

Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Focus Group Results



February 7, 2017

Topics Discussed

- Social and Emotional Climate
- Counseling, Psychological and Social Services
- Physical Education and Physical Activity
- Health Education and Nutrition Environment & Services

Focus Group Meetings

- Participating Groups: Spanish-Speaking Parents; Staff (all groups)

Themes:

- Culture where all students, staff, and parents feel valued/recognized through aesthetics, design, music, and behavioral norms
- Safe environment (inclusive, valuing equality) through closer partnership/collaboration between Admin, Classified, Certified and Parents in support of students
- Place to get support (new parents, non-speaking families)

Suggested Future Actions:

- Deploy a Social and Emotional curriculum for students through all grades & programs for parents and staff
- Foster a culture of understanding, acceptance and collaboration through job shadowing for staff
- Engage parents more so they can provide more support to students in ES during recess, at lunch, etc., when students practice their social and emotional skills
- Offer translations services to non-English speaking families
- Offer special support/services for newcomers and transitioning students/families

Focus Group Meetings

- Participating Groups: HS Students, MS Parents, HS Parents

Themes:

- Counselors focused on academic scheduling, not mental health
- Students/parents do not fully understand what counseling assistance is available beyond assisting students with what classes they need in order to graduate
- Extracurricular activities encourage students to be involved in their school, enable students to feel excitement about being at school
- Parental opportunities to be involved with the school decreases as their children get older
- Students want to better understand what mental health issues look like and feel like in themselves and others and how to help/get help

Suggested Future Actions:

- Start high school later
- Increase funding for dedicated mental health providers at the schools
- Provide administrative assistance (interns, volunteers, paid staff) to counselors for class schedule input and appointment maintenance to free time for hands-on counseling
- Increase extracurricular activities offered by either teachers/parents/volunteers to encourage engagement and create connections
- Educate parents and students on career paths and class choices/resources available to accomplish career path earlier (middle school & 9th grade)

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

Focus Group Meetings

- Participating Groups: MS Parents, ES Parents

Themes:

- Balance physical activity with academics by having physical activity be a part of all classes
- Focus more on teaching lifelong sports/activities and physical activity as a way of life
- Questionable drop off in availability of physical education and physical activity programs like Middle School sports in Middle School. Lower-income families can't afford Club sports in MS so that once they get to HS they can't compete with their higher income peers, creating inequality
- Test physical skills and knowledge progress; incorporate goal setting into curriculum beginning in elementary school

Suggested Future Actions:

- Look at internal resources for the development of Physical Education programming (Kathy Hogan - outstanding teacher to shadow/videotape/lead PD).
- Offer choices/adaptations in Physical Education classes for Middle School students (i.e. lower, medium, and high ability levels)
- Utilize community partner programs (i.e. Soccer for Success) and parents for coaching assistance
- Involve parents to support PE & Physical Activity after school
- Educate parents and staff on the benefits of physical activity on test scores

Physical Education and Physical Activity

Focus Group Meetings

- Participating Groups: ES Parents

Themes:

- Address health in a whole child view, ensuring all activities align and support each other to create and/or improve a culture of wellness
- Ensure students have access to food (especially breakfast) and time to eat
- Make nutrition attractive and interesting (taste, variety, hands on)

Suggested Future Actions:

- Offer free breakfast to students who need it
- Provide at least 15 minutes to ES students to eat lunch, from the time the last child sits down
- Allow all students to wash hands prior to having lunch
- Set proper scheduling of snacks and lunch intervals so that ES students have chance to eat every two hours
- Develop a nutrition curriculum and provide cooking classes
- At school, offer variety of healthy, tasty options (ex: fruit that has taste and is ripe)



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