

EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
December 9, 2020 -- 6:00 P.M.  
VIDEO CONFERENCE (ZOOM)  
MINUTES

- I. **The Chairperson**, Dr. Damary Bonilla, called the Education Programs & Resources Committee Meeting to order at 6:16 P.M. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance, Secretary Jessica Barlotta called for the roll.
- II. **Board Committee Members Present:** Dr. Damary Bonilla, Rebecca Bear, Sharone Glasco, and Debbie Kulick.
- III. **Other Board Members Present:** George Andrews
- IV. **School Personnel Present:** Anthony Calderone, Brian Baddick, Heather Piperato, William Vitulli, William Riker, Jessica Barlotta, Tabitha Bradley, Trenee Lurry, Shahida Jones, and Erin Dreisbach.
- V. **Members of the Public Present:** None
- VI. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE:** Motion was made by Rebecca Bear to approve the agenda for December 9, 2020. Motion was seconded by Sharone Glasco and carried unanimously 4-0.

VII. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE:** Motion was made by Rebecca Bear to approve the minutes from the November 4, 2020 meeting (pages 1-8). Motion was seconded by Debbie Kulick and carried unanimously 4-0.

VIII. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- a. DEI Committee Update - Dr. Vitulli was handed this topic by Dr. Damary Bonilla. He thanked Dr. Bonilla. He also echoed Dr. Bonilla's sentiments regarding Georges service on the committee. Dr. Vitulli said he is kind of new to this. But he does appreciate George's service and is glad to see him still attending the meeting. He also thanked and congratulated Sharone for joining the committee. He expressed that he is excited that she is a part of the committee as well. He then passed the meeting off to Trenee Lurry to let her bring everyone up to date. Trenee greeted everyone with a good evening and expressed that she was happy to be on the committee and to be able to share with everyone some updates for the DEI. She thanked Dr. Bonilla for saying that the DEI Committee is picking up steam. They are now up to 21 members, and increasing and growing. The more people that hear, the more they want to be a part of the group, which is exciting. Heather created an excellent DEI reporting guide that was shared with Dr. Riker which is a place for the DEI team to streamline their goals and be able to track the progress for this year. She did an excellent job with the reporting guide and that is going to help the DEI team continue to stay focused on the path that they are on. They have goals and also have teams within those within the goals that they are going to work together to move forward. They have five teams and they range from school climate to data diving. Those are going to be able to move this work forward. The group started another set of trainings today, cohorts three and four, which were moved virtually together. Because of the virtual component, it allowed us to be able to put together two cohorts. That began today, virtually, and it went very well. They got a lot of good feedback from that people and they are excited about it. It was an interesting way to do it as well. Trenee said it was the first time doing it virtually but she was excited about it. And it's going well, and it's going to continue to go well, so she is glad to be able to be a part of it and be able to share all

that with the Committee. Trenee thanked everyone for allowing her the time to share and wished everyone a good evening. Dr. Bonilla took over and thanked Trenee. She explained that we are also taking the opportunity to share external resources around readings that will help enhance the knowledge and the experience for members of the committee and the broader community, as well as opportunities for webinars and continued training for all members of the committee. There is definitely more ahead. As the subcommittee's start working closer together, the DEI Committee will have more details on the specific projects and how members of the Education Committee might engage, as well as other members of the community who come to these meetings. Dr. Bonilla thanked Trenee for the update, then handed the meeting off to Dr. Vitulli.

