



**Huntington Union Free School District
District-Wide Shared Decision Making Regular Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the District Shared Decision Committee of the Huntington Union Free School District was held on November 8, 2023 at the Jack Abrams School, Room 202, 50 Tower Street, Huntington Station, N.Y.

ATTENDEES:

Nancy Burke-Allard, Sara Baliber, Heather Barfuss, Suzette Biagi, Mary Brandt, Stephanie Campbell, Valerie Capitulo-Saide, Paula Gasparino, Denise Glozek, Joseph Leavy, Abbey Loechner, Beth McCoy, Brenda McManus, Wendy Naborre, Kerri Roskot, Catherine Schaeffer, Rosecindy Siegel, Brian Stellato, Julia Sullivan, and Thomas Van Bell.

CALL TO ORDER 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion made by Valerie Capitulo-Saide and seconded by Rosecindy Siegel to approve the minutes of the District Shared Decision Making Committee meeting of 5/10/2023.

REPORT FROM STAKEHOLDERS:

Huntington High School (Suzi Biagi)

- Goal: Support the efforts of the Guidance Department and all other academic departments in promoting AP, Honors and College level courses for all students.
- Organize and promote a HHS Club Fair and organizational hub for extracurricular activities.
 - Fair
 - Advanced classes
 - Social media
- Goal: Recruit additional members of the SDM teams, including students and parents as needed.
- Goal: Facilitate communication and mentorship between experienced HHS parents and those who are new to the school and/or district.
 - Survey for parent mentors and mentees

Finley Middle School (Mary Brandt)

- Goal: Maintain the district's commitment to enhancing its culture of appreciation for the diverse nature of our school district community and its' students through associated analysis and alignment of curriculum and instruction, recruiting and hiring practices, and professional development.
 - Bulletin board for monthly themes such as Hispanic Month or Black History Month
 - Weekly announcements highlighting a person for their background/heritage.
 - No Place for Hate
 - Student ambassadors will be the voice for Finley
 - Library will contain diverse materials and have online access that focuses on different cultures within the building and community.

- Goal: Implement and evaluate programs that support the social and emotional well-being of our students and staff to build upon interpersonal connections throughout the district:
 - Continue to have the following programs:
 - Friendship club
 - Restorative Circles
 - Mentors
 - Therapy dogs
 - Community Club
 - Have a homeroom with student ambassadors that will be the voice of Finley
 - Bring at least 2 assemblies that are related to social and emotional well-being.

Woodhull Intermediate School (Paula Gasparino)

- Goal: Recognizes the need to support the social and emotional needs of our students. We will support these needs through instruction, mentoring and guidance.
 - Guidance counselor will SEL survey to identify needs
 - Identify programs, guest speakers and assemblies
 - Restorative circle training in January, implementation by June
 - Mentor Program
 - Peer Buddy program for new students
 - 6th grade team building
 - Breakfast Tuesday, 11/22
- Goal: Recognizes the need to provide multicultural learning opportunities for students which will provide them with a variety of unique experiences and expose them to multiple perspectives.
 - Guest speakers, assemblies, field trips
 - Bulletin board to display students. Map of world popsicle stick, monthly theme that goes by characteristics.
 - Career Day
 - Outdoor learning space for cool experiences
 - “Welcome” in various languages outside of main office
 - Paint Night with multicultural artist or style of artwork
 - Librarians will have monthly read aloud representing different cultures and perspectives.
- New Things:
 - Theatre pilot program for 4th grade – 12 week program
 - Makerspace during lunch periods
 - Signature Project assembly

Jack Abrams STEM Magnet School (Heather Barfuss)

- Goal: Increase parent engagement through expanded communications pathways and offer opportunities for students and families to share cultural backgrounds and make connections.
 - Cultural Immersion Gallery Walk
 - Targeted parent nights
 - Expand student communication
 - TV’s
 - Student Council bulletin board
 - Student Council videos
 - Signage
- Goal: Increase opportunities for students to feel represented and connected to teachers and the larger school community. Increase student exposure to leadership through community service events.
 - Expansion of House System (Student Leaders & House Ambassadors)
 - House Meetings – House Charity
 - PTA/Student Connection

- Box Tops/Givebacks – money goes to student selected programs
- Community Market Day – Spring weekend event
- Parents can join houses
- Students become members of PTA
- Goal: Increase student focus on wellness by expanding access to student support services and offering opportunities for students to engage in healthy lifestyle choices.
 - Expand mentoring program
 - Walkathon/Color Run
 - Mental health intervention programs
 - Create posters of what they are learning through health curriculum
 - Awareness posted on lunch room TV

Flower Hill Primary School (Brenda McManus/Cindy Siegel)

- Goal: Will provide opportunities to families to maximize communication between the school/home in order to ensure a more informed and engaged school community.
 - Plan and host Family Engagement events (Our Story Novel, Multicultural Dinner Night, School Beautification)
 - Create monthly newsletters with school updates, announcements, and highlights of student progress.
 - Continue to incorporate the PTA Buddy Program and Welcoming Committee
- Goal: Will work together to create a nurturing, supportive, and inclusive environment where students have the means to develop and apply their Social and Emotional Learning skills.
 - Continue to implement PBIS
 - Implement Flower Hill Book Club to foster growth mindset
 - Readiness Squad
 - Incorporate “Mindfulness Markup”. This initiation will start the week off on a calm and focused not. For one minute, student will focus on guided breathing exercise to center and calm their minds.

Jefferson Primary School (Valerie Capitulo-Saide)

- Goal: Committed to creating a welcoming environment for families, where we invite them to participate as partners in the education of their children.
 - Surveying parents for topics for workshops
 - Invite parents to America Education Week – Nov. 13-17
 - Parent/Guardian Engagement Nights
 - Math/STEM 11/8
 - Holiday Read Aloud 12/6
 - Reading Night 3/24
 - Possible multi-cultural and internet safety programs
- Goal: By June 2024, our school aims to actively engage with our local community through a variety of initiatives and partnerships. We will strive to enhance our students’ leadership skills and foster a sense of responsibility and empathy by organizing at least two community service projects, collaborating with local organizations, and hosting community events that promote positive connections between our school and the community. Through these efforts, we seek to make a lasting, positive impact to both our students and the wider community.
 - Grade 3 Leadership Team forming now
 - Thanksgiving Food Drive
 - Holiday Donation Drive
- Goal: Committed to fostering the social and emotional development of our students. Over the course of the school year, our goal is to create a safe and inclusive environment where students can develop their emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. We aim to implement SEL activities that promote empathy, resilience, and conflict resolution.

- PTA has purchased Kindness posters
- Staff will give stickers for acts of kindness
- “Golden Spatula” award to the class that exhibited kind, safe, responsible and respectful behaviors in the cafeteria
- Students will lead announcements during assembly programs
- Goal: Dedicated to creating a culturally responsive learning environment that values and respects the diverse backgrounds of our students and their families. Our goal is to ensure that every student feels seen, heard, and valued in our school community. By the end of the year, we aim to foster an inclusive atmosphere that celebrates diversity, where students can engage in meaningful cross-cultural experiences and gain a deeper understanding of their own culture and those of others.
 - Update bulletin boards and television displays (PTA helps)
 - Create visibly multilingual/multicultural environment (provide Spanish on all signs when possible)
 - Hallways and classrooms will showcase student work/pictures of students flags of different countries represented by the students.

Southdown Primary School (Read by Beth McCoy)

- Goal: Families will participate in responding to a survey to provide feedback and highlight areas of opportunity and growth for building relationships with the school community which will include administration, support staff, teachers, school aides, special teachers, custodial staff, lunch staff and security.
- Goal: The school community will participate in monthly book talk’s and read alouds celebrating students’ character built through character trait conversations and literature.
- Goal: The school community (families, students and staff) will continue to participate in the two activities implemented over the last two years that support in giving back to their community. Will embed a third and new activity for this school year, that will also teach the characteristic of giving back while supporting the Down’s syndrome community.

