

# Community Pulse Coalition

## Meeting Notes 10/10/18

### Introduction

The goal of this Coalition is to establish open, two-way conversation. The intent is for Pulse members to bring to meetings what is being discussed in the community, and to return to those communities with what we discuss in our meetings.

### Updates/Highlights

1. Safety and Security
  - construction of vestibules
  - safety and security coordinator
2. Middle Years Programme
  - focus of Professional Learning Day

Topics raised by Pulse members:

### Bullying

Bullying and how to reach out to kids who are not athletes to get them involved and be a part of some type of “team.” Non-athletes many times are kids “on the outside” who may not have that many friends and may feel isolated.

Children’s librarian says parents coming in asking for books to deal with bullying...young kids. Connect elementary counselors with Vicki DiSantos. Also Parks and Rec who have 400 kids in camp during the summer. Host transition meeting for camp counselors in spring to teach them the language the kids are getting in school around bullying.

**Communication** - while it has gotten better, some think it is not enough.

Best avenues for communication

Somers Record

Facebook page

Tusker Nation

People like official communication from Ray

Twitter

Phone calls (like for school closings)...could you do that for something big

Official email is most helpful, from building principal or Ray. If it’s not a direct email, pick our favorite way to communicate and direct people to it.

**Website** – Difficult to navigate

**Vaping** - SMS and SHS - what is being done

The town passed ordinance to ban vaping shops in shopping centers. County just raised age limit to 21. Park rules amended- no smoking or vaping in all town parks. Also same for all schools.

**Solar panel revenue**

Wouldn't touch our old roofs. Next summer getting new roofs so we'll go back to K Solar (statewide project through governor's office). We get kilowatt hour credit for what we send to the grid.

## **Meeting Notes from 3.14.19**

### **Potential Security Bond**

Dr. Blanch gave an overview of security measures the Board of Education is reviewing as it considers issuing a bond to finance the measures. Highlights include security film on windows and installing swipe card access on all doors, interior and exterior. There is roughly \$2.7 million in district reserves that would fund about 20% of the project. We expect to know more about the potential bond's status after the March 26 BOE meeting. If the BOE approves putting forth a bond, it would be voted on along with the May 21 budget. With the state approval process, it would take another 18 months or so before construction could begin. As in years past, the district is creating an animated video explaining the budget, which will include a section on the bond. We would like your input on the video before we distribute it to the public to make sure it is clear and easy to understand. Amanda will email the video when a draft is ready.

### **Follow up work after discovery of swastika**

The high school is working in partnership with the Holocaust and Human Rights Education team to develop lessons for all high school students on the history of anti-semitism, hate speech and hate symbols. Those lessons will be delivered in all English and history class within the first two weeks of April. Motivational speaker Dr. Omekongo Dibinga spoke to all SHS students this week on being an "Upstander", not a "Bystander". See attached video of some highlights from his talk.

### **Student Athlete Leadership Team**

The district is sending a group of 6 SHS athletes and two coach-chaperones to an athlete-leadership training program in Nebraska – it's a conference on drugs, alcohol and healthy habits. This will be funded by the substance abuse education grant awarded to the district with Partners in Prevention this past fall.

### **Emails from Dr. Blanch regarding security incidents**

Dr. Blanch and Amanda asked for input on the benefit/detriment of sending informational emails to parents when something happens in the district that could be deemed threatening (ex. The email that went out Monday after a student in the bathroom quoted a movie line about a gun). The general consensus was that these emails provide valuable facts and are helpful for clarity and reassurance.

## **Meeting notes 5.13.19**

### **New positions**

Dean of Students at SMS and SHS

### **Vaping**

Huge problem. Kids can get addicted quickly.

### **Budget**

With a 2% cap ... why is the increase 2.6%?

Bond

Budget – getting the word out so people vote

Question about new turf fields – no there are none

6<sup>th</sup> grade world language

How are class sizes – good. 1 less class at SIS, one more 1<sup>st</sup> gr class

Adding math and science classes

### **MYP**

9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> MYP possibility in next 4-5 years. Almost ½ of all juniors and seniors are taking an IB class. Every 5 years MYP comes back to your school and gives an evaluation for 3-4 days.

Talks to teachers, students, admin, to see how you're doing, how you're looking ahead. Make sure they're doing what they're supposed to be doing.

IB – written out on sign at SHS. It's a good selling point for district.

\*\*Kids coming out of MYP will come out of program with a very different mindset. Prepares so well for college – especially learning to write clearly, effectively, concisely.

Teachers describe this learning about MYP as best professional development they've ever had.

### **Idea for future**

Senior internships in last month of school.