested initially setting it up where a teacher has two to three students and the mentors could be added to the group. The children would never leave to enter a breakout room. Colleen stated she would also ask the principals for names of teachers who could support the work. She stressed the importance of a small group setting.

The meeting ended at 4:16 p.m.

Next Meeting: [January 19, 2021 @ 3:30 p.m.](#)