- b. Trauma Informed efforts update - Dr. Vitulli thanked Dr. Bonilla. Then he went on to introduce Erin Dreisbach and Shae Jones. They are the district coordinators of social services for secondary and elementary programs respectively. They are going to be providing the Committee with an update of the trauma informed efforts that are part of our district wide initiatives. Dr. Vitulli then turned the meeting over to Erin and Shae. Shae began by saying good evening, welcome, and thanked everyone for being on the meeting to hear us discuss one of our district initiatives as trauma informed schools. Erin and Shae started the trauma informed efforts about 2018, when they were hired as one of their overall goals. They are able to do so thanks to receiving a grant through PCC DEI, that allowed them to provide training for all of the staff members that are administrators, school counselors, and as well as three teachers in each building in the summer of 2019. They created trauma informed cohorts and each of the buildings have a cohort and team that works together on being trauma informed in providing additional resources and trainings to our staff members in those buildings. They also are implementing a new focus in 2020 and 2021. Continuing to use this grant to enact maintenance training for the faculty and staff throughout the year to work on our MTSS, which is the multi-tiered systems support to develop our tier one, tier two and tier three trauma informed interventions for our students, and then also to develop an active multiyear plan, which includes an initial training plan for our faculty and staff members. Shae then turned it over to Erin to finish discussing. Erin started by thanking the Committee. They did create a multi-year plan. And the first year, which is this year, they have training days in place. The goal, and what we will be doing is training all professional staff and understanding trauma. And so we are doing two virtual half days this year. And that is four hours each. Broken up in high school and intermediate. High school already had their first session, and that was December 2, and they will have their next January 6 and then intermediate, as well as elementary will have train dates in January and February. We will also provide educational opportunities to communities and families for a better understanding of trauma. And that will be through our East Stroudsburg Area School District website. By the end of 2025, our goal is to have all staff trained in understanding trauma and how it affects our students. Some of the data that we are collecting for this is discipline data, in-school suspension and out of school suspension data, self-regulation and avoidance infractions. That number of Act 71 referrals, students restrained and student assistance program referrals for all of East Stroudsburg Area School District and that's to help monitor effectiveness and the progress in creating a trauma informed School District. Dr. Bonilla asked if members of the committee have questions. She wanted to know more about the resources for families and when those will be available. Shae responded that they are working on developing those resources. They have some that are available now that we have throughout the community that we have created. And that will get be placed on the district's website shortly. In addition, they are looking into additional resources by connecting within our community, both in Monroe and Pike Counties to provide those resources to all families. Monroe has a heavy amount of resources available to our families. However, they are working with Pike County as well to develop and increase those resources. Erin added that they also have different books that they will put on site in case, parents, families, or committee members want to read a little bit more about understanding trauma. Dr. Bonilla asked if they are planning to have sessions for families, virtual sessions, opportunities to talk about some of the trauma informed issues with them? Shae responded that they are planning to have trainings, eventually having our parents being offered training through our trauma informed initiative, as well as eventually we are looking to have some sessions to work on some of those social emotional types of services that we do offer within our buildings and

understanding, at the elementary level, the mind up and zones language so parents can be working together and getting a team that would be able to also help complete that. Dr. Bonilla thanked her and handed the questions off to Sharone. Sharone asked was the grant targeted directly for the school district or was it open to the greater community? Shae responded that it was a grant that was specific for schools through PCC, DEI. One of the biggest pieces and components that was listed within that grant was the trauma informed schools. Now Governor Wolf has initiated a trauma informed school initiative, as well as a common language which we have provided to the trainer, Dr. Sadan, to be able to make sure that we're linking up the language of the state, within our school systems as well. Rebecca wanted to know if we are looking at our trauma informed training and how we can identify things that we might not see right in front of our faces anymore, because of the virtual learning. Are there skills being taught to our ESACA teachers, and now our brick and mortar teachers that are doing virtual? Are those skills being taught to identify triggers or signs that you might not normally see in school, but may now see different behaviors at home? Erin responded that Dr. Melissa Sadan is absolutely taking the pandemic and looking at that as a trauma informed aspect. The first training is more of identifying trauma and what that looks like, which again goes into you know, learning from home is doing more interventions, not only within the school classroom, but also online as well. Shae also commented that we were able to look at a universal screener in elementary and really help identify some of those students that are struggling more that we might not have necessarily identified prior to, just by answering some questions about each student. So that's really helped us with identifying those kids that we may not necessarily see because it is very different virtually, versus being in school. So it really does help us see all students and that's the big piece is that trauma can look very differently from one person to the next. And so we want to make sure that we're meeting the needs of all kids. Sharone pointed out that she thinks it's so important to share the information as much as you can on the district website. So that it can get in the hands of our parents who are primarily with students at home during COVID, so any information that could be shared would be so grateful from a parent's perspective. Dr. Bonilla commented that Sharone is right because in the conversations we've been having this year, we've been talking about this experience as trauma, because of the sudden change of the expectations, all of the short notice changes that families and children have experienced. So we are counting that as trauma. One of the things Dr. Bonilla suggested, and it's following up on Sharone's comments about making the information accessible is, are we going to have some kind of informational, email, maybe video? We talk often about communicating with families and the importance of having diverse opportunities to share the information, so is there a plan to send out a communication, in explaining that we are considering the pandemic as trauma and that we are taking these measures and we want to support families in this way? Shae responded that we can absolutely do something like that and she took a note of it. Dr. Bonilla said to Shae and Erin to keep in mind that they are here to help them. Sharone is in higher education. Dr. Bonilla has been in youth development and leadership development. They are also parents, so they are always talking about their own kids experience as a lens. They are also connected in the community. So they might know some of those organizations offhand. Rebecca pointed out that she agreed with Dr. Bonilla and the more information we give our families the better. Mr. Baddick added that one of the big initiatives that they had in the Pupil Service Department is looking at their department portion of the website, and that included looking at the central office location, and also looking at the route the district with the school counselors are putting up. And also, for example, like our nurses who have included a lot of information, the last several months, along with the school counselors. The school counselors did a wonderful job in working and putting a lot of resources up via working with Erin and Shae. They put a lot of information out last, from the March through June window. They are constantly updating that information with the counselors and the nurses, who are actually doing a lot of outreach right now. They learned a lot from the last closure during the pandemic, so they are constantly doing a lot of updates on our websites. Mr. Baddick thinks the videos are a great idea in doing and doing some of those as outreach goes. They are constantly looking to see in terms of the resource posting out there. Erin and Shae have done a really nice job to pull in as much of the resources and post that out there, just to remind our families, our parents, our caregivers out there, you know what is on our website. And we've done a really good job of transition into the virtual. They have also done a great job letting parents know that even though we're in the

