



**Huntington Union Free School District
District-Wide Shared Decision Making Regular Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the District Shared Decision Committee of the Huntington Union Free School District was held on May 18, 2021 virtually via Zoom conference.

ATTENDEES:

Nancy Allard, Suzette Biagi, Valerie Capitulo-Saide, Carol Coffey, Allison Conlon, Carmen DiBartolomeo, Vincenza Famiglietti-Caruso, Paula Gasparino, Lara Gonzalez, Miriam Gonzalez-Engle, Kathryn Kalkau, Kristin Kanzer, Kacy Knauer, Shari Krull, Lucia Laguarda, Beth McCoy, Tracey McManus, Donna Moro, Valerie Murray, Edie Pulizzotto, Diana Rich, Michelle Richards, and Leah Van Horn.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion made by Donna Moro and seconded by Kristen Kanzer to approve the minutes of the District Shared Decision Making Committee meeting of 3/25/2021.

REPORT FROM STAKEHOLDERS:

Huntington High School (Suzette Biagi)

- Parenting Workshops continue. This month's workshop will be on resilience to discuss resilience for the parents and their children.
- Potential ideas for next year are a greenhouse raising flowerbeds, farm to table initiative and installation of an outdoor sculpture depicting a positive lasting memory of social justice, inclusivity and resilience, which will be a sundial. The sculpture will mark a moment in time in history because 2020-21 has been tough.
- Continuing outreach to the kids enlisting the assistance of our Natural Helpers. Natural Helpers has been acknowledging a different department and every teacher each month writing notes to display on the giant bulletin board in the front hallway. The teachers have been feeling acknowledged and appreciated with the kind messages.
- Planning the return of Freshman Seminar one of the last weeks of summer.
- Promoting extracurricular activities. Attendance has been unbelievable. Moved most of the meetings to 7:00 p.m. after sports began. Weekend band has been very successful.
- The Grand Friend has been working with the Huntington Senior Center all year. They were heartbroken they couldn't do another Senior-Senior Prom. Did a Jonny D's fundraiser and banked the money for next year. We did a standing parade holding signs at the Senior Center during their food pickup. During Mother's Day, we couldn't make our usual corsages, so we made flower pen bouquets and spring bouquets for those seniors who aren't mothers. During the standing parade, the women took their bouquets. Next week we're doing Father Day cards or Special Person in My Life cards for the males at the Senior Center to give on the food delivery day.
- Mock Trial kids worked really hard this year. Having an End of Year Awards at My Little house in June.
- The AWOD kids are having monthly meetings tackling a topic. Have gotten into deep conversations.

- Events coming up is K-Factor and The Teacher Act via Zoom showing how bad Zoom can be, Senior Awards Nights, Senior Prom and graduation at Stony Brook University on June 26th.

Finley Middle School (Carmen DiBartolomeo)

- Finished all of the Parent Virtual Workshops.
- Use of the Ileana Perez the neighborhood aide was useful with translations to ensure we provide more equity. The last one she assisted with was Digital Portfolio.
- For SEL, we're bringing in an assembly for the 7th grade to discuss bullying on June 8th.
- Working on a Welcome Packet to welcome new students into our building.
- A video is being created by our student government. Existing students will be able to show new students what they need to know at FMS. Instead of the adults talking, we have the students talk giving them the low down on Finley.
- PTA has encouraged summer reading and we have collaborated with Huntington Library at the secondary level. PTA is giving prizes (gift cards) for a BINGO Reading Challenge.

Woodhull Intermediate School (Lara Gonzalez/Vincenza Caruso)

- Family Engagement Night for Friendship & Feelings. Instead of separating into an English and Spanish session, they hosted both groups simultaneously translating with breakout rooms in English and Spanish.
- Mindful Mondays is a constant in the building.
- Sent out a survey with four different books to choose from for our Read Aloud selection so the entire building could be reading the same book. Teachers showed trailers of the books to the classes and the classes voted on the book of their choice. The winning book was Becoming Naomi Leon. Ordered the book in English and Spanish.
- A to Z Countdown

Jack Abrams STEM Magnet School (Donna Moro/Shari Krull)

- Mental Health team continues to reach out to all students, which has been essential for this year. They have come up with different monthly events where they go into each class for every grade level to address the entire study body. This month was centered on building self-confidence and self-esteem building. The teachers hear the students repeat these things to themselves or one another. It seems to be taking hold. It's great that the mental health professionals are more visible in the school. The students know who they are. They rotate going into the classes so that the students have become familiar with who they are. Sometimes it's the psychologist and the next time it may be the social worker. They gave the students laminated handheld reminders to refresh strategies to help them.
- Targeted smaller events to specific needs for parents may yield a better turnout for parent participation. Beginning with our Rtl groups.
- The most successful Family Engagement Night we have done was our Paint Night hosted by Mr. Hiscox with over 100 participants. We were able to provide the supplies to everyone.
- Hosted two Yoga Nights for parents.
- Started a Kindness Corridor down the 4th grade rotunda hallway. Mural of handprint painting and tree with a kindness message.

