

Academics Agenda
September 14, 2020
8:00 am-9:00am

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92503592880?pwd=WjdVSVBCUXlkZEV5ZmxrVmdpeDZyUT09>

Members (those in red were not present): Michelle Kurkoski, Maggie Burggraaff, Tom Johnston, Joell Pundsack, Emily Graveen, Cheri Howe, Jeana Albers, Hannah Kostichka, Noah Langseth, Mariah SMith, Teresa Ward, Kirstin Knutson, Tara Richert, Noelle Haland, Kassie Larson, Wendell Sletten, John Gawarecki, Jennifer Heydt-Nelson, Angie Haverland, Rob Krueger, Jennifer Bartle, Paula Akakpo, David Pushparaj John, Jill Findlay

1. Meeting dates - should we continue first Monday or move to second Monday?
 - a. Thinking of the regular surveys sent out and whether that would assist or help any of our responsibilities?

Meeting the second week of the month gives the committee more information (ie: surveys reports from other committees) to support the BOD. Being consistent is key.

2. WBWF Updates (Tom) 3 minutes

None at the moment. MDE does not have any current updates; though, interest from a student has been shown.

- ~~3. Recruiting Diverse Staff Update (John) 2 minutes not needed this month~~
4. Supplemental Online Learning Update (Emily) 3 minutes

This is still on pause. For now it will be handled case by case. Two current students are participating, and all is going well and is set up.

5. Enrollment update (Joell) 3 minutes

Middle School (MS): Waitlist is still open. We are currently at capacity for every grade.

High School (HS): 9th, 11th, and 12th are below capacity. Per current BOD policies, these students will not be replaced.

PSEO: 69 students are participating.

6. Scheduling update (Joell) 5 minutes

Tomorrow is the last day students can withdraw from a course without it going on their transcript. The grading handbook will be sent out to all families today with this reminder.

7. Covid-19 Group liaison update (Noelle) 5 minutes

The priorities for this group were discussed. A focus is to increase engagement with students and families during Distance Learning (DL). Another focus is to increase awareness of the mental health of staff, students, and families.

A survey was put together for students and families to complete; this will close tonight. The survey focuses on the perception of how DL is going so far. These surveys are due by midnight tonight. The plan is for one survey a month. The staff survey is being worked on and will go out soon.

The next meeting for this group is tomorrow.

8. Fall 2020 Update (John) 10 minutes

a. Overview and general updates (John)

COVID rates in Washington County dipped slightly last week; however, there is no real change for what we are allowed to do.

MDH released a new decision tree. This has not been put out for use yet at MSA, as MDH took over an hour and a half to explain how to walk through their new plan. This tree determines when individuals are allowed to come back to work if they have been exposed or have had contact with those with COVID. It gets complicated rather quickly. Without background information, the tree doesn't make much sense. To eliminate questions and confusion, John has decided not to release it yet. The goal is to include a link to the MDH presentation when releasing the decision tree. Hopefully MDH will be able to simplify the presentation so it can be much easier to understand for families. The simple tree that was released earlier makes more sense to John at the moment. Fundamentally, if you have been exposed to someone who tests positive, you need to quarantine for 14 days after the last day of contact. This is the gist of the new tree and is also in the old tree.

There is a flu clinic planned for the staff.

The finance committee will discuss improving the broadband connection on campus at tonight's Finance Committee meeting. Because of the funding we want to use (CARES act funds), we will need MDE approval as well. There is no indication what MDE's timeline is for turnaround once requests are submitted. However, this money needs to be spent in place and

paid for by December 30. If approved by MDE, we can move forward. Within approval time, we will be able to have it installed likely within 30 days. It is likely that the new broadband will be in place by November 1st.

b. Parent survey about return to school (Joell)

506 families completed this survey. Only 25-30 families at MSA did not complete this survey yet. These families are being contacted to discover their opinions on this matter.

164 families (32.3%) said their children are likely to continue DL for the entire year regardless if we return to in-person/hybrid learning.

