

**McCallum Campus Advisory Council (CAC)**  
**December 7, 2020**

**MINUTES**

Present via Zoom: Administrative Representatives Nicole Griffith, Tammy Stone, Larry Featherstone; Teacher/Staff Representatives Elaine Bohls-Graham, Andrea Rogers, Nicole Sorto, Rachel Murray, Kristen Wachsmann, Megan Susong, Heather Ramsay, Amy Brodbeck; Student Representatives Eliana Herrera, Olivia Navarro; Parent Representatives Claire Mathias, Bria Cirkiel, Holly Eaton, Laura Dooley, Viva Garza, Carlene Wegman Todd; Community Representatives Susan Moffat, Laura Yeager; Business Representative Shawn Cirkiel.

1. **Call to order.** Co-chair Rachel Murray called the meeting of the McCallum CAC to order at 5:31pm. A quorum was present.
2. **Minutes.** Minutes of the November CAC meeting were approved by email vote prior to the December meeting and posted to the McCallum website.
3. **Update on McCallum Principal Search.** Co-chair Claire Mathias reported that she and Rachel Murray learned Friday that the district is reopening McCallum's principal search, which had originally been scheduled to conclude this month. Ms. Mathias said district staff emphasized that this was not a reflection on the applicants, but rather that lack of school data due to the pandemic hampered the process. Ms. Mathias stated that Sheila Henry, AISD's Executive Director for High Schools, would join the CAC meeting at 5:45pm to provide an overview of the new timeline for principal selection and to answer any questions. Ms. Mathias noted that the fall selection process had been somewhat frustrating, particularly due to the lack of parent and staff meetings to provide input, and that it might be possible to address these shortcomings constructively in the new process. Ms. Mathias asked CAC members who would like to provide input for consideration in the new principal selection process to contact her directly.
4. **Update from AISD High School Office.** Sheila Henry, AISD's Executive Director for High Schools, joined the CAC meeting at 5:45pm to answer questions about the new principal selection process. Ms. Henry stated that the McCallum principal position will be re-posted the first week of February, the Vertical Team will screen applications on February 19, and the selection committee will interview candidates on February 19. The superintendent will interview finalists on March 1<sup>st</sup> and notify the AISD board of her selection on March 5<sup>th</sup>, at which time the board is expected to approve the new principal. In answer to questions, Ms. Henry said the superintendent had decided not to move forward with the original principal selection process because there had not been sufficient time to gather current information about the campus due to the pandemic and the low percentage of students attending in person. Ms. Henry said this lack of current data denied candidates the opportunity to demonstrate how

they would use that information to support strategies for improvement, but she expressed optimism that more data would be available by February. She stated that the selection process, which is new this year, is already set by the district, and that the interview committee will consist of the CAC Co-chairs, the PTA president, one additional campus representative, and two AISD central administrators. In response to a question from one of the student representatives, Ms. Henry stated that students could provide input via the survey the district sent to families that allowed respondents to rank characteristics important in a principal. A parent representative raised the question of timing if the AISD board approves a new principal in March, noting that it might be awkward to bring in a new person two months before the end of the school year. Ms. Henry responded that the start date for the new principal is currently scheduled as March 6, but that she will take feedback regarding timing. Ms. Henry will send the CAC co-chairs a written copy of the new timeline to share with the McCallum community. She also offered to resend the survey for anyone who didn't receive the survey in the fall, but noted the district does not intend to re-survey those who have already completed the initial survey and that any new input must be received before the Vertical Team meeting on February 19. Ms. Henry stated that she has been in communication with McCallum's Acting Principal Nicole Griffith. Ms. Henry left the meeting at 6:03pm.

5. **Citizens Communication.** No one present wished to speak.
6. **COVID Updates.** Acting Principal Nicole Griffith joined the meeting at 6:05pm. She reported that only 42 students attended in person on December 7, which was the first day students were allowed back on campus after Thanksgiving; this number included 18 Special Education students and three students for whom this was their first day at McCallum. Ms. Griffith said she was proud of McCallum's safety protocols and that it helps everyone feel safer knowing how seriously the campus takes these. She reported that the district has rescinded most of the faculty and staff accommodations for the spring semester, and that she is meeting individually with affected staff and faculty to see what can be done to make them feel more comfortable on campus; she is also advising them about what they can do to resubmit their accommodation requests. The district has started a pilot program that allows individual campuses to determine how many staff are actually needed, but the only high schools invited to participate to date are Ann Richards and Bowie. Ms. Griffith indicated that she would very much like to participate in this program if the district opens it to other high schools, and plans to ask about it at the upcoming principals' meeting. She noted that the district's high schools are generally experiencing low in-person attendance, but that many elementary schools have high numbers of students on campus and are struggling to meet their needs without a full teaching staff.
7. **School Calendar DOI/PD Days.** Ms. Griffith reported that the TEA may require AISD to make up 430 minutes of last week's remote learning time. The TEA is still considering the district's request for an exemption, but if schools are required

to make up this time, the only option will be to turn two of McCallum's early release days into full days later this spring. She is still hopeful for a positive ruling from TEA and will keep the CAC apprised. McCallum will hold another District of Innovation (DOI) day on January 5<sup>th</sup>, in which the Vertical Team will work on equity issues. In February, McCallum will continue its Professional Development (PD) with Cognito training focused on LGBTQ issues, as well as technology issues.

8. **Finals, Fall and Spring.** Ms. Griffith reported that she has sent information about fall final exams to all students and families. She has received some calls from parents asking about possible exemptions for spring final exams, which a few other AISD high schools are already providing, and asked for CAC members' thoughts. Ms. Griffith said a final exam exemption program could reward students who are doing well and working hard, but she would want it ensure that would not burden students or teachers or contribute to inequities. She also emphasized that the program is not a blanket exemption from all finals. In Austin HS, where this program is already in place, the option is available only to juniors and seniors, and those applying for exemptions must have an 80 or above average, no more than three absences, and no disciplinary removals. Seniors may apply for exemptions for two classes each semester, and juniors are limited to one. The administrative team reviews all applications and makes the final decision. Students still have to show up for all finals and are required to produce a culminating reflective piece. Final grades reflect an average of three six-week periods. Ms. Griffith noted that these final exam exemption programs are separate from Advanced Placement (AP) exemptions. CAC members expressed concerns that an exemption program might deepen inequities and that an attendance requirement might pose problems during the ongoing pandemic, but also thought that it might provide a positive incentive for some students. Regarding attendance, Ms. Griffith noted that McCallum's attendance has been substantially higher during remote learning. A parent representative observed that the current attendance requirements for remote learning are confusing. Ms. Griffith agreed, but said the TEA requires this system of reporting.
9. **Outdoor Classroom and Facilities Update.** Ms. Griffith reported that many members of the McCallum community are excited about the possibility of a new outdoor stage. She will email a powerpoint about the proposed project to CAC members, and will provide a fuller update on the stage and facilities in general at the January meeting.
10. **Other Business.** Co-chair Claire Mathias invited any members who wished to discuss the principal selection process further to stay on the Zoom meeting after adjournment, or to contact her via email.
11. **Adjourn.** There being no further business, the CAC adjourned its meeting at 6:34pm.