

Parent Advisory Council

September 8, 2022

There were 11 attendees present at the meeting.

Question of the Month: What went well as the District started the school year and what could the district do to improve?

- I noticed communication seemed to be a lot better from last year to this year. There was a lot of agreement with this sentiment.
- It seems like the district did a good job with being proactive and helping families navigate possible issues.
- Multiple channels for communication has been very beneficial - having the text messages, phone calls, emails, etc. so you can always get something.
- There were several comments and suggestions related to continuing to improve circumstances for the expanded PRZ:
 - Bosley Lane and the neighborhood next to it. The lack of crosswalks is a major issue there.
 - One parent indicated that the presence of a crossing guard at Barkers Mill was helpful. People still may not follow all traffic rules, but it is a person who can monitor.
 - Parents wondered if there was a possibility for some kind of partnership with the city for more crossing guards, because it seemed to be a particular issue. There is also an issue with crossing guards needing to rotate.
 - Parents highlighted one or two locations where perhaps the PRZ could be reconsidered. There is one around Hazelwood in particular that is JUST beyond the point where the PRZ starts, but it is a challenging location for
 - There is also a place around that area (Hazelwood) where people use the area that is supposed to be for walking as a parking area.
 - It seems that a lot of schools are having similar issues with drop-offs, pickups, etc. with the lack of crosswalks and sidewalks.
- If there could be more extensive training on the SSO forms and how they need to be completed for those of us serving in those roles, that would be incredibly helpful.

Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder, Director of Schools, delivered a Director's Update.

- Our philosophy this year as a team is "we're back, we're better than ever, together." We are so glad you are back!
- It is so good to hear what you are saying. We want to hear from you all. We cannot fix any issues unless we know about them. We may not be able to fix them all, or fix them all right away, but we hope you will always continue to keep us informed about what is not working and what is working.
- As of yesterday (9/7/22), we had 38,843 students. That is about 1,000 more students than we had last year.

- Some of what you are sharing about transportation issues are very much related to the growing pains we are experiencing as a district and as a community, and I hope you know that we are very much aware of these issues that you raise. They are complex issues. We know the solutions may not come as quickly as we would like to see, but we are working on solutions.
- We are working diligently on hiring drivers. We had approximately 50 individuals who we are wrapping up on with background checks, etc. We have an additional 18 in training.
 - 5 drivers being out the other day affected 19 routes. Every driver matters.

Anthony Johnson, Chief Communications Officer, shared an update about Parent and Family Engagement

- We have been seeing dozens of events in schools this year and a lot of optimism, and we are so glad for that
- One of our strategic work goals this year is around intentional parent and family engagement.
- We have had a lot of conversations with principals about what it looks like to plan communication, to be strategic about it so you are providing what people need without burdening them. We are so glad that has been reflected in what you have seen.
- We have formed a continuous improvement team as a partnership between Communications and Instruction.
- We are auditing all of our schools to find best practices for welcoming families, and we are working on a pilot program to promote higher levels of family engagement.
 - Pilot will allow schools to graduate to different levels of family engagement. Participating schools are listed below:

Elementary: Moore Magnet, Rossvie, Carmel, K-12-Virtual, Barksdale/Spanish Immersion, Kenwood

Middle: Kenwood, Northeast, Kirkwood, Rossvie

High: Kenwood, Kirkwood

- Mr. Johnson also showed the school safety hub to parents (<https://www.cmcss.net/school-safety/>)
 - I want to offer positive feedback after the West Creek High event. While it is awful that the kids have to be prepared for these sorts of situations, it was wonderful to know that the kids were prepared, and the reaction was swift and effective. It was unfortunate, but it showed how well everything was handled, and it made me very confident in the administration.
 - I feel so confident in the prudence of the administrators in this district knowing the safety measures that are taken and the work that's been done.
- If you ever have additional question or concerns, you can email safety@cmcss.net.

Questions:

- What kind of continuity will there be? Will it be across all grade levels?

- After elementary school, family engagement tends to look different. We have seen that ourselves too. The goals will be the same, but it may look different at each level
- Are we addressing the differences between the community oriented nature at the secondary level compared to the elementary level?
 - Yes, that is part of the focus of our work on this team.
- Are we including the Virtual School?
 - Yes, the virtual school is included.
- Could we create some kind of community resource page? Let's say we want to do X at the school, who does the school already have relationships or contracts with that can do these things?
 - We could certainly work on something like that. We are working on beefing up our Partners in Education program, and this could be an extension of that. We would want to be mindful that for some purchases, depending on the amount, we are required to bid those things out; however, we can certainly look into something like that.
- I know there are also different military organizations...a lot of the schools don't know which unit is partnered at their school. Divisions on fort campbell all partner with a school.

Dr. Kimmie Sucharski, Director of Accountability, did an overview of accountability data.

- We are giving you the preliminary data that is about to be released
- I will share where some of it is already housed.
- We will not receive school grades this year, due to some of the continued challenges with the data due to the COVID-19 testing years.
- Schools must have a 95% participation rate in all tests - in the spring, the US Department of Education did an audit of participation and how it's calculated; we have to change something about the way we calculate that as a state, based on that audit.
- The state has begun releasing indicators that are used for District Accountability:
 - Achievement
 - Growth
 - Ready Grad
 - Graduation Rate
 - Chronically Out of School
 - ELPA (English Language Proficiency)
- The indicators are weighted differently at Elementary/Middle and Secondary; the district is held accountable to all of them.
- The state sets what is called an Absolute measure. Regardless of who you are, if you meet these benchmarks, you will get this letter.
- The state also sets targets. This is a measure that accounts for the population of the school, the previous performance of the students, etc. There is additional scoring based on how districts meet those targets to improve their performance year after year.

- Dr. Sucharski walked through some of the different indicators and how they are calculated, such as the Chronic Absenteeism measure and the Ready Graduate measure.
- To access data, visit <https://www.tn.gov/education/data/data-downloads.html>
- Accountability Scores:
 - System-Wide Composite = 5
 - System-Wide Literacy = 1
 - This includes all literacy-related exams for all grades
 - System-Wide Numeracy = 3
 - System-Wide Literacy and Numeracy = 1
 - System-Wide Science = 5
 - System-Wide Social Studies = 5
- The full list of accountability Designations will release 9/12/2022
 - As of 9/13/2022, CMCSS was awarded with a designation of Advancing, which is the second-highest designation. The District had a total of 11 Reward Schools, which are the top 5% of schools in the State.

Questions:

- Does the group that includes Students with Disabilities include students with IEPs, or does it also include students with 504 plans?
 - Students with disabilities calculation includes only students with IEPs
- Will the 95% participation rate apply this year?
 - Yes, that will be in place this year
- Why does the new retention law focus on 3rd grade proficiency?
 - 3rd grade reading proficiency is an important predictor of a lot of other success factors in life (students' future success in school, future success in life, etc.). It is also the point in a student's education where they will stop learning to read and will begin reading to learn, so their literacy skills at that point are crucial for their continued success in school.
- If the retention is based on TCAP proficiency, what happens if the student/the student's parent opts-out? Does the student go to summer school?
 - We are not 100 percent sure about that. We have asked the state several questions about the law to ensure we understand some of those details.
- Is it only based on TCAP scores? Are there other ways a student may show that he/she has improved their reading?
 - This is another question we are working to clarify. This was an active topic of conversation both in the year the law was passed and last year during the legislative session. It seems some legislators are open to the possibility of flexibility on the law, but we will have to wait and see if that happens during the legislative session.

Dr. Sucharski's full presentation can be accessed [here](#).