Washington Primary School (Julia Sullivan)

- Goal: Will plan and implement initiatives that promote comprehensive parent/guardian involvement that is inclusive of all families and provide a welcoming environment at Washington Primary School.
 - Dual Language communication in English and Spanish through Parent Square and neighborhood aide
 - Parent Square helps promote school programs, teacher/classroom communication, parent-teacher conference sign ups, etc.
 - Family Engagement Nights (interactive opportunities and information about the learning their child engages in)
 - 10/12 Science and Technology Night
 - Week 11/12/23 American Education Week parents are invited in for a period to see the classroom and a lesson
 - 12/6 Read with Me Night
 - 2/7 Art and Math Night
 - 3/14 PARP Night
 - Multicultural Night (PTA)
 - Washington Reads YouTube Channel – Dr. Richards and Washington teachers have and will continue to record themselves reading stories for students and families to listen to at home
 - Dr. Richards’ Sunday weekly updates through Parent Square
 - Spirit Weeks – Curriculum driven with at home connections
 - STEAM Week
 - PARP Week
 - What’s Going on at Washington?

- Word Up Wednesdays – Students are invited to wear shirts with words on them to encourage reading in real world scenarios
- World Beautification Committee – Two bulletin boards to highlight the Principal's Book of the Month and the culture we are celebrating each month. One bulletin board is informational and one bulletin board is student work samples
 - Sept – Hispanic Heritage
 - Oct – European Heritage
 - Nov – Native American Heritage
- Mindfulness Mondays – Belly breathing and positive affirmations
- Building-wide SEL Quick Connection Questions – K & 1 and 2 & 3

PTA (Sara Baliber)

- All primaries started off the year with block parties. All were very well attended.
- All K-6 had Halloween festivities including dances, harvest festivals, trunk or treats
- HS PTSA is trying to connect with students and boost student membership. They are offering \$250 grants to each student government class. They are also connecting students who need community service hours with PTA units who need volunteers.

SEPTA (Wendy Naborre)

- Continuing district-wide membership drive. We are almost half way to our goal.
- Just had Football Night. Brought in about \$800. The “guys” requested more of them.
- Riptide Fundraiser selling tickets “pre-holiday” gift ideas for 2/10 game
- During breaks planning activities for kids Plaster Funcraft
- Updated grant requirements asking for all principals/applicants to be members before 1/1/24
- Meetings are hybrid
- Next meeting 11/14

Title Funds (Report from Nancy Allard read by Beth McCoy)

- Consolidated Application was approved.
 - The Consolidated application is funding from the government to schools. It consists of 4 subgrants:
 - Title I – Rtl Teachers and Parental Engagement
 - Title IIA – Professional Development funds our academic coaches
 - Title III – ENL Programs
 - Title IV – Safe and Healthy Students – Funds STEM coaches, technology mentors, home visits, and a Social Emotional Learning Club at the high school
 - We had our Meet the Reading Teacher Night on October 26th. It was very well attended with 171 families signed in.
 - UPK is off to wonderful start. We currently have 3 seats available due to students who moved, but we expect to fill them quickly.
 - All districts that received American Rescue Plan funding to address the impact of COVID-19 must participate in coordinated monitoring, similar to an “audit”. So, we are preparing for that. The first round of information is due in December with an expected visit in January.
 - A student member is needed for a building SDM committee. It is a requirement of Title IV. Last year, I met with a high school student in a separate grant meeting and it's wonderful to get a student's perspective.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (Beth McCoy)

- Action Plan

- New ELA program
- Science Assessments Grades 5 & 8
- Restorative Circles 4-12
- Computer Science Implementation
- VB Course
- PBIS

NEW BUSINESS

- None

Future Meetings: 2/28/2023 and 5/15/2024

ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Valerie Capitulo-Saide and seconded by Brian Stellato to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Minutes recorded by various committee members.