

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools
Student Voice in Action Committee
Monday, December 18, 2023 @ Canton High School Media Center
Agenda

Committee Attendees: Sara Alassi, Mohamad Alomary, Maya Alomary, Sadie Anthony, Sylvia Black, Zeina Ciochetto, Jo Fessler, Evayla Georgieva, Lucas Hagerman, Juliet Jakubik, Lasya Jalari, Riya Kalapurakkal, Deena Khalil, Max Krinke, Emma Krupa, Hudson Lloyd, Iniya Mudaliyar, Sarah Nelson, Sae Pawar, Josh Patterson, Zachary Patterson, Alice Pressler, Adiran Roychoudhury, Anaya Roychoudhury, John Sadowski, Sahana Shankar, Jushen Sidhu, Marley Thomas, Riley Tulgetske, Marianna Vespa, Elijah Wilson, Riley Zajas, Superintendent Monica Merritt, Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs, Secretary Anupam Chugh Sidhu, Vice President Lauren Christenson, and McKenna Pierce

Call to Order, Introductions, and Welcoming New Members

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by Secretary Anupam Chugh Sidhu. The committee and everyone in attendance went around and introduced themselves.

Review Minutes from November 20, 2023

Secretary Anupam Chugh Sidhu asked the students to review the minutes. The minutes from November 20, 2023, were reviewed. The meeting notes from November 20, 2023, were moved by Josh Patterson and seconded by Mohamad Alomary. The November 20, 2023 meeting minutes were approved by everyone in attendance.

Welcome from Co-Chairs and Review SVA Norms

Sae Pawar and Josh Patterson welcomed everyone and reviewed the finalized 2023-2024 norms for the Student Voice in Action Committee. Riley Zajas read the norms aloud to the committee. Josh Patterson and Sae Pawar encouraged the committee members to review the meeting norms and opened it up to questions and discussion. What does “coming prepared to all meetings” look like? It had been discussed that we should take the norms and create a poster for future meetings.

Public Comments

No public comments were made.

Nutrition Services Initiative

SVA is working toward creating a more inclusive lunch menu across the district. Sae Pawar and Josh Patterson announced that next month, we are inviting Gina Stanford, Assistant Director of Nutrition Services, and Ann Whetstone, Food and Nutrition Dietician Coordinator to discuss lunch menu options. This will provide an opportunity for SVA members to suggest the need for more inclusive lunch menu options to serve our diverse community.

Update on Board of Education Subcommittee:

Student Performance and Achievement (Hudson Lloyd)

A new course is being created, History of Hip Hop and Rap. P-CCS is above the state level. A choir course was renamed to become more gender inclusive.

Finance and Operations Meeting (Lauren Christenson)

The property P-CCS is selling was discussed along with furnishing updates for the middle schools, East and West. Innovation Hub and Robotics, band uniforms, and other possible purchases were discussed.

Policy Advisory Committee (Josh Patterson)

Several policies about AI were discussed involving staff and students. Invasive health screenings were discussed and with parent permission, would allow for COVID vaccinations.

Student Handbook: Dress Code

Students were encouraged to gather in groups of 4 to 5 to talk about the dress code policy at Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. Each group will write down their feedback on the current dress code and will open up discussion for what, if anything, needs to be changed, clarified, or eliminated. Each table went around and provided their feedback.

Hats and hoods were the first topic brought up; the district-wide dress code is that hats and hoods are prohibited in the classroom. Groups shared that the hat and hood dress code should be decided on a school-to-school basis, hats/hoods can make students feel more comfortable, however, hats and hoods make it difficult to identify students in hallways and around campus. Hats and hoods can cover earbuds which can be a distraction to learning, but it was argued that long hair can also hide earbuds.

There is no equal enforcement of the dress code across P-CEP. If there is a dress code in place, all administrators should be treating this equally since some administrators give warnings while others write up on the first offense. The dress code should also be equally enforced for all body types and genders.

Clarify “chains” in the dress code. “Gangs” should be elaborated.

Clarify/define “material disruption” in the dress code handbook. It is important to make the dress code as equitable as possible. This also insinuates that the administration can prohibit clothing “not specifically” mentioned in the handbook, which can be unfair to students.

It was mentioned that “grooming” has a negative connotation and should be rewritten. Female-presenting students seem to have more “rules” and limitations according to the dress code. Exposed shoulders, leading to potentially exposed undergarments, should not be viewed as a distraction. Students should not be sexualized for their clothing.

Dr. Liz Vartanian-Gibbs suggested students take time to review other school districts’ dress codes to use as a guide for P-CCS’ new dress code.

Discriminating and defamatory clothing needs to be elaborated.

Every dress code standard needs an explanation directly into the dress code handbook. Fewer complaints will occur if students, staff, and administrators are on the same page.

John Johnston, a community member, believes that learning is the most important part of the school. Dress codes should be followed as expected by the tax-payers.

Secretary Anupam Chugh Sidhu will create a Google Document for the SVA members to continue this discussion about the dress code from the Student Handbook.

New Member Process (Vice President Lauren Christenson)

The SVA new member process has been completed. The 2023-2024 was behind the 2022-2023 schedule by approximately one month. Moving forward, SVA will begin accepting applications earlier in the school year to encourage new members to attend more meetings. Hudson Lloyd suggested starting as early as the end of each school year to spend the summer reviewing applications; this would have students attending the meetings as early as September or October. New members suggested communicating through teachers to encourage their students to apply. Emails are not typically the best way to communicate with middle school students.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m. by Josh Patterson

Upcoming Meetings

Monday, January 29, 2024
Monday, February 26, 2024
Monday, March 18, 2024
Monday, April 15, 2024
Monday, May 20, 2024