

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

2229 E. Buck Road Pennsburg, PA 18073

**Pupil Services/Special Education Committee Meeting**

February 17, 2022

Ex-Officio: Judy Maginnis, President      CHAIR: Mrs. Judy Maginnis,      MEMBERS: J.P. Prego, Mike Elliott

Superintendent – Dr. Allyn J. Roche

Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Andrea Farina

Director of Special Education–Carol Giblin

Supervisor of Special Education – Amy Coyle

Approval of January 24, 2022 meeting minutes.

**Pathway to Graduation (P2G)**- UPSD received a grant that will be utilized over 2 years. This grant is designed to support middle school students identified with an emotional disturbance and ensure all students graduate from high school college and career ready. The goals are to increase daily attendance, decrease state reportable offenses and code of conduct incidents, and increase course performance. There are 8 students with an ED disability in middle school who are currently participating and data is being collected and shared with the IU/Pattan. Data is collected monthly on attendance, behavior difficulty and core course performance. There are district staff core team members and 2 district staff internal coaches. Our MS Student Assistance Counselor provides support as a family liaison. Check and Connect is a student engagement intervention focused on dropout prevention. The four components are: having mentors who work with students and families; regular check-ins utilizing current school data on attendance, behavior and academic progress; timely interventions to connect (reestablish/maintain) students' connection to school and learning; engagement with parents/families by the mentors to foster active participation in student's education. As we move forward, there will continue to be monthly meetings, professional development, and additional mentor PD. There is also a plan to expand the program to all of MS and HS students.

**Comprehensive Plan update:** our mission and vision statements will remain the same. We have re-written the goals to make two large goals: SEL programming (assessments, staff development, mental health supports, service delivery model). K-12 CORE and supplemental Programming that aligns with post-secondary transition (pathway to graduation for all students, special education tiered work-based program, career experience/exploration activities). We are continuing to map the framework for our goals and working on next steps for review and approval.

**McKinney-Vento-Understanding Eligibility for Services:** the definition of homelessness is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. The McKinney-Vento definition of homeless is children or youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations, living in emergency or transitional shelters, living in a public or private place not used as a regular sleeping accommodation, living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, migratory children living in these aforementioned circumstances. An unaccompanied youth includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. The local liaison has the authority and responsibility to ensure that eligible students are identified; this should be a collaborative effort with school personnel, and through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies. Determinations are made on a case-by-case basis. UPSD has seen a significant increase in homelessness this past year. Some of the factors include economic downturn, conflict within the home, housing issues caused by weather. Challenges the district faces is transportation (transporting to other districts), finding the correct contacts within other school districts and agencies.

Homeless families/youth tend to live in shelters and transitional housing, hotels, cars, friend or relative's house, or abandoned buildings. Shelters are often not an option due to lack of shelters in many communities, the demand for shelter exceeds the supply, families and youth have safety concerns in the shelter environment and shelter policies (no adolescent boys, stay limits, curfews, etc.) There are no shelters within our district so we tend to see homeless families doubling up with other people.

Barriers that have been encountered include: being unable to meet standard school enrollment requirements; changing schools and moving around a lot; being tired, hungry and stressed; not having a quiet place to study or having school supplies; not having access to reliable transportation and not having a parent or guardian to help them. Common causes of family homelessness include economic challenges, health challenges and domestic violence. Common causes of youth homelessness include abuse or neglect, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, blended family issues, substance abuse, pressure for older children to be financially independent, and lack of space for whole family. Homeless students are more likely to experience chronic absenteeism, lower grades, score poorly on assessment tests, drop out of school. Many homeless students also have special education needs. The subpopulations who are at higher risk for homelessness are LGBT youth, Hispanic, non-white youth, Black or African American youth, unmarried parenting youth, youth with less than a high school diploma or GED, and youth reporting annual household income of less than \$24,000.