

Freedom HS PTO Meeting

October 13, 2020 7:30pm

Meeting called to order at 7:33pm by Wendy Simpson. Wendy introduced our guest speaker, Superintendent Dr. Joseph Roy.

Dr. Roy first gave an overview on district happenings in regards to student learning.

-Approximately 73% of students in K-12 are in the Hybrid learning model; approx. 25-26% in e-learning; approx. 1.3% are in cyber academy, noting this last model is non-BASD teachers and curriculum

-Largest number of e-learning students are in high school; Kindergarten enrollment is down this year from previous years; Charter enrollment is increased in comparison to previous years.

Next, Dr. Roy gave some information regarding Covid-19 as it stands in the district in our 7th week of school.

-4 active cases currently – 3 cases, each in a separate school and 1 e-learning student

-4 active cases in transportation; contact tracing done and shows these cases are unrelated.

-Dr. Roy is confident that no cases are due to school spread; cases show the source is often a family member, college student at home, or outside events.

-Zero hospitalizations with these cases.

-Contact tracing is done. Hybrid scenario makes this easier; ie: if not in school, less exposure to others; nurses track and follow up.

-Next week, meeting with the Health Bureau and Kim Brannan (BASD Health Services Supervisor)

Third, Dr. Roy gave an overview on how we stand in our County regarding Covid-19

-Numbers in the county are on the rise. He will be asking the Health Bureau for a breakdown of cases. A large number could be coming for area colleges. Dr. Roy notes that the percentage of + test results are on the rise. The target number is 5%. Ours have been increasing and currently this week stand at 3.9% (a slow increase over the past weeks)

-State Guidelines have shown a moderate spread for our county.

Lastly, Dr. Roy spoke on the Education so far this year:

-Dr. Roy says although this is “not how we do business” that things are going ok. Out of school learning is a challenge for some and they are constantly looking to see what steps they can make to improve certain situations.

-He notes that the Hybrid model works. The past 7 weeks in school show that following the CDC guidelines has proven to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our schools.

-With the increase in community spread, there is no talk about changing the Hybrid model any time soon.

Open Discussion/Questions for Dr. Roy:

Q: When the time comes for schools to return to 5 days, how quickly can that scenario happen?

A: It would be easiest at the high school level. More challenging would be elementary schools since some of their sections are closed for e-learning (3 classes down to 2, plus 1 class as e-learning). Would need to move teachers and possibly hire more.

Q: Some concerns about e-learning student online instructions being insufficient; parents not feeling supported.

A: Dr. Roy notes that the best reality right now is Hybrid learning, unless a doctor advises against this. We can see that our Hybrid model is working. He also suggests reaching out to teachers, counselors, etc, and keep up with the communication. *

Q: Why is e-learning not live-streamed?

A: Dr. Roy notes that although some districts do their learning this way, he says there is no evidence that it is effective.

Q: If a child is in e-school, how do they go about getting into the Hybrid model?

A: Contact the student's guidance counselor and/or teachers. This change can happen easily.

Q: Is there any type of evaluation for how the Monday e-classroom/zoom is going. Some feel that it should last longer than it has been, stating that it should be more than just "here are the links". Some Monday classes are done within 10 minutes and parents are feeling there should be more instruction/recorded videos/etc.

A: Dr. Roy referred to his previous comments on this matter. *

Q: Are students with an IEP eligible for additional days in school?

A: We are looking into how to bring them back for more support. Mrs. Leeson notes there is ample support for special education online and the case managers can reach out if the need arises.

Q: Have the Community Service requirements changed for the Class of 2021?

A: The BASD School Board will be voting on a measure to change the hours requirement for the Class of 2021 to 30 hours from 60 in light of difficulty with students finding safe places that are open to complete their hours.

Q: Can Monday zoom meetings for e-school students be rescheduled in cases where there is a holiday on a Monday?

A: No, because the teachers are in school teaching the other 4 days of the week.

Q Will there be winter sports?

A: Conversations happening now with the Health Bureau. No decisions have been made yet.

Q: How are the ventilations systems in the BASD? In particular, the gymnasiums?

A: Preliminary research being done; late in the summer, concerns came in. Schools are required to turn-over the air and these checks are made routinely. Dr. Roy assumes it is the same in the gyms. Mr. LaPorta notes that gym classes have been/will be held outside, weather permitting. Dr. Roy added that music groups/chorus have also been held outside.

Q: How are other projects in the district moving along?

A: We are doing some assessing; not where we were last year; had to push off training. Some things had to be put off/put on hold for now.

Q: What if schools need to close?

A: There are tentative plans. Mrs. Leeson notes there will be a continuity of learning if things shifted. For short term closures, students would zoom with their teachers on their normal "in school" days.

Mr. LaPorta noted that if we shut down, the implication for e-learners would mean they could join their hybrid peers.

Comments:

Mr. LaPorta reminds all that it is crucial for parents to log on to Parent Portal; check your child's work, if they are completing assignments, grades, etc. Stay engaged along with them.

Mrs. Leeson: Mailing of progress reports to go out at the end of the week.

Q: Dr Roy was asked to encourage registering for the Census.

A: Dr. Roy notes that federal funding is connected to the Census numbers. Deadline to register is October 31st.

Mr. LaPorta addresses the attendees:

-Club meetings/times are now posted on the FHS website

-Map for student drop off not posted for safety reasons, but reports drop off procedures are going well.

-Meal distributions sites and times have been increased; both a.m. and p.m. times. A survey went out to parents to provide Aramark with information for them to meet the needs of the district.

-NHS induction will be virtual on Nov. 4th

-Teacher Inservice on Nov. 3rd

-Marking Period ends on Nov. 6th, Report Cards after November 10

-PSAT is this Saturday, October 17th. (FHS students only) Room assignments have been posted for students.

Business:

Treasurer's Report-

-No activity yet this school year. Current balance \$6,152.52 Report posted on website. Motion to approve-Marie Brown, 2nd by Michele Rosete

Secretary Report-

Minutes from September meeting posted on webpage. Motion to approve- Kathleen Sweeney; 2nd Carmela Swenor, Michele Rosete

Committee Report-

Marie Brown PAC- Regarding Covid-19, same as Dr. Roy reports; BASD Covid-19 Dashboard has up-to-date information.

-Free lunches in district until the end of 2020.

-Dr. Silva has been visiting teachers, students, and staff and gets their feedback on what is working/not working.

Wendy Simpson on current status of FHS PTO

-Pivot on our mission after losing our primary source of funding.

-Need to change/re-write the bylaws.

New Business:

-Applications for teacher wish lists will be going out. These will need to be modified w/ a dollar amount and will go out later this month.

-Coming up in November- Help the Guidance office with their Holiday Giving Tree

-Reminder: Exercise your right to VOTE! November 3, 2020

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm