

Porter Advisory Council
Meeting Agenda
October 19th, 2023
6:00 pm on Zoom

I. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 6:02 and began with introductions. All attendees requested to enter their name in the chat.

II. Introductions

- Porter staff and parent attendees introduced themselves and their respective roles at the school.
- Principal encouraged collaboration and conversation, and explained value group offers to Porter.
- Ms. Meres shared the agenda.

III. Citizen Comment Time

- Citizen comment time was moved to end of meeting so attendees could hear the presentations and offer informed comment.

III. New Business

- Review Bylaws
 - Types of Positions
 - Principal noted that PAC is reviewing Bylaws, which happens annually. All attendees will be email to council members for review and comment. The Bylaws will be reviewed next meeting in November. It was noted that the Bylaws were substantially reviewed and updated during the pandemic, but comments are welcome. Specifically, please look at the positions and suggest updates moving forward.
 - Ms. Stewart remains President
 - Ms. Redd remains Secretary
 - Please consider other positions
- Parent Input
 - Parent Handbook Creation
 - Ms. Mears explained PAC will consider a Porter Parent Handbook or a Family Handbook
 - **Question:** Would this be helpful? Are there any ideas that would help inform what would be in it. A focus group advised last year that it would help parents understand expectations.
 - Parent recommended including the retake policy from Middle School
 - Parent recommended a description of attendance requirements – excused and unexcused absences
 - Probationary processes
 - Description of expectations that might change between elementary and middle school
 - Overarching guidance that PWC might have that isn't well known that further informs Porter guidance
 - Principal noted that the goal for this year is to have a draft by May to be approved by the committee
 - Parent recommended information regarding volunteer hours and what is acceptable
 - Parent recommended considering having a section to explain routine considerations for students transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school.
 - Parent recommended including a description of testing that is accomplished and a description of what they are and what the purpose is
 - Parent suggested a description of the laptop policy, acceptable use, insurance options, process for repair / replacement / cost recovery
 - Description of special education services and name of coordinator to request evaluations; how to request language assistance; identification of resources
 - Description of club approval process and how to start a club; description of existing opportunities
 - Description of how language services are provided in the school and how modified materials or interpretive services are provided
 - PTO goals / contacts / mission, etc.
 - Discussion of opt out forms and which student training sessions parents can opt out of – like Red Ribbon related learning opportunities
 - Description of additional learning supports available: reading specialists, tutoring, math support, etc.
 - Ms. Mears requested PAC members review the sample handbooks and come to the Nov PAC meeting with any additional ideas for inclusion, with a goal of drafting an outline of a table of contents.
 - Note: An idea was discussed to have a parent network of volunteers for translation support on a volunteer basis.

- Communication
 - Communication – Parent suggested different mode of communication such as Class Dojo. Principal noted Class Dojo is not an approved mode of communication. Moving to school status which also offers texting and two-way communication.
 - Addition of Volunteering Commitment
- Review CIP
 - Reviewing plan that aligns with Superintendent's plan.
 - Commitment 1: We are well on way to achieving goals – including ESOL and SpED. Continue to focus on needs in those areas to address gaps.
 - Commitment 2: Focusing on student sense of belonging and feeling heard. Available data in this are was scarce so we are working on teachers engaging in ways to get restorative / responsive information. The application is different between the grades, but the concept is the same.
 - Commitment 3: Family Engagement: Having several events – multicultural events, for example – to increase family engagement. We will look to PAC for additional suggestions for events.
- Superintendent Representative
 - Kari Dinarte
 - Meeting last week was cancelled and rescheduled for 11/9. Dr. McDade will speak at the 11/9 meeting.
- Back to School Nights
 - Complete for the year. Very successful.
- Car Line
 - Very long. We are starting a little bit earlier due to screening system, which has gone very well.
- VGA Testing
 - Ms. Hill provided an update. First round complete. Will test again in Spring.
- Evolv Screeners
 - As noted, screening transition has gone quite well.
- Parent Liaison
 - Making lots of community connections to provide additional resources and engagement opportunities.

IV. Counseling Department

- RAMP Application 2024 – 2025
 - Recognized school counseling program, data driven. Goal with program is to analyze data to provide the best services. In November PAC will receive an update on what initial findings show.
- TJHSST Application & High School Specialty Programs
 - Every effort is made to send information out when received so families know about available programs.
 - Works with students 1:1 on applications to TJHSST
 - Highschool visits are ongoing – Colgan recently visited and spoke to students. Governor's School coming 11/3; dates in planning for other schools.
- October: Bullying Awareness & Prevention Month
 - All classes had learning opportunities on what bullying is.
 - Parent asked about social media bullying. Principal noted support is available, but there are limitations on school authority as it relates to social medial bullying. If it wasn't on school property / during school hours, must be carefully assessed. Could offer conflict resolution for outside school hours or address things that overflow into the school.
- Red Ribbon Week
 - Focuses on healthy food choices and saying no to drugs.
- Quarter 1: School Climate and Culture Survey
 - Ms. Meres reviewed survey process which is geared at looking trends to see how students are feeling.

V. Upcoming Events

- Blue Up Day: Monday, October 2nd
 - Noted. Bullying discussed.

- World Kindness Day: Tuesday, October 10th
 - Every student had a kindness note from counseling team and given opportunity to write kindness notes to each other.
- Pink Out Day: Friday, October 13th
 - Breast cancer awareness
- Career Day: Friday, October 27th
 - Looking for volunteers
 - Students can dress up – careers or interviews, depending on grade.

Citizen Comment Time:

- Parent: Picture day – Can we have students dress in clothes other than uniforms. Principal noted that it could be considered – possibly for one of the two picture days.
- Parent: Kudos to teachers getting students in for pictures. Noted variation in reading levels. Can we do anything for student / teacher ratio. Lower-level grades need more support. Principal noted that Porter follows state / county requirements for class sizes. However, reading support services are pushed into classes.
- Free tutoring based on ARPA will continue. We can now add first and second grade for reading and math.
- Parent: Suggested a school offer resources for parents to learn strategies that students are learning for purposes of doing homework and supporting students at home.

VI. Next Meeting:

- November 16th, 2023
 - PAC members asked for input on meeting time & location (school or zoom); majority of PAC members agreed that Zoom & 6:00 p.m. is preferred

VII. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.