364 families (67.7%) said they are likely to continue whatever option the school presents when/if that opportunity arises.

c. Next steps in planning (Joell)

October 12th is the date Joell wants to have hybrid schedule plans solidified by then. The gradebooks will still stay split even for the students taking DL for the entire school year.

d. Departments - additional information, questions, ideas

Many teachers have been reporting that grading is falling behind because much of what teachers are preparing for is planning curriculum and how class will be run in the upcoming days. It was asked that Joell add a caveat to the email she is sending out today about grading being delayed due to DL. Teachers are overwhelmed with the number of students, planning curriculum, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and grading. It is key to remember this is not going to change with hybrid teaching.

Practically speaking, teachers need help with work; however, there are not ways other people can help with these issues. It is so nice to know we have so many people who are willing to help, but it is unlikely to be easier to set it up. There is so much involved with data privacy and access to grades that this really all falls on the teacher's shoulders.

SEL is important, but the teachers have not had PD that focuses on this.

The original PD Plan for 10/14 included equity and implicit bias. That is still part of the plan, but we may pivot to add PD supports for this year. SEL is critical for the year. There is a subcommittee looking at equity and SEL to see how these two topics intertwine. Teachers would benefit from SEL PD to add confidence and information to what they can do to support students.

It is apparent that some kids are already burned out with screen time. Teachers may need to

give more breaks. MS needs more active breaks. Teachers want to cover the content, but kids are already feeling the struggle. This will likely become a larger issue.

A concern has been raised that students are not taking advantage of the time provided to work on assignments. As more assignments are coming due, we will discover this. Also, once grades are updated, students may feel more of a need to complete assignments.

Are teachers providing assignments students can work on away from a screen? Jen does this for her art students. She has them work on art away from the screen. Michelle is asking students prior to the start of each unit about wanting paper copies of materials. As a school, should there be suggestions and reminders about how to reduce screen time. Screen fatigue sneaks up on you.

Students who sign up for band/orchestra/choir often take these to be a part of a group. It is unfortunate that this is how it will work this year.

David John suggested that teachers, at the beginning of each class, encourage students to do some type of physical activity.

There is miscommunication about determining the dos/don'ts for small groups on campus. Advisers, teachers, and coaches want to be able to do these things for the kids. There is confusion over what the parameters are so this can happen. This should be discussed tomorrow at the COVID Liaison meeting. The BOD needs to approve DL with supports. John has put this on the BOD agenda for next week's meeting. This opens up the ability to have students on campus. Having students meeting with teachers is different than meeting for sports or activities. It can be a simple proposal to give the administrators the go-ahead to make a plan. The current plan is for DL, so this needs to be stated specifically to allow this to happen for academic purposes. This could allow other opportunities for meetings outside of the building.

The survey results will be looked at tomorrow, and shared with the staff on Wednesday during the staff meeting. A deeper dive can be done next month at this committee meeting

e. Discussion

- i. Family support - what are we doing, ideas for improvement or new ways to engage, student support

COVID Liaison group is discussing this topic. The PTO is discussing this as well. SEL is working on this. Most of this is in stages and not being dropped all at one time. The Communications Committee is talking about connecting with the PTO to see what parents need, in the hopes they are connecting with parents and families.

- ii. Food pantry - keep or cancel? Whose responsibility?

NHS plans on taking this over. Student council can donate what supplies they have left over that can be donated to this as well.

iii. Activities starting - any updates?

More information is being gathered in the survey. Shannon is working on getting as many activities going as possible. She is having advisors come up with a plan to meet in person; the idea being that these surround the original plan for the school. However, each activity has different needs, so the thought was that this should be determined on a case by case situation.

There is confusion over this because the coaches, advisers, and leaders are waiting for leadership from administrators, not the other way around. There should be one plan for all, but each group should have the opportunity to tweak their own plans. It was thought that the overall reaching guidelines are already set. The groups should be able to create plans based on these already.

There should be specifics on what rooms can hold what number of kids, how it will be reported that rooms need to be cleaned, if students need to complete a form (similar to the one teachers complete) when they come on campus, what the protocols are for meeting outside vs. meeting indoors, what are appropriate numbers for meeting.

Next Meeting: Will be October 12th at 8:00 A.M.

Items to include on next month's agenda: Review the surveys, Department updates/issues with DL