

McCallum Campus Advisory Council (CAC)

December 6, 2021

McCallum Library and via Zoom

5600 Sunshine Drive, Austin TX 78756

MINUTES

Present: Administrative Representatives Nicole Griffith, Larry Featherstone; Teacher/Staff Representatives Rachel Murray, Andrea Rogers, Kenneth Rogers, Joe Carcione, Margaret Smith; Student Representatives Ariana Mendez, Bobbie Currie; Parent Representatives Keren Campa, Ashli Pate, Lisa Alverson, Alexis Pruitt, Viva Garza, Kate Hayes, Amanda Holleman; Community Representative Susan Moffat.

1. Welcome and Call to Order. Co-chair Rachel Murray called the meeting to order at 5:47pm.

2. Minutes. Minutes of the November meeting were approved via email prior to the December meeting and posted to the McCallum website.

3. CAC Training. Ms. Murray shared a link to the CAC guidelines for Citizens Communication and provided an overview for members.

4. Principal's Report. Principal Nicole Griffith offered the following report.

Good news. McCallum's football team made the second round of playoffs. McCallum PALS collected 240 coats for kids and are visiting feeder schools. McCallum recently hosted a successful robotics tournament. The Excaliber Coffee House is back on campus providing another venue for student performances. McCallum has restarted the FIT (Flexible Instruction Time) program, which both students and teachers are enjoying. McCallum recently hosted its first flu vaccine clinic. Band and Choir are starting the process for regional and state competitions. McCallum had more students make the all-state Orchestra than any other school in the region. Theater is working on Joseph and Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat, which will open in late January and will also serve as McCallum's competition show.

Facilities. The district is currently in the planning process for the next school bond, but no other information is available at this time.

Substitute teachers. Like many schools nationwide, McCallum is experiencing a shortage of substitute teachers due to the pandemic. In other

states, schools will often close if there are too few teachers, but this is not an option in Texas because state funding is tied to schools staying open.

McCallum has addressed this shortage by allowing teachers to volunteer to take on extra classes or by grouping several classes together in the cafeteria with adult supervision. Fortunately, lesson plans are usually available on the Blend platform so having a substitute teacher isn't as disruptive to learning as it may have been in the past. In short, McCallum is making it work despite the challenges posed by too few subs.

Staffing. McCallum currently has openings for an English teacher and a Science teacher and is hiring to fill these positions. AISD is requiring more walk-through observations of classrooms; most McCallum teachers have already had 3-4 walk-throughs and are becoming used to them.

End of Course (EOC) Exams. McCallum will start state-mandated December EOC testing tomorrow. This will include a higher number of students than usual because of those who missed last spring's tests while still learning remotely. The state requires students to take EOC tests in person.

5. Citizens' Communication. No visitors were present who wished to speak.

6. Other Business. CAC members raised two topics for discussion. The first pertained to AISD's new proposal to require high school teachers to teach 6 of 7 periods with single block scheduling. McCallum currently uses double block scheduling with teachers generally teaching 6 of 8 periods, leaving 2 periods for lesson planning, collaborative planning within departments, ARD meetings, 504 meetings, parent-teacher conferences, assisting students, and other responsibilities. In essence, the proposed change would mean a greater workload for teachers with less time for planning. The proposal, which is believed to be a cost-cutting measure, was only made public recently and has not really been discussed, though the district apparently plans to hold community meetings on the issue. Ms. Griffith said she hopes to have more information by the January CAC meeting and encouraged CAC members to attend district meetings on the topic when they are announced.

The second question was about school safety in the wake of the recent school shootings in Oxford, Michigan. Ms. Griffith stated that McCallum's administrative team was discussing the Oxford incident, stressing that it is important to learn from this and other incidents. She explained that AISD uses Gaggle, a third party software program installed on AISD devices, which scans students' Chromebooks for threats to students or others, though

she noted that Gaggle cannot detect threats on students' phones or other personal devices. When threats reported, either through Gaggle or by a member of the campus community, school counselors and administrators evaluate the threat and identify resources for students who need them. Ms. Griffith noted that McCallum is fortunate to have a very empowered student body overall and that most students are comfortable reaching out to a teacher or other adults about a perceived safety threat. She emphasized McCallum takes all threats seriously and that solid relationships with students and a strong advisory program are key to campus safety. She also reminded CAC members that the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits campus staff from discussing disciplinary measures involving a student with anyone other than that student's parents, acknowledging that this inability to share information about consequences was sometimes frustrating to a person who reported a threat.

6. Adjourn. There being no further business, the McCallum CAC adjourned its meeting at 6:32pm.