Flower Hill Primary School (Alison Conlon/Lucia Laguarda)

- We have had three Cultural Nights since our last SDM meeting. Our families have been amazing creating their own presentations using Google Slides, sharing their screens during our Virtual Nights. We had families present on Columbia, El Salvador, Hong Kong and Malaysia. They ranged from having live music to cooking. We had collaborations with former Flower Hill students with current Flower Hill students. When they did Malaysia, they were dressed in traditional clothes. Families taught us how to count to 10 and how to write in Mandarin.
- Welcoming Committee created a Welcome Pack for new students in the event we get a new student in the middle of the school year. It come with folders, supplies, and all of the district

forms they need. We are trying to incorporate our Kindness Squad into welcoming new students being a buddy to them.

- 'Music in the Morning' is when we play music during arrival when the kids get off the busses. The students had a great reaction to it. They get off the bus and start dancing with us. We are incorporating our Kindness Squad and Star Students in. When they get off the bus, they can go in to put their bags down and come back out to welcome their classmates.
- Mini PARP is coming up. Focus is on poetry. We will have our readers either pre-record or join our live Google Meet and do a read aloud with our classes. PTA gave every student a creative writing journal. PTA also got a donation from Book Revue so that every child goes home with a book.
- End of Activities. Tomorrow starts our Z to A Countdown to Summer. Every day is a different theme. Field Day and Moving Up Ceremonies coming up.
- Classes have been utilizing our Outdoor Learning Tent. We have a sign up that's always being utilized. Third graders have a lap desk to get out of the classroom to promote outdoor learning.

Jefferson Primary School (Valerie Capitulo-Saide)

- We celebrated in Poetry Month in April as well as Autism Awareness Month. We had a special 'Poem in Your Pocket Day' run by our Rtl reading teacher Mrs. Sejarto. Every classroom had a big pocket on their door containing poems for every child to take.
- We shared a fact about Autism each day during that month. The teachers selected a book A Friend Like Simon about a boy who's a little bit different to share with the children.
- Implemented 'Around the World Wednesday' where we celebrate our families' cultural heritage. We ask for parent volunteers to make a Flipgrid or email a video. We share those videos on Wednesdays.
- In April, we celebrated a Dual Language Bilingual Poetry Night. Our kindergarten and first grade teachers Ms. Rivas and Mrs. Gallo read the book, My Colors, My World / Mis Colores, Mi Mundo by Christina Gonzalez. Afterwards, the students wrote their own poems using color related words in both Spanish and English. Our second and third grade teachers Ms. Rivera and Ms. Lanoue read the book, What Can You Do With a Paleta? by Carmen Tafolla. Then the students shared their poems in Spanish and English using color related words about spring and also shared Flipgrid videos.
- Continued the work with our Leadership Team. Dr. Oz has been co-teaching in the classroom biweekly and going over the seven habits of an effective child and teaching the children about being a great leader.
- PTA gave individually wrapped gifts each day for Teacher Appreciation week.
- In May, we are celebrating Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Jewish American Heritage Month. We are sharing literature and different facts about those heritages.
- Planning our field day which will be a closed event and working on our end of year celebrations

Southdown Primary School (Valerie Murray)

- Goals were to increase parental involvement as well as focus on social emotional learning.
- Parental Involvement – Continue to have our technology trainings for parents and tutorials.
- Recently did a cereal box domino. We had all of the students bring in different cereal boxes. We collected 704 cereal boxes which were donated to the Helping Hands Rescue Mission. We lined them all up in the hallways and students were able to be socially distanced as we knocked them all down. The kids were very excited.
- PTA hosted our I Scream, You Scream, We all Scream for Ice Cream social. The book fair is coming up.
- Cultural Cooking Committee is doing cooking lessons on Friday. This Friday is Italian food making stromboli's from the Lanzilotta family.
- Working on Cultural Research Projects. Each student is researching a different culture learning about the food, the culture and the history. Will be reflected with the flags we put in our lobby.

- SEL we are continuing our SEL Google website which is focusing on peer relationships. Updating with different resources and read alouds.
- Continuing with Southdown Stories and are opening it up to families so students are able to record videos with their families and send them in.
- Planning our beach day which has been modified called “Surfing at Southdown” where will do fun activities at Southdown. The third graders will still get to go to the beach.

