

Parent Advisory Committee

Apr 20, 2023

Dr. Luna-Vedder delivered a Director's update

- We know that 3rd Grade retention is a topic that is top of mind for parents.
- We cannot release information about which students will be eligible for retention at this point, because we do not have TCAP data.
- Students who score below or approaching will be the ones ultimately eligible for retention, unless they complete tutoring and/or summer school.
- We have been attempting to send screener data home to parents if their child falls in one of the two bottom categories.
- Summer school will be a little longer this year, so we can ensure there is flexibility for things like vacations, etc. to allow students to get all of the time they need.
- Summer school is expanding this year - Rising K-Rising 9 - but 3rd grade who must go will get priority.
- We are hearing a lot in legislation about safety. In this district, we have an SRO in every single school, and many of our high schools have two SROs. We also have float SROs who can push-in where needed.
- We are always looking at ways we can improve the safety of our buildings, while still ensuring that we maintain a school environment conducive to learning.
- We did have a presentation about our charter school application that we received on Tuesday. Our recommendation at this point is to deny. If you would like to review the presentation with the recommendation, it can be accessed on our website ([click here](#)).
- Finally, on regalia for graduations. We want to allow everything, but we have to put some limits on things. There is a guidance document that outlines what is and is not allowed for student regalia ([INS-G019](#)).

Questions:

- If a parent knows they may have a conflict or something like that with summer school, who should they begin reaching out to so they can get those details worked out?
 - I would begin with the building principal.
- Being in a traditional setting doesn't work for my child at all. Not all students can function well in that setting, so what will be available for those students who may require summer school?
 - We are consistently investigating the flexibility that we may have to offer non-traditional modes for students. Currently it is not an option.
- Are summer school and extended school year the same?
 - They are not synonymous, no. Summer school has some very tight restrictions on how much literacy, how much math, etc. Extended school is more 1:1 focused on the needs of the child, more geared toward students with an IEP, etc.
- If a child is low in a particular area (say, Math), will they still need the literacy pieces?
 - Yes, they will still get all of those criteria, but to be clear, retention is only eligible for 3rd grade ELA.

- I hear a lot of the interventions being talked about with school safety are around SRO's. Of course they are incredibly important, but how would an increased SRO presence help with the situation in Covenant School?
 - If there is an SRO who can be one of the first to confront, it can help the situation, potentially.
- Are you finding there is a need to increase school counselors and social workers?
 - We are continuing to do that, but we haven't seen an increased need based specifically on this situation (the Covenant tragedy).

Norm Brumblay presented an update on work of the Operations Department

- We have made a significant effort to improve our communications and response time through dispatch.
- We had the same setup now as we did in 1980 - one dispatcher.
- We have added a second dispatch center on the North side of town, behind Liberty Elementary.
- Our dispatch time has gotten much more manageable this year, and responsibilities are managed more efficiently.
- RFID Pilot - we are working to enhance our efficiency on buses through this program.
 - We need to ensure security and accountability systems in place.
 - We have been piloting an ID card system, similar to the ID card system that we have for our employees.
 - It is difficult for our drivers early in the year, when they do not know their students, or with a sub driver when they do not know students, and we hope this will help overcome that challenge where a driver has an emergency or needs to identify a picture.
 - Students can use their cards to log into their Classlink pages, they can use it for the cafeteria, they can use it in the library, etc.
 - It also lets you check your child in via the Raptor system if they are tardy
 - The main purpose, however, is for rider accountability on our buses and alleviating the time it takes to verify if a student boarded a bus, what bus they boarded, when they got off the bus, etc.
- We are piloting right now, and expecting to pilot to all elementary schools.
- Another system we are implementing is a system called "StopFinder." This is an app for bus alerts where parents will get real-time locations of the bus. You will get an alert when the bus arrives, you will get an alert when the bus is close.
- Kirkwood Campus Progress
 - High School - 80 Percent Complete
 - Elementary - Plan is to open in 2024
 - The plan right now is to build the expanded version of the elementary school (will look like how Oakland looks now)
- There is also an addition at Barksdale for the Spanish Immersion program
 - These are being funded through ESSER money, so this is not at the expense of the Montgomery County taxpayers
- East Montgomery Reconfiguration

- East Montgomery was built with the mindset that open “pods” as a classroom space. We know now that does not really work anymore.
- We are reconfiguring the space to create enclosures
- Right now our land acquisition is focusing on North Clarksville in 2024, North of the Red River (2026), South of 24 in 2029, and then Middle Regions 1 and 2 in 2031

Questions:

- How does this system work if a bus breaks down?
 - This would actually help alleviate the challenge of making sure we communicate properly with parents - otherwise, we would have to go to the bus roll, and send the message to whoever those things.
- So does this timestamp where a student gets off? So if a student gets off at a different location, the parent could know.
 - That is exactly what this program is for. If this happens now, we have a lot of steps we have to go through - looking at video, coordinating with law enforcement.
- What happens if a student loses their card?
 - We can reprint them.
- Is there a photo database that links up with the student?
 - There is, but we’re working to improve it so that photos stay up-to-date.
- Is there a way to coordinate their cards so that it can be clear that the student is a daycare rider, a bus rider, etc.?
 - We are hoping to incorporate all of these situations into the card.
- I have a driver, and this week there was a situation where he needed to ride the bus...would he be able to get on the bus?
 - You can call the transportation department and get him registered so we can account for him.
- Do drivers have a system they use with rolls?
 - They do, but bus drivers are sometimes on such a tight schedule, if they do not know the children, etc. it is not always 100 percent accurate.
- Will there be features to know that the bus is delayed, etc.?
 - Yes, there are some features to be built in that would allow for that.
- Is there an opt-out for parents?
 - We totally understand that some parents are going to be hesitant/against it. We are going to do our best to account for that child at all times. Ultimately, if a parent refuses, we cannot prevent that.
- Is there a way to install something like a scanner system on buses?
 - That is not something we are investigating right now.
- The original scenario that you described...if there is a bus with multiple routes, and there is a situation with a middle school student, but the driver is already running another route. How do you get the video in that instance?
 - We have someone who will follow a bus and we use the GPS tracking for the buses to make sure she can take out the chip and put in a replacement.
- Will there be a rezoning for elementary?

- Yes, we have a third-party group that will help us with that. That will start next year (Fall 2023).
- Is there a way that we can investigate different hallway structures as we build new schools? To ensure they're safe?
 - We're always asking these questions - we work really closely with law enforcement on making sure we're constructing buildings that align with the needs they have to respond to situations. Law enforcement indicates they prefer a straight line like a long hallway, rather than something with corners.
- Would we be able to consider separating hallways by corridors? (Like a door to each hallway so you can shut down a hallway at a time?)
 - That is not something we have considered, but as we build future buildings, we will certainly consider that as a possibility and whether it is feasible.

Mr. Brumblay's full slide deck can be found [here](#).