

Freedom High School Principal Advisory Council

Minutes

September 20, 2023

602 Welcome and Introductions- Mrs. Smith

- First meeting of the 2023-2024 School Year PAC meeting.
- Meeting is opened to all FDHS students, staff, students and community members.

604 Ms. Ellis, President speaks

- Will review agenda items first; hold questions to Q&A , if preferred, send question via chat and question will be addressed.
- Introductory of 23-24SY PAC Advisory Cabinet Members:
 - Kamei Ellis, President
 - Joseph Williams, President- Ed/Ld Teacher
 - Rachel Chivers, Teacher Leader – Art Teacher
 - Jahanzeb Akbar, Teacher Leader – French Teacher, World Language Dept Chair, Resident PWCS- “care for our community”
 - Keshae Wright, Student Leader
 - Nyela Asterilla-Anderson, Student Leader
 - Amailei Anderson, Student Leader
 - Carolyn Handy, Parent Leader
 - Kathy Bazil, Parent Leader

610: Mrs. Smith, Principal Items:

- Graduation (level 1 is high and level 3 is low); we were a level 3 and now level 2
 - Important for students to have a high school diploma and be successful after they graduate
- Attendance
 - 43% considered chronically absent (missed 18 days of school)
 - Decreased 3%
 - Our goal is 32%
- Dropout rate 15.2%
 - Our goal is to decrease by 10%
- SOL Data
 - Last year level 3 math, we have exceeded the state level expectations and 78% students have passed the SOL (we are now level 2)
 - Reading – we need to work on writing as 56% passed the writing SOL

How do we do this reach our goals?

- Graduation Coach at Freedom High School: specific focus on students and to help ensure they are on the path to graduate.

- Community in School Coordinator at Freedom High School- a new position, specific focus on activities that will address chronic absences and provide support; working with 50 students throughout the year. Will also offer writing sessions after school.
- Intervention Specialist: when student reaches 5 times of absence, they will meet with the students and speak with the family
- Edu-Futuro- assistance for families who may need help. Parents/students may speak with parent liaisons, administrator or school counselor for additional information. Edu-Futuro also offers assistance to help students to graduate and prepare for after school.
- CASA- another level of support, they offer tutoring and assistance for parents who would like to learn English
- Early Warning System in place through our counseling team. Where students' grades are monitored. Tutoring, remediation and recovery classes will begin 2nd quarter as we will be able to see what the need is to support students.

Mrs. Smith thanks the parents and teachers for working hard to get scores higher. Turn meeting over to Ms. Ellis.

6:25 Ms Ellis

- New Information – New EVOLVE security running. Goal to have students and in class by 7:25am. Take the following items. Laptop out of bag and out of sleeve, metal rings, instruments and umbrellas.
- During the search if the system beeps, there is a secondary search. The system shows on the screen where the area is beeping. If third search is needed, then SRO Armstrong will do the search.
- Important Dates: SAT 10/26; Homecoming, PTO information is on our school website.
- Safety Update: Teachers and faculty throughout the hallway. Students being always monitored.
- Reminder: we are a closed campus. Students can not leave and return with out proper signing out.
- Now have a total of 6 security; one is outside who communicates with our inside security.
- In the cafeteria, security and teachers are in the cafeteria and encouraged to stay seated during lunch.
- Attendance reminders: early dismissals end by 12:30pm. Main office in the main office. If absent, submit via parent vue.

6:32 Questions and Answers

Q: How do we help students learning w/ disabilities.

A: We have case manager and a large special education team to help students with disabilities. We have the largest contingent in state of Virginia. If you have a student with disabilities, please contact case manager. We are trusted adults, specific issues, contact the case manager or the school.

Q: Ms. Ferdinand- Daughter is a Freedom; my task is to set up a PTSO. Daughter is on track. Didn't want to go to Woodbridge. See all this people on this, now I need 59 of everyone on the PTSO. Need not only parents, need teachers and staff. Teachers are here, parents are for their children; need everyone

involved. Show the community; not giving up. Very excited to have everyone involved. \$10 dues. This is dear to her heart.

Q: Student is a Freshman to student this year is about the PTSO and PAC; what is the difference or how is it related.

A: PTSO helps build the positive culture, contributing to the school. Both goes hand in hand, PAC meetings provide a platform for ideas and concerns to be discussed and plans to be established.

Q: Interested, busy but interested in working with PTSO. Noticed to be quite challenging. School board meetings affect students. Do the committees go?

A: Ms. Ferdinand answered and said she hope to attend the school board meetings and represent.

Q: Daughter, captains on the track team; athletic leadership and mentor program. What all is planning to do with PTSO for students.

A: Ms. Ferdinand: PTSO do not deal with disciplinary; will support student dances, headphones... bridging gaps between students and teachers. If you see parents more involved, reading will improve, and attendance be approved. PTSO will recognized students and needs.

Q: Student: Are there support group for students who have trauma at home.

A: Dykes: There is support in the building. Communicate with anyone in the building.

Q: has the lunch been shorter. Line is long and not enough time to eat.

A: New this year, Mr. Frey watching and paying attention to time. He does send emails out to excuse students to give them more time to eat. Mr. Eaton is also looking at this to see if lunch times need to be changed.

Q: speaking with some of the parents. If you have a kid attend a student and you bring the family of 5; a lot of money. Is there a way to lower the fee for games; school spirit.

Q: Is there a 15 minute time frame to class for bathroom? Why can't a student go to the bathroom if teacher okay with this?

A: Mr. Akbar; rule 15-15 to ensure, we know that we can get students in the class; respecting the tardy bell was a big issue, being present and 15-15 ensures that our students in class everything ties in together to the change in the building. Less students in the hall, attendance being checked, etc...

Mrs. Smith, security during that 15 also making sure the bathrooms are cleared out. This was a concern last year. There were students who would hide out, we want to be able to take the child for support. A lot happening during the first 15 minutes.

Parent Reply: Thank you, and transparent informed her child to speak with the teacher and they can call you. I know the time is limited, just informing us.

Q: How do we stop kids from using drugs?

A: Freedom HS is a drug free zone. We have a new horizon therapist working on a program. If you know your child needs support, speak with counselor.

Q: are class sessions lasting one hour without breaks?

A: Freedom has 90 minutes classes; our teachers are constructive and not sitting down for a lecture the whole time where they would need breaks.

Mr. Williams: If a child needs a mental break, make sure that student speaks with a teacher. Encourage the child to speak with a teacher. The teacher doesn't teach minute to minute and often starts the class to see how students are doing.

7:29 conclusion; thank you. Great questions and contributions to the night is much appreciated.