virtual period right now, that the services that we provided in the brick and mortar has not stopped. Shae explained that the district is continuing the services with IU 20 social workers to provide individual and group counseling, or therapy. The district has our school counselors continuing to meet with students to provide counseling to them as well as our MTSS teams working on check in check out with our students making sure that we are meeting their needs. Our school counselors are continuing to run their second step program, which is their social emotional learning program that they have for the last several years that they've been using. So we've continue at elementary to utilize those services. Dr. Bonilla commented that she thinks that is fabulous. And that's the kind of information that we want families to have because there's some anxiety around what is still going to be available when we go virtual. We have seen some of that in our public meetings in the comments and people asking questions, particularly students with special needs and those that are still on the spectrum and/or undiagnosed. Dr. Bonilla shared that her family has benefited from the support of their school guidance counselor and the resources that she's shared in the specials section of the Google Classroom. Dr. Bonilla pointed out that she does not know that everybody knows what information is there because it is overwhelming. So if the families don't know the resources, they may not be able to support their students. She commented that anything we can do by video, even if just a reminder, we should certainly do so. We have received really good feedback about Dr. Riker's videos. People can connect to them and there is a people factor when they hear you sharing the resources versus reading it all the time. And as she mentioned, frequently, we have community members who are illiterate or who don't speak or read the language, and we want them to access the information as well. Dr. Bonilla thanked everyone, again, for everything that they are doing. She then asked George if he had any questions. George stated that he did not have any questions to ask today. He was just here to learn. He did ask about joining a committee and what ones he could join. Dr. Bonilla responded that you can join us if you want. You can join us as a board observer. And if you want to join one of the subcommittee's and be part of that, we can connect you by email. Dr. Bonilla said she will connect George to Trenee by email. And this way she can share which are the various subcommittees that we have. And George can let her know what's of the most interest. Dr. Bonilla mentioned that this is something she thinks is important: to have individuals that are committing to work on specific areas as the subcommittees are working committees. But then we are also going to have quarterly meetings for individuals who want to be engaged and know what's going on so that they can plug in at different times, but do not have the time or the bandwidth to engage in a working committee. So there are opportunities for somebody who says 'I want to know what's going on, because I might be able to make a connection somewhere', or 'I might be able to help with a specific part of the work, but I can't commit fully'. And then there are working committees for individuals who have some more time and availability for ongoing work. She wanted to make that clarification, as people are considering what they might be able to contribute. Dr. Bonilla asked if any committee members have any more comments or questions whether on the DEI update or the trauma informed efforts? There were no additional questions about this topic. Dr. Bonilla added that she did want to add that she appreciates that Shae talked about her work with the partnership with IU. She was actually missing Executive Session because there's an IU meeting tonight. Right before the pandemic, Dr. Bonilla spent half a day there and wanted to have a session for families and our community to be able to ask questions and engage with IU staff and resources there to know what is available because she finds that some families don't know everything that is at the IU. Dr. Bonilla would love to follow up on that with Shae to discuss a virtual visit to IU for families to see what all is offered through it. The other area Dr. Bonilla mentioned is having our DEI Committee engaged in some way. And maybe it's one of our subcommittees that does it. We do have to consider the cultural diversity that's missing on our team, to make sure that we're taking into consideration some of those cultural nuances, not just the language barriers, but a lot of other areas that have impacted families during this time. Dr. Riker can help guide some of that, in terms of how to connect the work that the DEI Committee is doing to additionally support Shae and Erin in this work and be sure that we were considering widely the nuances and how we're supporting our families, because that goes into the communication aspects as well. Erin mentioned that they are meeting once a week and that is where any student with a concern funnels into when the teams meet. They also have a Victims Intervention Program, as well as Women's Resource Center who are meeting with students.

