

Fernwood School Engagement Council (SEC)

October 30, 2023

Location: Virtual-Google Meets: <https://meet.google.com/hnp-uhmu-wpr>

Present: Kristy Lowell, principal; Meredith Genrich Mertes, parent coordinator; Elaina Sullivan, school support teacher; Kristin Adler, parent; Ryan Baumer, parent; Lisa Sarnowski, parent; Audra O'Connell, parent; Jennifer Cramer, parent; Amy Joyce, parent; Patty Joyce, student; Karen Lemke, community member

5:30 Welcome, Introductions, and Open Agenda (Includes revision of below agenda, introduction of any guests with potential addressing of pertinent issues)

1. MPS District Advisory Council Report (Lauren Anderson-Stepanek, Nikki Janzen) Meredith reported that the DAC is looking for members/parent involvement.
2. Thank you Chairperson Kristin Adler-Chairperson will get the agenda a week early to review.
3. Welcome Community Member Karen Lemke-Discussed Karen's background in education

5:45 Report from Ms. Kristy Lowell

1. District Attendance Initiatives. District Goal: 95%

September 96.7%

As of October 24: 95% for the month

As of October 24: **96% overall**

Attendance CICO

There are about 30 students who will be doing the check in/check out process which is down from 50 students last year.

2. Brigance and Reading Readiness Assessment, STAR Assessment, CogAT, 8th Grade Writing Assessment Updates, District Writing Samples- Elaina Sullivan, SST Our 8th graders did well on the writing assessment this year. 85% of students got full points toward HS enrollment.

New writing assessment this year for Lower El students involves writing about the feelings of pictures of dogs.

Fernwood will be chosen to give a national test called the NAPE. Some 4th and 8th graders will take it.

Testing in the building offers teachers some help with diagnosing what exactly students need help with. Tests are well integrated into their routine.

3. Family Teacher Conferences

1605 people attended. Suggested that the long lines for adolescent conferences were not anticipated by parents. Also, suggested that parents and teachers be reminded that there is a 5 minute window. Ideas include a ticketing system or having parents sign up for a one hour time slot. Discussed that previous conferences were with homeroom teachers who could not speak to issues for ALL subjects. This is a better alternative. Ms. Kristy will communicate with adolescent teachers this week and come up with some ideas.

4. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

-Increase by 5% math and ELA proficiency from spring 2022-2023 to spring 2023-24 on Wisconsin Forward

-Decrease by 10% of number of students scoring below basic in math and ELA spring 2022-2023 to spring 2023-24 on Wisconsin Forward

-Maintain a 95% attendance rate-Going well so far this year.

-Reduce the racial/ethnic disproportionality in referrals, identifications and disciplinary procedures through the use of equitable practices as part of a multi-tiered system of support.

We have an academic (learning) teams that review STAR testing. This is very indicative of how we will do on the Forward Test. This year the instruction focus is on math (giving students different language with which to talk about math in addition to Montessori language, so that terms on tests are more familiar to students). School is also working on literacy with students. Learning team works on how tier 1 interventions affect all students (including high achievers). BIT is looking at tier 2 and 3 which includes support for kids who are behind and those who are achieving. As a school, we have more students that are significantly behind vs students who are advanced. Tier 3 advanced Math will start in 6th grade.

5. Fernwood State Report Card (coming soon)-Kristy will present this soon.

6. Fernwood Staffing Updates

We had a paraprofessional resign and the replacement is starting Nov 6th. This person was a sub in the building so they were able to be hired quickly. Children's Health Assistant starts tomorrow after being vacant for over a year. Additional Para from 3rd Friday numbers will be posted soon.

6:15 Submission of parent/student/staff concerns

From Parent Lisa Sarnowski:

- 1.) Questions about Nature's Classroom: numbers attending and staying back, fundraising breakdown, student accommodations
 - a.) 206 attending, 18 staying back-Students who stay back will be provided with a similar curriculum (nature, team building) that Mr. Nikolai will design in conjunction with the substitute teacher.
 - b.) About \$8100 needed in financial support/program support. \$2900 pledged by families to help. So many generous families!!!!
 - c.) \$300 obstacle course, \$460 popsicles, \$538 bake sale, \$579 pizza sale, This was very successful fundraising.
 - d.) Fernwood Fund has committed to financially supporting the programming for the trip. Fund offered to fill the gap so all families can attend.

Parent asked why some accommodations are being made for some people and not others. Said that she has gotten lots of feedback from people on Facebook regarding the trip. Parent suggested that the teachers did not address these issues well.

Principal Kristy and Meredith suggested that any parent with an issue should contact the school directly as Facebook is not a way to communicate to the school. Facebook information is often filtered through many people and has not been vetted. Another parent suggested that a process

or document be set up for how to communicate with the school and/or escalate issues. Ms. Kristy also said that teachers approached all the families that weren't going to go in order to communicate and problem solve.

- 2.) Mental health at Fernwood- how is this being addressed? What is the district mandate? What is Fernwood doing? What are opportunities for growth? What are the biggest mental health concerns?
- a.) District requirement Second Step curriculum, Montessori Grace and Courtesy lessons
 - b.) School psych does child protective unit with K5 and lower el classes
 - c.) School counselor does bullying prevention and friendship lessons with K5 classes
 - d.) Support staff tier 1 instruction around friendship, bullying, etc. with lower el and upper el classes, based on tailored needs. Support staff available always for concerns raised by parents/teachers about students
 - e.) District offices (Gender and Inclusion, Girls of Color) to support work that Fernwood has partnered with
 - f.) Secondary survey to assess student mental health needs 3x a year. Identified students and groups are created
 - g.) YRBS district survey 4th-8th grade
 - h.) Fernwood GSA (new this year, must have permission from parent, 7th-8th)
 - i.) Last year- ESSER SEL Grant- Ending the Silence and Peace Learning Center

A parent offered that Walker's Point Youth and Family Center has free mental health services for 11-17 year olds.

Last year, ESSER funds were used to bring in a presentation from NAMI for adolescents about how to help a friend who is having a mental health issue. ESSER funds were also used for a trip to the Peace Learning Center which focuses on restorative justice.

6:30 Schedule of future meetings-all will be virtual at 5:30 p.m.

November 27th
January 29th- in person
February 26
March 18
April 29
May 20- in person end of year celebration

6:30 Adjournment

Next Meeting: November 27 , 5:30pm