

McCallum Campus Advisory Council (CAC)
February 7, 2022

MINUTES

Present via Zoom: Administrative Representatives Nicole Griffith, Larry Featherstone; Teacher/Staff Representatives Rachel Murray, Andrea Rogers, Kenneth Rogers, Joe Carcione, Margaret Smith, Elaine Bohls-Graham; Parent Representatives Lisa Alverson, Viva Garza, Alexis Pruitt, Ashli Pate, Carlene Wegmann Todd, Amanda Holleman, Kate Hayes, Kerren Campa, Ashli Pate; Student Representative Ariana Mendez; Community Representative Susan Moffat.

1. Call to Order. CAC Co-chair Rachel Murray called the meeting of the McCallum CAC to order at 5:47pm.

2. CAC Training. Ms. Murray shared a link to this month's CAC training, which provides an overview of all AISD advisory bodies, including contact information for each one. She encouraged CAC members to review these if they are interested in becoming more involved with a particular subject issue.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MmiQbhmAVhAi8wnGh3URE4XCtPXweSFNF44Y0CU_T-w/edit?usp=sharing Ms. Murray also encouraged members to familiarize themselves with the district's budget process, which will be a focus of next month's CAC meeting. <https://www.austinisd.org/budget>

3. Minutes. Minutes from the January CAC meeting were approved via email prior to the February meeting and posted to the McCallum website.

4. Principal's Report. Principal Nicole Griffith shared the following information.

Good news. McCallum is engaging in a number of activities for Black History Month in conjunction with the Students of Color Alliance. Fourteen Mac swimmers have advanced to regional competition. The spring musical, Joseph and Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat, was outstanding and very well received. Mac soccer player Mia Gomez recently scored her hundredth goal as Mac Knight. Mac runner Chris Riley has been signed to the University of Texas. Three McCallum students had films accepted to this year's SXSW. Nine band/orchestra students have qualified for state orchestra, including one freshman. The Austin Symphony performed a beautiful concert for McCallum Fine Arts students. Niki Sorto was named McCallum Teacher of the Year. The McCallum girls' basketball team appears poised to make it to the playoffs for the first time in many years.

Fine Arts Academy. Acceptances to the Fine Arts Academy went out today. In advance of the application process, McCallum FAA representatives visited 17 of 19 area middle schools to provide information about the program (two schools were unable to schedule Mac reps despite multiple efforts). McCallum FAA reps also participated in numerous high school fairs and hosted three information nights for

students and parents via Zoom. The Academy received well over 300 applications from 29 different schools, including public schools, charters, private schools and home schools. Everyone who completed an application received an audition and McCallum has accepted a diverse group of 251 students for next year's Academy.

College and Career Highlights. 73% of McCallum seniors (327 students) have applied to two- or four-year colleges or universities and have also completed the required FAFSA form or opted out. Mac students have recorded 442 college acceptances in Naviance to date. One McCallum student has received the prestigious Wells scholarship from the University of Indiana, which covers all expenses for four years including a student stipend and numerous academic opportunities. McCallum National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists should hear this week if they have advanced to become Finalists.

Covid. Like the nation at large, McCallum is still dealing with Covid, but the number of cases is slowing. Since McCallum is a Covid testing hub, our students have more *known* cases than some other campuses because our students are testing more frequently; we've also had a number of false positives. The McCallum administration is continuing to do contact tracing for all reported cases. McCallum's on-site testing hub is limited to AISD students and staff. Ms. Griffith recommended that everyone apply for the federally-funded free rapid tests (four per household).

Substitute Teachers. AISD recently increased pay for substitute teachers, which has helped address shortages and allowed McCallum to cover all teacher absences.

New McCallum Website. AISD is in the process of creating new uniform websites for all campuses. The new sites, which will be coming soon, look nice and should be easy to update. However, the district has determined that parent volunteers will no longer be allowed to update the new sites.

Budget. McCallum's campus budget for the 2022-23 school year will be available for review and discussion at the March CAC meeting. The March meeting may run a little longer than usual to allow for full discussion.

Calendar. Ms. Griffith does not believe AISD is planning to make up the two recent ice days. February 11 and March 4 will be days off for everyone. McCallum also has three professional development days coming up.

Communication Channels. Ms. Griffith wants to ensure communication channels work for everyone – students, parents, staff, teachers, caregivers – and that everyone feels informed. Current communication channels include Blend for students, the weekly MacKnightly News, the principal's monthly newsletter, Mac Journalism, and the faculty's daily email. In addition, band, orchestra and choir all use the Charms platform. She noted that School Messenger doesn't have student email addresses, and that it's generally harder to contact students than caregivers, though seniors get a lot of communication through Naviance. Ms. Griffith is considering starting an

official McCallum Facebook page and wanted to hear CAC members' thoughts about the existing McCallum parent Facebook page, which is a private account, and to get suggestions regarding communications generally. CAC members responded with the following observations:

- The McCallum parent Facebook page is a private group and is generally fine, but occasionally becomes a source of misinformation or personal attacks. CAC members and Ms. Griffith agreed that a committee to establish general rules for the site would be an improvement (for example, no cyber bullying; no calling out students, faculty or student groups by name; no personal attacks, etc.) with a few volunteer moderators who could point out when rules were being violated, take down offending posts, or end threads that are out of control. Ms. Griffith stressed that she does not want to moderate the parent FB page, but would simply like to see some norms established. She hopes to identify parents who are active in the parent FB group who would be willing to work on such a project.
- Any school communications should also be available on the campus website. Many people don't use social media or don't check emails frequently, but might go to the website for information. Ms. Griffith said that McCallum's new website will have a feature so that any announcement from an official school Facebook page will automatically post to the website.
- For scheduling SpEd meetings, texts are often a better way to reach parents than email. Many people's email boxes are overloaded and it's too easy for important communications to be buried.
- Communications need to be available through multiple platforms: website, marquee, an official Facebook page, email, texts, etc. Many people still prefer email.
- A parent representative stressed the need to explain best communication practices to parents and caregivers so that teachers aren't bogged down with too many communications from individuals, noting that parents need to support teachers to support students. Ms. Griffith agreed and is looking at other ways students and parents could assist teachers, such as helping to make copies.

5. Other Business. Ms. Griffith announced that upcoming evening event on student electives and scheduling will be recorded so that parents who can't attend may view it later. There will also be videos available about various electives, and counselors are visiting every classroom to go over all scheduling and elective information with students. A document containing everything parents need to know will go out soon. In response to parent concerns about AISD's switch to having faculty teach 7 of 8 periods, Ms. Griffith acknowledged this would not be an easy change, but that she will do her best for students and teachers. She noted that The Shield had an excellent article on this topic recently, and that she would have more information to share about how McCallum will implement this change at the March CAC meeting.

6. Citizens Communication. No one present wished to speak.

7. Adjourn. There being no further business, the McCallum CAC adjourned its meeting at 6:38pm.