

School Council Meeting #6 Minutes: February 23, 2021

In attendance: John Smith, Ann Dever-Keegan, Nicole Kepnes, Michael Jaffe, Donna Strouse, John Lin, John Soragan, Amal Sharfi, Sterling Williams, Liza Birmingham, Lilly Caplan, and Emily Waugh

Start of Meeting Procedure

1. Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. All members were introduced.
3. The new members were introduced.

Review of January Minutes

- The school committee is now in the process of determining the superintendent for the next school year.
- Many guidance counselors have received their 2nd Covid-19 vaccination.
- Disinfectant wipes and spray are the supplies now being used to sanitize classrooms.

School Update: 4 Day In-Person Learning - John Smith

- A plan is being developed to potentially return high schoolers to four in-person days starting April 5th.
- Students would be in person on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and remain using the current schedule.
- The lunch time would be cut into two waves with a staggered dismissal system. The waves would include a combination of underclassmen and upperclassmen (for instance, Freshmen paired with Juniors) to reduce the number of students going into the cafeteria at a time.
- The school committee must permit Juniors to opt into signing out at lunch time to reduce the number of students in eating areas.
- Some rooms in the high school that were being used for storage have been cleared out to provide more classroom spaces inside. Some room changes would be made to accommodate for overlapping room use.
- Students would be transitioned to each class based on wing location.
- In the coming weeks a "Frequently Asked Questions" will be distributed to inform students and parents of this potential change.
- Families will still have the option of full-remote learning.

Student Handbook Update - Ann Dever Keegan

- Some changes will be made to the student handbook for next year to reflect the new school start time.
- New language and policies surrounding cheating and plagiarism will be made.
- The "Headmaster" and "Assistant Headmaster" titles will be changed to "Principal" and "Assistant Principal."

Social Media and Communication for Activities

- Students reported a variety of communication methods including GroupMe, Remind, Facebook, Google Classroom, text messages, and emails.
- Google Classroom has been a good option for user-friendly communication between leaders and members of sports, clubs, and other activities.

GPA Discussion

- A student and parent/guardian survey will be sent out to receive community feedback.
- The Needham student and parent/guardian survey serves as a good template for our survey.
- Parents and students in the DS community may not entirely understand the function of GPA in the college application process. The survey and a potential information session would serve to clarify how GPA is used by colleges.

Student Feedback

- Some students were hesitant while some preferred the idea of four days of in-person learning.
- Concerns about the shift to four days in-person include the remote student experience worsening and how the shift could disrupt routines.
- Positive aspects of the shift to four days in-person include supporting students who struggle with the remote system and learning from home.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 22nd, 2021