

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
April 12, 2023
VIA Zoom
7:00 P.M.
Minutes**

I. The Chairperson, Dr. Damary Bonilla, called the Education Programs & Resources Committee meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Devyn Kolcun called the roll.

II. Board Committee Members Present: Dr. Damary Bonilla, Debbie Kulick, Jason Gullstrand, Rebecca Bear

III. School Personnel Present: William Vitulli, William Riker, Shae Jones, Erin Dreisbach, Heather Piperato, Trenee Lurry, Eric Forsyth, Rebecca Lopez, Carissa Johnson, Heather Hill, Kristen Long, Nichole Benedict, Shelby Slinger, Devyn Kolcun

IV. Community Members Present: Seth Gordon, Stacey Forsyth, Mayra Sequen, John Gerhardt, Salvatore Lapadula

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE: Dr. Bonilla asked for a motion to approve the agenda for April 12, 2023 with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action in the best interest of the District. A motion was made by Jason Gullstrand and Rebecca Bear seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion was made by Jason Gullstrand and seconded by Rebecca Bear to approve the minutes for the March 8, 2023 meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

VI. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a. BE ALLiance Update - Trenee Lurry

Trenee Lurry starts her update with giving the observances that happen within the month of April. These include: Diversity Month, Autism Acceptance Month, Deaf History Month, Child Abuse Awareness Month, and Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Mrs. Lurry continues with dates that are also observed within the month of April. These include: World Autism Awareness Day, Passover, Easter, Day of Silence, The conclusion of Ramadan, and Earth Day. Trenee Lurry concludes that this month's Coffee Chat will highlight opening and understanding classroom libraries and opening them up to be more diverse. Dr. Bonilla adds that the Women's Resources of Monroe County held a walk to honor Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Dr. Bonilla adds to keep sending Trenee observances to be added if any are missed.

**Presentation available by going onto esasd.net

b. Communications Update - Eric Forsyth, Carissa Johnson, Rebecca Lopez

Eric Forsyth starts the update with some information on what they are currently working on and what updates they will be providing tonight. Mr. Forsyth goes on to explain the communications audit that they had showed that it was important to not only communicate to the community but also within the school district to the staff. Mr. Forsyth shares that Carissa Johnson will be going over the Google Classroom that they created to help staff with standard operating procedures and training information that they need through all different classifications. Ms. Johnson starts by sharing information about the LMS Training classroom and the SIS Resources classroom and walks us through each topic that they have added to help out staff. Mr. Forsyth adds that the users are able to comment on the training to inform if something has changed so then they can go in and fix what is needed. He also adds that they are working with other departments to get any information that they feel will be helpful onto the classroom. Dr. Bonilla shares that she likes all the visuals and all the topics that have been added as it looks very user friendly. Rebecca Bear would like to know if a staff member believes something should be added to the Google Classroom would they be able to reach out to Ms. Johnson and collaborate to get it added. Ms. Johnson responds that they would be able to as this is how she was able to start the classroom because she took all the questions she was receiving from staff and now she is able to send the how to guides or FAQs to help staff out. Debbie Kulick would like to know if someone who is looking at this classroom and is still having trouble understanding the guide is there a specific person they would be able to contact to help them out still. Mr. Forsyth responds that Carissa Johnson is that person who would be able to help out if someone still needs it. Jason Gullstrand adds that he appreciates all the work going into making the Google Classroom. Mr. Gullstrand also would like to know when creating them were invites sent out to the related departments or were they having to find them on their own. Ms. Johnson responds that when they originally created the classroom they did send out emails that provided whichever department they were in to add themselves to it. Rebecca Lopez starts with an update on the changing of the website which has been put on pause as blackboard is changing over to Final Site. Ms. Lopez adds that this will push the launch of the new website to the Fall instead of the Summer. Rebecca Lopez then goes on to explain they have started work with District branding meaning that when anyone sees the logo they will know it is our district. Ms. Lopez also explains that they are currently working on getting merchandise that has our district brand on it so they can hand them out at career fairs and events. She goes on to add that they currently have a meeting set up with Steve Zall to go over having a Now Hiring campaign and a Register Now campaign for the 23-24 school year. This would help the community, especially those who have recently moved into the area be able to see what is available. Dr. Bonilla shares that it is great to have these updates for the district and the community so that all can be on the same page. Dr. Bonilla also adds that she enjoys the branding of the school district since it looks very professional and that will in turn hopefully attract people with the same level of professionalism. Jason Gullstrand shares that he likes being able to see the branding as well and being able to see it at Millersville with Steve Zall also shows that everything shows the pride of the district and he appreciates it. Rebecca Bear shares that she is excited for the website change and that it will be more consistent than it is now within all the schools. Debbie Kulick adds that she is happy that we are looking at old school ways to advertise like billboards for hiring and registering as that is how most people will be able to see what is going on in our district. Ms. Kulick also adds that as we are developing all the uniform things for the website the schools should also add in and create its own culture as well.