Washington Primary School (Michelle Richards)

- Goals were Parental Engagement, Cultural Proficiency and SEL
- SEL – We have two “I Am” bulletin boards in the building where children were able to write down how they see themselves (i.e. I am brave. I am courageous). They were able to decorate those two bulletin boards, which are on each end of the building. We have an “I Am” affirmation that children recite during their morning meetings as well.
- The SEL theme for May and June is ‘peer relationships’. The SEL period at the end of the day will be dedicated to reading and watch video clips on how we can better build our peer relationships.
- Cultural Proficiency – During April, focused on inclusion in autism awareness, Down syndrome awareness and those in our community that have disabilities. Book of the month was Swimmy in May. We are recognizing Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage month. Book of the month was Malala’s Magic Pencil. In May, we had a presentation on Eid where we had virtual announcements. We received some books from our neighborhood friends sent through Mr. Polansky so we were able to read some of those books to our students for Immigrant Heritage Month in June. The book of the month is Si, Se Puede!, It is about the uprising of the factory workers in Los Angeles. We will have a Juneteenth presentation as well for Family Cultural Night. The Elizter family will be cooking a dish from Israel for us virtually.
- Parent Engagement – Our psychologist, Ms. Martino and social worker, Linda Kohan presented a workshop on building resiliency for our parents. We are still adding various texts to our Washington Reading Rainbow YouTube page that are based on the various cultures that are represented in our community and Washington.
- Our agricultural project is in its final phases. Our winter seed sowing project yielded many plants and various vegetables so we are going to eat the rainbow. A father who is a landscape contractor is building our raised vegetable beds so the students can put the plants into the beds. Hopefully by fall, we will be able to have some vegetables to eat as we did last year.

PTA (Kristin Kanzer)

- Goal was to reconfigure what we were doing to support families in light of a pandemic. Even at the end of the year when things are opening up, we still have some insurance matters that we cannot work around. Our units did a great job circumventing these issues by utilizing Zoom to do activities such as game shows and cooking nights for the primary level. It was a little harder to do events for the older kids because they were pretty Zoomed out.
- We are working toward ending the year by putting together our new boards so when we come back in September everyone is voted in and we can start the year strong and hopefully in person.
- If there is anything anyone needs to start the year out, please reach out to us because we’re going to be reconfiguring over the summer so it would be a great time to hear what your thoughts and needs are.

SEPTA (Diana Rich)

- Hosting its third and final virtual cooking class on Sunday. This week is dessert, bananas foster and strawberry shortcake.
- We’re excited that we will be granting six scholarships to our graduating seniors.

- Supporting our extended school year program. The usual activities have been postponed or cancelled. Trying to find new and creative ways to do that because we can't do the same type of activities done in the past.
- Just had the Jonny D fundraiser on Monday and they raised about \$500.

Title Funds (Nancy Allard)

- Finishing up our Title I Parental Engagement. Our Title I schools have done some really amazing and innovative things this year. There was actually more participation because of Zoom, it made it easier for some families that have a hard time making it to the buildings to participate.
- Our After School Math Program is finishing up. We also ran the ELA program earlier in the year.
- Starting our planning for next year so now is the time for your input from your buildings. Title I funds programs for at risk students, reading and math support, and parent engagement so if there's anything along those realms that you think are important, things that worked well or things you'd like to see, now is the time to make a request as we're working on our grants for next year.
- Title IIA funds professional development to our teachers, coaches and technology mentors. As we plan for next year, please share your thoughts on things you think would be helpful to our teachers.
- Title IV grant which is innovative programs, safe and healthy schools, and technology training. We got equipment with this grant last year.
- At the end of every year, we require signatures for our Title I, II, and IV grants. We need a parent from a Title I school (Jefferson, Washington or Woodhull), administrator of a Title I school, and an elected person on PTA, SEPTA or BOE for this year.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (Beth McCoy)

- Just applied for the Learning Technology 3 year grant to support technology initiatives in the district. Marybeth Robinette and I did a significant amount of work on it to submit.
- We are again the recipients of the Smart Start grant to support students and teachers in grades K through eight on computer science standards. We have selected teachers per building.
- We are also recipients of the Advanced Course ACA grant. We have selected 30 students who will be taking courses at either the college level or AP courses that perhaps may not have taken them in the past and the students will be supported in a different manner. They are virtual courses run through BOCES. We are also funded to get a teacher who will be fully trained in a new AP course over the summer. This is a 2 year grant.
- ARPA funds and the CRRSA fund which are coming from the federal government due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We will be holding a meeting next week to start the discussions with representatives consisting of parents, teachers and administrators from primary, intermediate, middle and high school to gather input. Please feel free to share your ideas with me.

NEW BUSINESS

- N/A

Future Meetings: 21-22 Schedule To Be Announced

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Carmen DiBartolomeo and seconded by Valerie Capitulo-Saide to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kisha Fowlkes