

Virtual School Climate Sub-Committee Report  
Monday, March 22, 2021  
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio  
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the purpose of discussing mental health and social emotional learning plans for SY 21-22. This meeting is anticipated to end by 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Member Rachel, Chair; Vice Chair Bowman; Member Wilson

Others present: Dr. Turk; Dr. Gittens; Dr. Madera; Student Member Vera-DeGraff; Student Member Killian

Member Rachel is the Chair. The meeting started at 6:00 pm. Member Rachel outlined the meeting.

On the following roll call vote, for the purposes of attendance: Member Rachel YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman

Member Rachel turned the meeting over to Dr. Turk and other district leaders for a presentation "Supporting CPS Students' SEL & Mental Behavioral Needs." She shared the objectives: build constituent understanding of a tiered approach to Social-Emotional Learning and Mental/Behavioral Health and the overview of planning efforts underway.

- Dr. Gittens provided context on what is social emotional learning
- Dr. Madera provided DESE's MTSS framework for SEL and Mental Health and also shared highlights from current efforts to support SEL & Mental Health
- Dr. Turk shared the School Year 2021-22 Draft Guiding Principles: apply MTSS framework as a guide to meet the individual needs of the whole child, build capacity and focus on Tier 1, honor CPS district-wide commitment to equity, partner with students/families/community based organizations, use an improvement mindset: learn/implement/monitor/adjust
- Jamie McCarthy presented health and wellness education (JK-12)
- Jennifer Amigone discussed the Student SEL Screening Assessment
- Alice Cohen provided context on the Tier 1 School SEL Self-Assessment Tool
- Dr. Gittens shared information about the student support teams
- Chris Clath-Hess discussed about professional learning and support, and providing tools to support CPS staff to support SEL and mental/behavioral health needs
- Robin Harris discussed family support and CPS efforts to build family capacity to support students SEL and mental/behavioral health needs

Member Rachel opened the meeting to public comment utilizing the progressive stacking method.

Member Vera-DeGraff shared the student perspective on what is working and what is not working. He talked about social workers, every once in a while the administration will send out emails. What could be better: lack of consistency across the board and what the TIER 1 students are getting? He talked about advisory and one on one check ins. The issue is that some students/teachers are not making the best use of advisory and 1:1 check ins. The educational side health/wellness is just 9<sup>th</sup> grade and would like to see that in the later grades also.

Member Killian echoed Member Vera-DeGraff's sentiments. Member Killian asked for clarification on the percentages of the different tiers.

- Alice Cohen shared that those percentages were made pre-covid
- Dr. Gittens talked about the percentages-Tier 1 is supposed to happen for every student and about 80 percent of the population will have their needs met
- They talked about how they tier their supports, not the students

Ms. Preval talked of the importance of intentional planning.

- Dr. Madera acknowledged that timing is an issue and that we need to look at the length of our school day
- Dr. Gittens talked about how the expectations of behaviors should be consistent

- Dr. Madera shared that there has been a lot of work done in the math department implementing math talks
- Alice Cohen talked about how we are focusing on deficits, and she wanted to highlight the resilience around us. She talked about how it is going to take time to heal from the pandemic.

Ena Valenzuela asked if social emotional learning is their role playing, she talked about what happened to the football team.

- Ms. McCarthy discussed how there is role playing and she can do a deep dive into what they teach. They have not taught the sexuality curriculum remotely.

Kevin Z shared the intersection of social work and spirituality in regard to SEL. He asked if there was an opportunity for CPS to have spaces to engage in that work.

- Dr. Turk talked about how there is a person that needs to be present to have a place to have a conversation with no judgement and compassion and that is certainly what they try to do at CPS

Member Rachel opened the meeting to other Sub-Committee members for their comments

Member Wilson appreciated the presentation and liked the definition of SEL work. Member Wilson talked about the importance of being intentional in the current nature and climate we are thinking about and what we can implement right now to roll out by next year. Member Wilson also touched upon how we are to support educators.

Vice Chair Bowman shared her perspective on what SEL: acknowledgement of tough times and she said for a next step that SEL directly connects to resiliency that leads to better academic outcomes.

Member Rachel asked what we could dip our toes into right now in the context of SEL. Member Rachel stated we are about four years into MTSS, is hoping that we can use summer professional development to work on these issues.

Member Wilson shared that additional support in crisis mode such as “crisis Chaplin.”

Dr. Turk added that there are so many things that teachers do every day that is SEL.

On a motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Member Wilson on the following roll vote, it was voted to adjourn the meeting (7:37 p.m.): Member Rachel YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA

Attest:



Allison Daley  
Confidential Secretary to the Office of the School Committee