****Presentation available by going onto esasd.net**

c. BCBA's Role - Shae Jones

Shae Jones starts by explaining what the BCBA's roles are and who they are. These BCBA's are mainly elementary but so support secondary schools as needed. The two BCBA's in this role are Shelby Slinger and Nichole Benedict. Ms. Benedict and Ms. Slinger start their presentation by sharing some information about themselves. Nichole Benedict goes over some of the job duties that they both will perform in these roles with the district. Some of these include: Conducting FBA for the evaluation or reevaluation reports, providing classroom or student consultations within special education, behavior skills training, etc. Shelby Slinger goes over what exactly a FBA is which stands for Functional Behavioral Assessment which is a

process for identifying problem behaviors and developing interventions to improve or eliminate those behaviors. Ms. Slinger also goes over the steps that they take in their roles with a FBA. Dr. Bonilla expresses she would like both Ms. Slinger and Ms. Benedict to come back another month to share more as it is important for the community to be able to hear. Dr. Bonilla also shares that she loves the idea of the additional support with them and the teachers and would like to see and hear how that relationship works. Nicole Benedict responds that they have developed some really good relationships within the rooms and being able to grow the relationships with their help. Ms. Slinger also shares that it is helpful to build those relationships with them because they are in there for close to five times and able to model how to do these roles with FBA. Shae Jones also adds that when they do have a really good written FBA they tend to see the behaviors that they are originally seeing greatly reduce or go completely extinct. Ms. Jones also shares that these roles with the teachers does not end when the FBA is completed; they continue that relationship with the BCBA as they spend a lot of time in the buildings. Kristen Long also shares that sometimes behavior is a huge barrier to learning and being able to have the BCBA's have a relationship with the teachers and support staff is amazing. Debbie Kulick believes that this is a vital position and is happy that they are building these relationships with the teachers and gives thanks to Ms. Slinger and Ms. Benedict for what they do. Rebecca Bear would like to know if these roles are part of identifying and testing of children who may be identified as somebody with a need or to help identify. Ms. Benedict responds that this role does not do that as the FBA is part of the evaluation process and if they know a student has behaviors that might be impacting their learning that is when the school psychologist would add an FBA into the evaluation. Jason Gullstrand adds that this is what he loves about this committee because it brings the community the programs and the individuals behind them who perform those functions within the district that often go unnoticed.

**Presentation available by going onto esasd.net

d. ELA Data Review - Dr. Vitulli

Dr. Vitulli starts a presentation on some of the data that they have collected with the ELA. This data is collected from grades 3-5. Dr. Vitulli shares that East Stroudsburg was nationally recognized at a summit with HMH where the district was front and center for our results. The first slide in the presentation provides mid-year information from the reading series that the district uses which is Into Reading. With this data Dr. Vitulli goes on to express that so far all the elementary schools have shown growth overall and that we have reduced the number of students that were two grade levels below their actual grade level from 25% to 15%. Along with HMH data they were able to pull data from NWEA, which included our district growth data that grew in every grade except one from Fall to Winter. Dr. Bonilla shares that she loves getting the feedback from this data as she is able to see what is working and what isn't working. Debbie Kulick adds that she loves being able to see the progress and appreciates being able to see that as a district we are taking terrific strides. Ms. Kulick would also like to see the data and growth publicly acknowledged somehow or are we waiting for a specific time. Dr. Vitulli responds that it is preferred once we get all the data at the end of the school year from grades K-5 to present it at that time publicly. Debbie Kulick also adds that she would like Eric Forsyth to have that information as well to be able to post it in multiple places since it was highlighted nationally as it would be something even the parents and guardians can be proud of. Jason Gullstrand would like to know if there is enough data or if we have enough data to be able to see sustained growth in these students. Dr. Vitulli believes that it would all come together once they get the data for the whole year for all the grade levels. Mr. Gullstrand expresses that he would like to see sustainability in the groups that they are getting the data from instead of it being just the grade levels. Dr. Vitulli responds that they can look into bringing in the pilots who ran the classes last year and bringing in some of the same students as well to see a comparison from last year to this year. Dr. Vitulli would like to take a moment to recognize Dr. Bradley and all the teachers who have put forth a tremendous effort with the new program.

