

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

2229 E. Buck Road

Pennsburg, PA 18073

Pupil Service/Special Education Committee Meeting

September 28, 2020

CHAIR: Judy Maginnis

Ex-Officio: Kerry Drake, President

MEMBERS: Melanie Cunningham

Superintendent-Dr. Allyn Roche

Assistant Superintendent-Dr. Andrea Farina

Assistant Director of Special Education-Carol Giblin

Supervisor of Special Education-Amy Coyle

SURVEYS-presented by Dr. Farina

PAYS--this survey was put on hold. CP3, the group who provides us with the 3 year trend survey data, was unable to provide it due to COVID. It will be provided in early October and then it can be shared.

PA Climate Survey—this survey refers to the quality and character of school life. It is based on school experiences and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. The data provides the district with information on how to make school a better place for students and staff and families.

Survey domains-

Student Support-this scale measures how much students feel listened to, cared about, and helped by teachers and other adults in the school to realize behavioral and academic goals.

Social/Emotional Learning-this scaled measures students' perception of their peers' social and problem-solving skills.

School Safe and Respectful Climate-this scale measures how physically and emotionally safe students feel.

Results:

High School- Notable responses: 51.5% agree that students are often bullied, 68.1% agree that students are often teased or picked on, 33.3% agree that students stop and think before doing anything when they get angry, 68.2% agree that students get into arguments when they disagree with people, 62.1% agree that students think it is ok to fight if someone insults them, 30.3% agree that students say mean things to other students when they think the other student deserves it, 72.7% agree that when students already know the material that is being taught, the teachers give them more advanced assignments.

Middle School-Notable responses: 48.2% agree that students are often bullied, 66.3% agree that students are often teased or picked on, 92.5% agree they feel safe in school, 4.2% agree that they sometimes stay home because of not feeling safe at school, 36% agree that students stop and think before doing anything when they get angry, 59.1% agree that they get into arguments when they disagree with people, 48.1% agree that teachers treat some students better than others, 61.2% agree they are usually bored in classes.

Elementary-Notable responses: 97.9% agree that teachers and staff are willing to give students help, 7% agree that they wish they went to a different school, 95.9% agree that their teachers really care about them, 94.8% agree they feel responsible for how they act, 95% agree they think about how others feel, 96.4% agree they care about how others feel, 95.4% respect what others think, 97.9% agree that they are kind to others, 94% agree that they try to understand how others think and feel, 96.5% agree that they help others.

PA Climate survey staff responses: 98.9% agree they really care about their students, 100% agree that they provide accommodations to students that need them, 94-97.2% agree that they feel safe around the school, in hallways/bathrooms and work areas, 25.2% agree that students are often bullied because of certain characteristics (race, religion, weight or sexual orientation).

PA Climate survey Parent results (242 parent responses): 81.4% agree that supports are good for all children, including children with learning problems, 87.6% agree that they feel like they are involved in their child's education.

Survey Deployment and Analysis: Educate all stakeholders about the PA Climate Survey (website, Skylert, faculty meetings); Build data team analysis of findings (strengths, areas for growth, trends); Revision of Continuous Improvement Plan Goals to Ensure Alignment (teams ensure areas of growth, deploy activities to enhance school climate).

How the data is used: building improvement goals: MS, HS-system of supports for students that address individual needs, recognize prosocial school wide expectations. Elementary-PBIS, MTSS process, SAP.

Ms. Cunningham stated that she has seen a difference and starting at the bottom (elementary) and working our way up to HS is working. Dr. Drake stated that it seems like things are moving in a better direction. Mrs. Maginnis stated that she has seen much higher survey results than years ago, especially at the elementary.

Review of Special Education programming and start of 20-21 School Year for in-person and virtual instruction-presented by Carol Giblin

-Determinations made for in-person learning beginning 8/31/20. The low incident programs (Autistic Support, MDS, Life Skills) and students with severity of disability (Intellectual Disability and Emotional Disturbance)-approximately 70 students returned.

Current and future determinations will be made based upon data and progress from UPSD data sheets and progress monitoring (goal progress from March, June and September probes). The data will determine the recommended amount of participation for in-person attendance. The data for each student is presented by each teacher on a case by case basis to the Special Education Department and the number of days per week of in-person learning is determined. As of this date, we have several more recommendations for in-person learning.

Mrs Maginnis asked that if a parent feels that virtual isn't working, and the student isn't coming in for in-person, what are we doing to address the needs? Mrs. Giblin replied that emails and calls have been received from parents and every one of those have been addressed. Meetings have been held and data is presented to parents. If we clearly see performance levels or goal progress that isn't satisfactory, it is an open discussion during a team meeting to determine in-person eligibility. Dr. Farina stated that the question was Can the service be delivered virtually? If the answer was yes, then we deployed in a virtual manner. The question now is Is the virtual instruction effective? If the answer is no, then the team meets and determines if there is something we can do in virtual (more time, more support) and if that doesn't work then it may be delivered as in-person instruction in some form. Dr. Drake asked if it is because we have a 3 hour in-person day is that the reason we are not meeting most of the student needs? Dr. Farina replied that this is not what is being stated. What is being stated is what is the quantity of time we need to deliver the service. We may have to increase the number of days of in-person attendance and/or the number of hours per day to receive special education services. We maintain Least Restrictive Environment, which is participation in general education classes. We have paraprofessionals in learning labs to support students.

Compensatory Education and UPSD Action Steps: We received a COVID Mitigation grant and with those funds we will be expanding our ESY 2021 program by increasing the number of days and hours. We will also be offering a compensatory service summer program 2021 to those special education students who may need assistance with goal growth that may have been impacted by COVID.

We will be having 4 parent trainings with topics including mental health, transition and grief, loss and coping during the holiday season. These trainings are all virtual and information will be sent in a community blast.

Mrs. Maginnis asked how we did with rolling out the MTSS tiers to the teachers. Dr. Farina replied that we completed our initial trainings and then March came and the remainder of the trainings couldn't be completed. We joined in a collaboration with the MCIU and we have trainings scheduled on behavior during this fall. When we return to a hybrid framework, we will re-educate on the MTSS framework and continue from there. The addition of our Student Assistance Counselors has been a huge benefit to the MTSS process and student/family support.

A survey will be sent out from our Student Assistance Counselors to everyone in the district in the upcoming weeks in regards to needs and supports.

Mrs. Maginnis asked about our expansion of the work program in the community and if that is still possible during this time. Dr. Farina replied that our work program students are attending and we do have partners who are having students there to work. Students also do work in district as well.

Mrs. Maginnis asked how we are utilizing our RBTs. We have 6 certified RBTs in district. We have a BCBA who supervises and supports them. They are currently working in the programs with the greatest needs.

Dr. Drake acknowledges that we are moving in the right direction with the culture and inclusivity, which is reflected in the PAYS survey.

A parent commented that it would be nice if there was some way that high school principals could send email blasts to those parents about things that pertain to them. The Special Education committee meetings weren't held in March, April and May and there was a feeling of lack of communication. The IEP revision about virtual learning occurred 3 days before school started as well. The parent feels very supported by the case manager and different things are being tried, but more communication about the supports that were discussed during this meeting would have been helpful earlier on so that parents knew what the plan was moving forward during the school year. Would like to have more openness with the plans for special education students.

Motion to adjourn made by Melanie Cunningham and seconded by Dr. Drake.

