

## **DAB March 2019 Meeting:**

Welcome and Approval of February Minutes: Check!  
Ice Breaker: Who Wants to be on the Executive Team!

### **DAB Committees Updates:**

#### **DAC: Rich/Lani:**

Dyslexia discussion: What we learned: dyslexia happens equally between genders, it isn't the rearrangement of letters, it's the way the brain processes the information. For most people it's a straight path (direct A->b) vs. dyslexic brains take a longer path in the brain.  
Training opportunities in the district to understand/help dyslexic students in the district.  
Strong team in the district with substantial knowledge on the subject.

#### **Legislative Committee: DJ Anderson**

Meeting on March 7 @ 12 at the Old Town Library.  
Supplemental Bill: school districts get paid monthly, has decreased because there are fewer at risk students. Working through committees, may be adjusted.  
Mill Levy: trying to make it a bill. "Look into it" - DJ. Make every district have the same Mills.  
PSD isn't as affected as others. Changes how we fund education.  
Full Day Kindergarten is likely going to happen.

#### **Board of Directors: Directors Update Christophe Febvre**

New School Board Members: Naomi Johnson & DJ Anderson  
March 26: presentation on bullying & social/emotional learning  
Next Board Meeting: Unified Improvement Plan  
Guaranteed Maximum Price: Zach school addition, etc.  
Budget Update  
Graduation Policy Update  
Reading Curriculum Approved

### **Mental Health & Social Emotional Learning:**

#### **Darcie Votipka – Director of Student Services**

PSD applies for any grant that becomes available to improve services offered to PSD students and staff.  
Bullying Prevention Grant: for middle schools historically, applied for additional schools in the future (8 total)

#### **Melanie Vogeli-Morris – Mental Health & Prevention Coordinator**

Mental Health Team: 15 Mental Health Specialist, at all schools  
13.4 FTE:

HS has a Specialist 4 days of the week at each school

MS has a Specialist 1.5 – 3 days each week at each school

ES has a Specialist 0.5-1.5 days each week at each school

Student Safety Team: When a student presents a threat outward, be that another student, property, etc.

**Theresa Fightmaster – Lead Counselor**

94 Counselors

4 elementarys do not have counselors, many now have a counselor 100% of the time.

Counselors are unable to do therapy for students, whereas an FTE is able to.

Social-Emotional Learning Strategies in PSD

Lead Counselor at each Level (ES, MS, HS)

**Questions:**

**Can you explain, when you have an incident at school and the safety team is involved?**

**Does the Safety team decide when the student comes back to school?**

Work is done WITH the counselors & principals at the school. We want that student in school, as much as possible. The decisions are always made on an individual student basis.

5 safety pera's for students who need Line of Sight supervision. If a Pera is not available at the time of an incident, they work with the admin team that is available until more support is available.

**When there are kids with an IEP, is there a plan for kids on buses?**

This is usually driven by the student's need. Its usually a team decision from the school and they work with the transportation team.

**For the elementary schools without a counselor, is that by their choice?**

Yes, they designate how to use their funds. If they do not have a full-time counselor, they then have another individual attend training for school counselor skills.

**How many of the elementary schools are using counseling as one of their specials?**

50/50. It's very sight based, each sight and counselors have different thoughts. Ideally you want them to be available and visible. Some schools have gotten off of the rotation and more intentionally useful, but staying in contact with students.

**Grants, looking for funding. Is there much instability in the numbers of counselors you have because of grants?**

We use them as supplements mostly, but also as a 'this is what it could look like'. We use the grants to add a person to show how they are useful at a sight. We have 8-9 through grants right now. Grants are typically 3 year grants.

Suicide Prevention Grant: preventative programming. Getting students engaged and connected to adults.

**Over the 19 years, how have you seen mental health evolve? As Parents how to we participate/help?**

If at your school, there is something you haven't seen or don't know what it means: ask how we can get that information out.

Students/Community has evolved. We are community with a high rate of suicide. We are also a community that talks about mental health. We've seen an increase in the students who come forward with suicidal thoughts. All staff go through training to identify those students, and there is a protocol for that. Kids are more trusting that process and they know there are adults in their world that they can talk to.

Top 2 issues: Anxiety and Depression, and also some disconnect.

Help for parents:

<https://www.psdschools.org/programs-services/student-support-services/mental-health-services>

**Extracurricular opportunities for community members?**

Mental Health Matters: in April 18<sup>th</sup> 5/5:30. Elementary and Secondary focuses.

