Corrected
Discipline Equity/Advisory Committee Meeting
February 13, 2020

Present:
Chasity Alexander, Windsor
Jessica Hines, Jefferson
Kathy Shannon, Board of Ed.
Heather Vazquez, Board of Ed.
Kristi McDuffie, Robeson parent
Jeanne Smith, Windsor (recorder)
Sushma Bridgemohan, Westview
Katharine Fettig, Centennial
Cindy Lockett, Windsor
Moriah Ward, Central
Bryan Yacko, Central
Orlando Thomas, Windsor (chair)

Student Code of Conduct
Orlando explained the process for making changes to the Student Code of Conduct and asked if anyone had recommendations for changes. The first change discussed was one that came up at the very end of the year last year that couldn’t be addressed in the time remaining, spitting. About once or twice a year, Orlando’s office fields calls from administrators wanting to know how spitting on someone should be coded. After doing some research on five other school districts’ student codes of conduct, it was learned that those districts included spitting under the physical confrontation category; therefore, the following change will be made to our Student Code of Conduct. (Bold, italicized print indicates additions and strike-throughs indicate deletions.

Change elementary and secondary glossary definition of Physical Confrontation as follows: Inappropriate physical contact such as pushing, shoving, and hitting, **biting, or spitting** with or without injury….

Recess Detention: There is currently no rule in the Student Code of Conduct that specifically addresses whether teachers may use loss of recess as a behavioral consequence. Board policies were reviewed and the only reference that could be found during the meeting that might be applicable was Policy 520.25 Professional Personnel-Discipline of Students. It states: “District staff may avail themselves of the following disciplinary measures: 1) Denial of privileges, 2) Removal from the classroom, 3) Detention, 4) Suspension (in-school and out-of-school), and 5) Expulsion.” Under this policy, if recess is deemed a privilege, teachers could have the authority to use loss of recess as a consequence. Alternatively, if denying recess is considered a type of detention, teachers could have the authority under that facet of this policy. Policy 715.01R Student Discipline—Administrative Procedure discusses “Lesser Disciplinary Measures” and states: “Detention, extended study hall supervision, in-school suspensions, removal from the classroom, or other disciplinary measures may be imposed for student disobedience/misconduct which warrants lesser penalties.”
Katharine Fettig reported student use of cell phones at the high school level is a major disruption to student learning; requires that teachers make multiple parent contacts (Centennial has stipulated three) for each student who violates this policy, in addition to completing a Level 1 referral; can aid in students cheating; and is impacting teachers’ evaluations because it is considered a component of classroom management. Bryan Yacko explained that although the number of Electronic Devices violations may appear small in datamarts, that is because Electronic Devices violations sometimes escalate to being Disobedience violations and are coded that way. Orlando explained that since phones are students’ personal property, our attorney has advised us that having administrators confiscate them can be problematic unless the reason for confiscation is related to an investigation or a safety concern. Liability for lost or stolen phones while in the possession of school officials is another concern. According to members present, phone use appears to be a larger concern at the high school level than at any other level.

Since cell phone use by students has been a topic of discussion for years and no solution has come to light, the group brainstormed ideas that might prove helpful:

1) Using a phone storage box (as Novak is using this year) where students put their phones up during class time. Possible concerns mentioned with this solution were: time taken to put away and give phones back to students, liability if students take phones that aren’t theirs, liability if phones get broken while being stored, and inability to easily access phones if they are needed for instructional purposes. (It was mentioned that Chromebooks would be available if phones are not.) We might consider doing this on a pilot basis.

2) Using a sleeve to store phones and only the teacher could unlock the sleeves.

3) Having storage box or sleeve that has the ability to charge phones to entice students to use them.

4) To lighten teachers’ loads, have school make robo calls to parents regarding violations. A possible concern with this is either parents would disregard the calls or they would call the school back creating a bigger loss of time for teachers and office staff.

5) Finding out how Danville and Rantoul are implementing their no-phone rule. (Orlando will contact these districts to get more information.)
6) Find out what Central’s cell phone committee is discussing. (Could Bryan get information and share at next meeting?)

7) Investigate what READY and Parkland do to combat this problem.

8) Query Board members at the next IASB meeting to learn what other districts are doing. (Heather Vazquez will investigate this.)

Next (and possibly final) meeting: Friday, February 28, 2020, 4:00 p.m., Windsor large conference room.

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