

Sandy Springs Middle School Governance Council
Meeting Minutes– April 16, 2019
7:45AM-8:45 AM

AGENDA ITEMS

7:45-7:47 Call to order

7:47-7:50 General Business:

- **Approve Minutes**
- **Approve Agenda**

7:50-8:00 Principal Update

- **Vaping/E-Cigarettes has been recognized as a significant problem by the School District.**
 - It's believed they're widely used even though they're illegal for students to use.
 - Marketing by tobacco companies, the use of flavors and lower costs make vapes and e-cigarettes especially attractive to minors.
 - Discipline of students is handled the same as if the students are caught using traditional cigarettes.
 - Staff has some flexibility depending on the situation and the parties involved.
 - The selling of vapes and e-cigarettes will be dealt with more harshly.
 - Vapes and e-cigarettes are harder to detect due to lack of smell and smaller paraphernalia.
 - There's concern about addiction to Nicotine and the belief they're a gateway to marijuana use
 - The School District will begin a 4 day/week counseling for the student population to be led by the District Counselor
 - SSMS will use a PowerPoint Presentation produced by the CDC during Focus Time.
- **Teacher retention should be higher next year.**
 - This item will be added to the May agenda to discuss the final number of teachers who will be staying next year.

8:00-8:10 SGC Survey/Review of Previous SSCMS Needs Assessment

- **Council Survey and Principal Survey** to be sent out via Mail Chimp Service
 - **Deadline for completion of the Surveys is May 20th.**
 - Feedback needed on whether the SSCMS goals are being achieved, evaluation of the operation of the GC and evaluation of the Principal.

8:10-8:20 Review of Teacher Feedback of Needs for SSCMS and our Community

- **This item was tabled for the next meeting.**

8:20-8:30 Discussion regarding Outreach Options to SSCMS Latino families

- **Mr. Campbell wants to make Outreach to the Latino families a priority.**
 - Ms. Collins has regularly visited the CIRCA apartment complex where there is a substantial latino population and many SSCMS families reside there.
 - At 5:00 on Saturdays, Ms. Collins has played soccer with several SSCMS students.
- The latino students have a negative perception of the SSCMS staff and teachers because several have gotten into trouble throughout the year.
- Mr. Campbell would like to bring more people and provide drinks and snacks to Ms. Collins' games in an effort to make the SSCMS latino families and students feel included in the school community.

- Ms. Collins will be scheduling dates for the Outreach events.

8:30-8:35 Analysis of Connections Classes and Whether They Align with the North Springs High School Curriculum

- **AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination**
 - Ms. Caldwell outlined the purpose and structure of the AVID program
 - **The goal is to make them aware that they can get into college and excel once they get there.**
 - **AVID strives to teach collaboration (teamwork) and leadership skills.**
 - AVID is designed for the “middle tier” portion of the student population whose school work is not below grade level nor considered to be advanced.
 - AVID seeks to inform students, especially those who would be first generation college students, about the college application process and entry requirements.
 - AVID also targets students who are known to not have as much support at home
 - Ms. Caldwell speaks with such students consistently about their grades and homework.
 - **AVID Entry Requirements**
 - The student must be recommended for the program by a teacher
 - The student must complete an application and be interviewed
- **Career Tech Pathways**
 - SSCMS includes Healthcare Sciences, Graphic Design and Criminal Law & Justice.
 - Engineering is not included because of the difficulty in finding a teacher qualified for this specialty.

8:35-8:40 Community Outreach – Melanie Couchman update of Summer “Hangout” Program with the Sandy Springs Parks & Recreation Dept.

- Melanie Couchman provided a hard copy of the **article** written by an 8th grade student and published by the **Huntcliff Homeowner’s Association** discussing what she liked about her teachers.
- MC traded voice mails with Trevor Ramone regarding the **Summer “Hangout” Program** and what effect the closing of SSCMS during the Summer will have on the area children.
 - TR confirmed they were aware that the school would be closed, however, they still plan to use the fields for recreation.
 - MC will follow up with TR to confirm how the Rec Dept. plans to address transportation needs, etc.
- **Community Assistance Center (“CAC”) and other Non-Profit Organizations**
 - MC and Mr. Campbell recommended the CAC and other non-profits set up a table at orientation.
 - Lars Mins recommended the CAC provide a sample of the “Clothes Closet” the CAC provides which includes low cost, used uniforms.

8:40-8:45 Set next meeting agenda

- The meeting ran past our time allotment and several topics were not covered sufficiently.
- GC agreed to meet beginning at 7:30 on May 7th to provide all topics enough time for discussion.
- At the May meeting, the GC will consider whether to hold a meeting in July.

Important Dates

SSCMS SGC Meeting dates:
2018: ~~9/25, 10/23, 11/13, 12/18~~
2019: ~~1/22, 2/12, 3/19, 4/16, 5/7~~

Future Discussion Points

Programs outside the School Budget and Curriculum to Address SSCMS Needs

Meeting Plan