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e. A2E - Program Review - Erin Dreisbach & Heather Hill

Erin Dreisbach starts the presentation by introducing herself and Heather Hill. Ms. Dreisbach goes into the background of why the A2E program was created. She begins to share that there were no alternatives to expulsions and that is what this program was made to do. This program was created for students to have the opportunity to grow, learn, and restore relationships between schools and family and being able to return the students to school more quickly. Heather Hill shares the steps that the A2E program takes when setting students up for this program. Ms. Dreisbach shares that the program takes nine sessions to be able to complete. Ms. Hill provides information on how these groups of students come together and what topics they look at with the students and discussions that they have together. Erin Dreisbach shares some of the success of the program that A2E has brought to the district. Ms. Dreisbach shares data from students who have been in the A2E program and have succeeded through the program vs. not. Dr. Bonilla shares that this position with A2E started off as an external partnership but then became an investment and was brought to the board and administration so they can move this from external to internal. She also shares that Heather Hill was able to have the training to be able to do this program which is a very unique training and just wanted to highlight the importance of this. Debbie Kulick would like to know more information on Heather Hill's background and some of the meanings behind what the acronyms are so families and community watching understand what they are. Ms. Kulick also adds that this type of program does help students and families and will help in the long run and prevent what could happen. Ms. Hill provides information on her background which includes that she was a graduate in the district and has kids within the district. She also shares that she thinks often that that is very important as she will think about how she was treated and how she wants her children to be treated as well. Ms. Hill also shares that her first professional job was being a caseworker which was a difficult job but it gave her the opportunity and prepared her for where she is at now. She also adds that the connection she has with the students is as strong with the parents and guardians as well. Rebecca Bear shares that this program is very important to her as she has worked with at risk children as well. Ms. Bear also shares that it does break her heart to sit in expulsion hearings and listen to what makes these students do what they did and it makes you want to be able to help them with this program. Rebecca Bear would also like to know how this program is presented to the students and guardians and how we are promoting this program within the district to those kids who need it. Heather Hill responds that as they move forward they do want to look at it as more of a preventative piece instead of reactionary. Erin Dreisbach shares that trend wise she does see from when this program started to now that they do have a lot of participants that have done A2E. Dr. Vitulli adds that about 70% have completed A2E and would like to share the passion that Heather Hill has for this program and the students and guardians. Dr. Vitulli addresses that if the students and guardians sign up and participate in this program their time on expulsion is reduced. He adds if they sign up for the program and then end up not participating in the program they must serve their whole expulsion process. Rebecca Bear would like to know if this would show up on their record that they participated in this program. Dr. Vitulli responds that this program does not show up anywhere on their record and disciplinary information is never shared on their record even if the student transferred schools. Dr. Bonilla would like to add a follow up conversation to have a more in depth conversation with this program and its data. Jason Gullstrand adds that he did use to work with students who didn't make the best life choices and have worked with similar programs like A2E. Mr. Gullstrand adds that getting the students to be able to learn and grow instead of just shortening their term of expulsion is commendable.

****Presentation made available by going onto esasd.net**

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIMITED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Dr. Bonilla opens up the meeting to public discussion. There are no questions or comments from the public.

VIII. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- a. Independent Contractor Agreement - Flintface, LLC - \$1,000.00 (VIII.a.)
- b. Independent Contractor Agreement - Hitech Instruments, Inc. - \$7,000.00 (VIII.b.)

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion to move item A and B to the Board of Education was made by Jason Gullstrand and seconded by Rebecca Bear. The motion was carried unanimously.

IX. NEXT MEETING - May 10, 2023

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE: Motion to adjourn was made by Debbie Kulick and seconded by Jason Gullstrand. The motion was carried unanimously.

X. ADJOURNMENT: 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Devyn Kolcun