The Victim's Intervention Program is North Campus and Women's Resource Center is South Campus. They are currently meeting virtually. We also have drug and alcohol; who are coming into each of the secondary buildings. They are providing some individual sessions with students as well as mostly groups. Not only for mental health, but also that prevention piece for drugs and alcohol. We also have the high school self-clinic run by colonial intermediate unit. Up at North Campus, we have Preventive Measures, and they're providing clinical services for both Lehman and High School North, as well as Shae mentioned, we have our IU social workers who are meeting with each building with students and we also have the alternatives to Educate Expulsion Program. Dr. Bonilla asked if the Victims Intervention and Women's Resources part of the weekly meeting? Are they talking? Are they having the same discussions or are they each doing their own thing at each of the campuses? Erin said they are sister programs so they have some communication. However, they are two different agencies. They work with any student who has had trauma and provide crisis counseling for that student. They also, at the elementary level, do different classroom educational groups in prevention of child abuse and trauma. Dr. Bonilla clarified that the question is coming from the notion that we want to ensure that the experiences are equitable at both of our campuses and that students have the same opportunities, resources, conversations, etc. Shae responded that they are equitable resources. Heather Piperato asked if she could comment. She commented that one of the benefits of having a SAP team around for a long time is that they have a really good checklist on the health of the SAP team itself. They ask important questions around self-reflections and how they have done for the year. She suggested there is an opportunity to borrow that and bring it to the DEI Committee. Have the Committee reflect on what makes a good committee and practice every year to make sure we are capturing those things that Dr. Bonilla was saying such as the diversity and the voices that need to be at the table. Her other thought was how many families are conveying the full information to additional third party care-givers such as grandparents that may be out of the loop of the emails of information dissemination we provide to the first party family members. She suggested Erin and Shae can reflect on this in the upcoming weeks. Dr. Bonilla said that Heather was right on whether those are some of the considerations and that was what Dr. Bonilla was referring to because there are diverse experiences amongst our families in the district. She thanked Heather for thinking about that and providing the partnership. Tabitha added that Dr. Vitulli added virtual learning tools to our webpage and we do have an elementary care givers form about three quarters of the way down that page for any caregiver who needs assistance with Google Classroom, Google Meet, Reading Wonders, and Go Math. The form is being monitored by our instructional and technology Coaches at the elementary level and the care giver just picks a time to receive assistance, as well as providing their contact information. The coaches instantly get an email and they reach out to any family who needs real time support. Anything technology goes through the technology department and there's a separate place to get that help. But we have a live forum right now on that webpage. For anyone who needs support we'll reach right back out to them during the time that they request and try to provide that one on one support for them. Dr. Bonilla thanked Dr. Bradley and thanked her for also co-presenting with the United Nations. She also went on to back what Heather was saying that for families, it can be very difficult to manage the emails and school information while maintaining other every day emails. She then asked if there were any other further questions and there were none.

- c. Dates for 2021 Meetings - Dr. Bonilla opened this topic up with the fact that all the committee members should have in their packet, the dates and hopefully everyone had an opportunity to review them. The dates are the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm. She then asked if anybody had any comments? conflicts? No one had any.

<p><b>ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE:</b> Sharone moved to accept the meeting dates as listed. Motion was seconded by Debbie Kulick and carried unanimously 4-0.</p>
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**IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Dr. Bonilla opened the meeting for Public participation for any comments or questions. There were none on this evening.

