Danbury City-Wide PTO Council

Meeting Minutes (Proposed)

Monday, February 1, 2021

6:30pm via ZOOM

Attendance: Tim Maroney (President), Jade O’Connell (Vice President/AIS), Paul Salvatore (Treasurer), Kathy Snow (Secretary), Sal Pascarella (Superintendent DPS), Kevin Walston (Ass’t Superintendent DPS), Anne Mead (Director of Family, School & Community Partnerships), Sherry Calipa (Broadview) Janine Schonfeld (King Street), Christine Fournier (Mill Ridge), Rachel Chaleski (BoE liaison), Kate Connetta (BoE liaison), Kathy O’Dowd (Health & Nursing Services),

Call to Order

* The meeting was called to order by Tim Maroney at 6:40pm.

Welcome, Introductions and Updates

* Tim welcomed attendees, and the meeting was held via zoom.

Updates from School Representatives:

* **Broadview:** planning PTO Boardmeeting on 2/4/21 to discuss meeting schedule. Hoping to have a spirit wear sale.
* **AIS:** students were very excited to be in school again. Opening seemed to go well. Drop off and pick up traffic was a non-issue; went very smoothly.
* **King Street:** Had signs out to welcome students back, very excited to be there. PTO is figuring out when to have the next meeting.
* **Mill Ridge:** similar to everyone else, students very happy to be back, drop off and pick up went smooth. PTO is trying to have a virtual bingo night soon.

Superintendent’s Report (Dr Sal)

* Question on Charter school was asked. There is a funding moratorium at the State level, but if it goes through Danbury Public Schools would have to pay for transportation and special services. The Board of Education hasn’t taken a position on Charter Schools. Charter Schools are a public entity.
* Erika Haynes is speaking on funding at a meeting Tuesday, 2/2/21.
* Open Choice is being discussed at the legislation as an option for parents. This will allow parents to choose to send their children to other districts in the area. More to come if it approved.
* Opening at elementary and middle schools as gone well, Dr. Sal is anxious to get all students back in school in hybrid mode.
* Substitute teachers continue to be a challenge. Staffing could be an issue, DPS has come close to having to close a building due to teachers being out.
* Question was raised about middle schoolers not moving from class to class and having to stay in one room all day. This was a decision made to keep students in one cohort at the beginning and will be re-evaluated to allow for movement to classes.
* Question was asked about Granville Avenue space. The first floor is occupied on a temporary Certificate of Occupancy, there will be a total of 12 classrooms there; 1 classroom short of what is needed.

Guest Speaker Kathy O’Dowd:

* Went over the process of contract tracing in Danbury Public Schools.
* Contact tracing is done 7 days a week; has been done when everyone was remote, didn’t just start.
* There have been instances where people have had to quarantine, good news is that there have been no reports of additional positive cases from those that quarantined.
* The District website has a Covid19 dashboard.
* The procedure for contact tracing is someone (student, teacher, staff, etc.) is found to be positive for Covid:
  + Kathy, the school nurses, school Principal and Kara Prunty have a discussion to determine where that person was: classroom, bus (if applicable), etc.
  + Family is contacted and spoken with to determine the last time they were in school
  + A 48 hour look-back is conducted and an identification of everyone that person had close contact with within the past 48 hours is identified (through PowerSchool)
  + Kathy O’Dowd sends the Principal(s) a letter to send out along with a “red alert” robo call to be sent to those individual families to check their email for more information regarding a close contact.
  + The general school community will then get a letter that indicates there was a positive case in the building.
  + The information is also uploaded to the dashboard on the DPS website for the general population.
  + Kathy O’Dowd also reports all positive cases to the health department and central office.
* The district is also asking that siblings of those that were in “close contact” stay home until the person who had the close contact receives negative Covid test results.
* If someone is feeling sick when they are in the school building, they are put into an isolation room until parents can come get them. It is imperative parents come get children as soon as possible (within 30 minutes) of notification.
* Once a positive Covid case is identified, the classroom and spaces that person was in are cleaned according to protocols in place.
* Question was asked about community spread tracing, Kathy O’Dowd said waiting to return until after the Holidays definitely helped. Transmission is mainly from social interactions.
* Question was asked about a person who has had Covid. Proof of Covid is required and a person is considered immune for 90 days.
* Vaccine for teachers. Teachers are still in the 1B phase, the problem is the supply of vaccines. Per Dr. Sal, the clinic is ready to go once we get the go-ahead to vaccinate teachers. They have spoken with legislatures last week to try to get teachers approved.
* Nurses have received the vaccine.

Next Meeting

* March 1st via zoom, details to follow.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:43pm