



SHAWSHEEN VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
100 Cook Street, Billerica, MA 01821
School Council

Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2021

In Attendance: Jessica Cook, Principal; John Bagni, Faculty; Kerry O'Brien, Faculty; Rebecca Chaffee, Parent; James Marshall, Community Representative; Paul Troisi, Community Representative; Michael Parent, Student; Alexa Strong, Student; Diane Cedorchuk, Recording Secretary

Absent: Danielle Santiago, Parent; Debbie Barnes, Parent

Call to Order:

Ms. Cook motioned to call the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion made by Mr. Bagni, 2nd by Mr. Troisi to accept the Minutes of October 6, 2021. With a roll call vote, Mr. Bagni, Ms. O'Brien, Mr. Troisi, Mr. Marshall, Ms. Chaffee, Ms. Cook, Alexa Strong and Michael Parent voted yes. All in favor. Motion carried 8-0.

Ms. Cook asked everyone to introduce themselves due to the fact some members were not present at the first meeting.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

SVTHS Mission & Philosophy - Ms. Cook passed out the Mission and Philosophy Statement and asked for feedback as to whether the council feels it is still relevant from when it was revised in the 2015-2016 school year. Alexa Strong noted the "his or her" should be changed and Mr. Bagni has some discussion regarding the non-traditional programs being outdated. Ms. Chaffee felt "Value, Inclusion and Belonging" should be added. The general feedback was to revisit the Mission and Philosophy Statement.

Student Mental Health and Wellness - Ms. Cook gave an overview of the re-organization. Ms. Cook stated the district hired a new nurse and adjustment counselor. She also noted over 40 staff members signed up for a social emotional professional development course. Ms. Cook opened discussion up to the group.

Mr. Troisi felt mental health issues are a concern. We are seeing stages no one anticipated and a large number of student suicide. He felt we need to provide a level of comfort to open communication.

Ms. O'Brien stated the pandemic has led to isolation and loneliness which leads to depression. There was a lengthy discussion on how students can reconnect with teachers. Students feel if you put it in writing it is easier than expressing it in person.

Ms. Chaffee noted there is a feeling of normalcy but also students are in fear that this normalcy is going to go away. They need to be reassured and need consistency to continue this normalcy.

Mr. Bagni spoke about last year having one week of normalcy when the students were in shop in person, however, related classes were virtual and the learning process was much more difficult. Mr. Bagni stated he felt Shawsheen did have a more normal experience as opposed to other schools. He agreed there is an anxiety amongst students and they need to be reassured we are staying in session. Students are feeling anxiety over others getting sick and people not being responsible with wearing their mask.

Ms. Cook asked the group how the staff can be more proactive.

Alexa felt the anxiety amongst students was due to remote learning. She also spoke about academic homework over shop week adding stress.

Mr. Marshall agreed with the anxiety issues and has seen it within the workforce as well.

It was decided to include Homework, Attendance and Make-up Policies on the next agenda. Ms. Cook noted the school council group started to talk about this just prior to COVID. The focus will be on a plan to integrate social and emotional issues. They need to look at the policy and be realistic.

Ms. Cook spoke about student discipline and explained the Diversion Program to the group. The discussion of student discipline will continue at the next meeting.

Adjournment:

Mr. Bagni motioned to adjourn. Mr. Troisi 2nd the motion. All in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.