## X. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. 2nd Step Bullying Prevention - Dr. Bonilla handed the presentation of this topic to Dr. Vitulli. Dr. Vitulli thanked Dr. Bonilla. The request is for the one time purchase of the Second Step Bullying Prevention text kits for elementary programs. Currently, all the elementary schools do utilize second step, the social, emotional curriculum, and it's provided to our students through our school counselors, as part of an in-class lesson. Also part of our requirements is to teach the kids about online bullying, prevention, and bullying prevention in general. But we didn't have and do not have any solid resources in any of the schools and so the school counselors have found themselves kind of reaching out and finding various things online and coming up with a selection of resources. So Shae came forward to request that we purchase this one again, a one-time purchase of text sets for each elementary school to be utilized in the presentation of that bullying prevention curriculum. At each elementary school, it's just a little bit over \$5,000 and the money will come from PCCD grant. Dr. Vitulli gave Shae the opportunity to speak if she has anything to add. Shae said she did not at this time. However, she did want to reiterate that the money does come from a grant and they have been using what they have been putting together for their own anti-bullying program. This program purchase would allow for cohesiveness across each building and consistency as we know we have six different elementary schools but we also have a very transient population of students who can move one to two to three elementary schools in one year within our districts. We want to make sure that they are all receiving the same information so we can keep a consistent language as well. For example, a student could go from Resica to Bushkill, to Middle Smithfield in one school year and we want to ensure our language is consistent especially when it comes to the anti-bullying scenario. With that in mind, the grant will only afford us ordering five not six, so the purchase for the last school building is built into our pupil services budget for next year, which gives enough time to make the purchase from the budget, as the programs will not be used until October which is anti-bullying month. Dr. Bonilla asked if everybody will have access at the same time under the plan to purchase one through the pupil services budget? Shae responded that yes, they will, because it's a kit for grades K through five. And it stays within that same second step program that we already are utilizing. So each grade level would have access to the kit that the school counselors would push into the classrooms, or provide virtually depending on where we are next October. Shae responded that it is a one-time purchase that we read, and they provide us updated information. Because we also utilize the second step program, they send us content to access for the online piece, as well. Dr. Bonilla asked if there is a training component for those that are going to be using it? Or how do we plan to train everybody? Shae answered that it will be the school counselors that will be using the product and there is training that is available to those that will be using the program. They will be able to do that training over the summer, during one of their summer days or at some point during their in service to be able to learn how to use the Second Step Bullying Prevention Program. Dr. Bonilla asked if any members of the committee have questions about the proposal. Rebecca Bear asked if we are using a similar program one right now? Shae responded that yes, we currently use the second step program, but we don't have the bullying prevention add on. Eventually the bullying prevention became an add on that they created. And so we don't have that program which is why we are proposing to purchase it. Rebecca then asked what exactly does the current second step program do for us? Shae answered that it is a social emotional learning program, so it helps with understanding empathy, helping a different year, different peers' friendships, and relationship building. Rebecca asked if we have had success with what we have so far and if we are going to enhance what is already working well? Shae responded that It is and the school counselors really like doing it. The kids look forward to the lessons the school counselors push in once a six-day cycle to provide those lessons to them. The students can also go back in. So if they are seeing a class where bullying becomes more prevalent, that school counselor can then reiterate that information by going over through the kit that we have and providing it to the students. Rebecca asked how long have we been using second step? Shae answered that she believes it was six years ago, however it was prior to her start. She spoke with someone in the department and he said it's about six years that we have used it for elementary. Dr. Vitulli pointed out that, he, as an elementary principal, remembered his first year using it. It has always been a very good program. Well-received, easy to easy to follow, easy to provide, and highly

scripted, but it gets good results. Rebecca commented that she was just wondering because her kids are not in elementary school anymore. So she did not know how long we have been using the program. Shae pointed out that Rebecca had great questions. And that yes, it is highly scripted and easy and user friendly. Anyone, including Rebecca, would be able to pick up the book and go through a second step lesson, without a problem. Dr. Bonilla mentioned that the videos are good. They have stories that they have on videos for virtual learning. They have stories about making friends, if you're the new kid, and you don't know anybody. They also have questions for the kids. Dr. Bonilla said her kids like it and they enjoy when Miss Castile comes in and does the lesson. There were no more questions after this and the motion was moved.

**ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE:** The motion to forward the 2nd Step Bullying Prevention to the Finance Committee was made by Rebecca Bear. The motion was seconded by Debbie Kulick and carried unanimously 4-0.

Dr. Bonilla announced that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13. At 7pm according to the dates that were just confirmed. She asked if there were any comments or any questions? There were no further questions.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Dr. Damary Bonilla asked for a motion to adjourn at 7:03 p.m.

**ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE:** Motion to adjourn was made by Debbie Kulick. Motion was seconded by Rebecca Bear and carried unanimously 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Barlotta  
Committee Secretary