

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Well-Being Committee met remotely in special session on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

BOE/committee members present: Mrs. Caramanello, Mr. Moore and Dr. Friedrich

BOE/committee members absent: Mr. Hicks and Mr. Roraback

Student advisors present: Conner Byrne and Molly Yale

Teacher advisor present: Mrs. Schaefer

Administration present: Dr. Serino and Mr. Sadinsky

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the agenda as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda as presented: Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich and Mr. Moore. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – February 20, 2020

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the minutes of February 20, 2020, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of February 20, 2020, as amended: Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich and Mr. Moore. Motion carried unanimously.

Mental health and Well-Being: focus areas and current and proposed resources

Students

Dr. Serino discussed the impact that the school closure has had on the entire school community. She cited a recent article that outlined the areas of mental health that are seen as the primary challenges when students return to school including increased anxiety and depression, difficulty returning to routine, change in sleep patterns, social recalibration, and increased school anxiety/school refusal. She discussed the area of well-being that is addressed in the Strategic Plan for Reopening and Recovery that includes the goals and actions steps for addressing and supporting mental health and well-being. Many of the steps include following the existing plan of support within a tier 1, 2, and 3 system that will be individualized to meet the presenting needs of groups and individuals. Various support personnel will be available for support including the two interns from CCSU from the Marriage and Family Therapy department.

The two student representatives shared their personal experience with the school closure including the challenges related to social isolation/being away from their friends and peer group, uncertainty about the future including prom, graduation and college.

Staff

Dr. Serino shared the information she has on staff in terms of the challenges they are facing at this time as well as the tremendous amount of collaboration and support that exists among the staff in all areas of the

district from teachers to food service staff. Mrs. Schaefer gave a summary from a teacher's perspective of what this experience has been like in terms of the challenges, but focused primarily on the incredible degree of support and communication that has existed among the staff and the outreach to students. This experience of distance learning and being separated from students has really highlighted for everyone the importance of connection over content. The relationship must be first.

Joanna Curry-Sartori has held voluntary virtual meetings with all school's faculty and staff members. People have shared openly what this experience has been like for them. She has reviewed the use of the PAUSE method with them and Mrs. Schaefer has talked about how important and helpful it is to use this method in challenging times.

Parents/Families

Dr. Serino shared some of the experiences parents are having during the school closure including supporting their children who are struggling emotionally with fear about the virus, their health and the health of family members, social isolation, confusion and frustration. Mrs. Caramanello shared her experience as a mother of three school-aged children and the impact of the challenges of distance learning and social isolation.

Board members discussed the ways in which they can support the health and well-being of students and staff in the district and agreed that one of the most important ways was to be aware of the fact that this is the foundation of everyone's success and to do what they can to support the staffing and programming in place to help students and staff.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to adjourn the meeting.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich and Mr. Moore. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.