Resource Fair before the event starts

Principals are able to reach out to create parent nights

**Community Outreach:**

Kayak: PSD students can go to Kayak when referred to by counselor or FTE. Provides resources to assess students mental health needs and connects families with the appropriate services.

DHS/UCHealth/Summit Stone/Crisis Assessment Center (ER on Lemay)/Mountain Crest/Police Services/

**Fossil had an event: Supporting Your Team, can you describe that for others?**

School Counselors are there to connect with students, to aide in prevention. Lead Psychologist is at Fossil. They each talked about their role and how the roles interact. Student

**Biggest need for the mental health services team?**

Extra resources are always helpful. Baring that piece, parents like yourselves to be involved and learn how to be partners in helping the students social/emotional well-being.

Reaching out and getting more parents engaged in the students schools.

Family Dinner

Counselor at every school

**PSD mirrors the county? What is the suicide rate of Larimer County? Does PSD mirror that rate?**

Rate of suicide climbs more with adults. Nationally, suicide rates are going up for younger people.

Since we've done our due-diligence with prevention, we haven't had a suicide in recent years.

Safe-to-tell has saved lives in our schools.

2-3% Suicide for Larimer County, it is increasing faster than the population.

**End of session Discussion:**

Schools shouldn't necessarily be concerned with distinguishing themselves. Figure out who is doing it well and copy, stop reinventing the wheel.

District provided 3 primary goals – and each sight could accomplish them as they see fit.

% Counselor Orange Page is a good talking point for the Board to provide an incentive for schools to gain a full-time counselor at every sight.

DAC: recommending the district identify priorities.

Where is the hard next step to bring something to the board?

Frame something around bullying/social emotional learning, put it in the Board Packet for March.

Offer the Board the idea of creating a committee to determine equitable options for counselors.

**Additional Comments & Questions:**

-Would love to see a matrix of the SEL strategies/schools to get a better feel for how many schools are using particular strategy \*also a glossary for the different acronyms would be helpful\*

- Would like further discussion on equity around counselor assignment within each school

-Based on last night's discussion, I would like to suggest that the DAB put forth a recommendation to the Board during the March 26 meeting related to anti-bullying and social and emotional learning, that a committee be formed to make a recommendation on equity of services across elementary, middle, and high schools. The objective of the committee will be to research and make a recommendation to the board what essential services should be the same across schools and how those services might be funded. The committee should be championed by the district with input from key subject matter experts including but not limited to representatives from: DAB, DAC, elem, middle and high school principals, student services (counselor, mental health), finance, community members. The committee should also be given a timeline for when a recommendation should be made to the board.

-Counselor sign up sheets in each classroom, usually full

-Programs at school level could be misrepresented, need to standardize across schools, too much fluff & so many tracks & titles

-Every site should review what other schools are doing

-Are we a school district or a district of schools- can make individual decisions, but a framework is needed

-More sharing of successful ideas/programs between schools

-Schools shouldn't worry about distinguishing themselves, should be consistent

-Ways to fill your square (in form) vs real programs

- Certain programs aren't effective across the board (don't hit preschool, not 5th grade)
- Action items, assignments in SACs, instead of just checking the box for having the meeting
- What type of training do bus drivers receive in regards to safety and/or mental health?
- Do bus drivers receive specific training if transporting a specific student with needs (meet with Theresa or school counselor, parents?)
- Make an "SEL strategies in PSD" handout with all acronyms spelled out with hyperlinks to program descriptions
- We noticed that PHS & FCHS have specific marijuana education programs. What if the district came up with 3 initiative per elementary, middle & high school and said here are 3 areas we'd like you to address & however your school chooses to do it..." ex HS: marijuana, vaping, anxiety
- How are the programs selected? What programs in the list are evidence based? What programs are ongoing, more than a one off assembly/event?
- Are there academic counselors and therapeutic/mental health counselors? Or does one counselor have to do it al?
- We would like to see the DAB put forth an initiative to the BoE to support one counselor at each elementary (similar to how district supports asst. Vice principals at each school)
- More awareness (great happenings) of events for parent to connect with counselor/mental health staff i.e. mental health matters, support teens..
- We recommend that DAB advocate for a counselor a every school equitably. Help our children feel safe and secure at school. Include this topic in the board packet for March 26th.