

Coffee with the Executive Director

Wednesday March 18, 2020

12:00 p.m. -12:37 p.m.

English Meeting Minutes

Staff present: Danielle Benson, Mercedes Alonso, Dr, Shirley Moux, Mayara Costa, Wilma Almonte, George Schaab, Lisa Flynn

Mercedes opens the meeting at 12:05 p.m. The phone call will close at 12:30 p.m. There is a group chat to the right of the screen. If there are any questions, please type your questions, concerns, on that chat and they will be addressed along with the other Administrative Team Members.

Mercedes welcomes all to the call. Reminder that this is the first of multiple calls that will be happening over the next few weeks while the school is closed.

Late on Friday, close to 3:30-4:00 p.m., AAACS got news from the Delaware Charter Network that Gov. Carney would be sending out his declaration that public schools would be closing in Delaware. It was asked of school leaders to hold off on information to parents and staff until after he made his declaration. On some level, as a school, we were not able to manage the time as we were being directed by the Director of the Charter School Network, Kendall Massett. Immediately, the information was put out on social platforms to get everyone on the same page.

Someone is not on mute. An ask is made to please remain muted as it creates background news when you are unmuted.

Saturday and Sunday went by and information was continually shared with AAACS around what the next few weeks would look like. In terms of what it would like look at the local level.

Yesterday was the first time AAACS's Admin Team was able to come together to plan around how we would move forward in the next two week.

Dr. Shirley is unmuted to share decisions around the academic decisions because she is at the helm of it with the guidance of her teachers and her team. She is going to share the resources for parents and where they can be located.

Dr. Shirley unmutes.

Dr. Shirley reminds that according to the state all academic plans are optional. We have posted on our site an optional schedule. Kids will have access to online learning through Imagine Learning and Dreambox. Students have been working on these all years. If they do not know how to access, there is a letter with directions posted. There is also a suggested calendar posted. There are resources for students to get active with Phys. Ed, Capoeira, Art, and Stem. One of the reasons we have posted this type of information is that we have to be careful around not violating our Terms of Usage. We must also be conscientious that not all parents have access to technology. For that reason, we have provided resources such as Epic and Starfall, which can be used on the phones. There are also resources that can be printed, but if you cannot print, do not worry. These are all optional. There are resources in Spanish and English. We will continue to update the resources. They are available of our Facebook page and our website as well. Teachers continue to share resources and we will share what is appropriate. We are screening all information and resources to ensure that you will have access to things that are free and easily accessible. They are optional.

Mercedes asks that Dr. Shirley mute and reminder that there will be a time for parents' questions.

Mercedes opens up to Wilma Almonte in regards to basic needs and the efforts that have been made on behalf of our students and families in need.

Wilma greets the group. As of today, AAACS has been able to work with the Nutrition Manager and the Food Bank of Delaware to deliver food boxes and personal care kits to some of our families. Our Family Crisis Therapist also continues to work with her families. We are sharing information about where grab and go meals are available. There have been at least 26 families that have received their food boxes as of today.

Mercedes thanks Wilma for sharing.

Mercedes notes George Schaab, Director of Operations. He has been working on the home front to ensure the cleanliness of our school in the absence of students and staff being there. There is a tremendous effort being made to ensure that when we reopen we will have the cleanest facility as possible. Fernando, our Facilities Manager, and George work hard on a daily basis so the task has been manageable. It is going well.

Mercedes opens to parents to share concerns, make suggestions, ask questions. Reminds those present that the Director of Communication is on the call and open to suggestions from parents around communication. Questions can be typed or you can unmute yourself and ask your questions. The Admin Team will respond.

Parent Question: I am a parent of a 1st grader. He does not have a tablet, but he does have a Smartphone. His tablet will be here on Friday. The links on Dojo are not clickable. I was able to print because I have a printer, but the links are accessible. How can parents click on those links if they do not have access to it? I would like to be able to access through Dojo.

Dr. Shirley shares. You will have to copy the link and go to Chrome. Download Chrome.

Parent: When I click on the link in the link, I am not able to click it and I am not able to copy and paste it.

Mayara shares that sometimes it comes through as text and you are not able to click on it. I would advise you to go to the school website and click it straight from there. It is in the Parent Portal.

Parent confirms, go to the website and follow the prompts on the website.

Mayara shares that the only other way to do it would be to type it exactly as it is seen, but that is time consuming. Reminds the Team that all information that is shared on Dojo is shared on the Parent Portal as well.

Student shares a question on her Mom's behalf because her Mom does not speak English. She is requesting the link for Imagine Learning.

Dr. Shirley shares that on your tablet or computer you need to type Imagine Learning and click on your Student Log on.

Student asks to share it on Dojo.

Dr. Shirley asks who is her teacher so that she can ask the teacher to share it.

Student shares that it is Mr. Perez.

Dr. Shirley shares that if you type Imagine Learning Student Log In, it will take you directly to where you can log in, exactly how you log in at school. On the website, there is also a letter that explains how to log in. You can also contact the phone number on letter if you need further assistance. But, the information will also be shared via Class Dojo through the teachers.

Parent Questions: In regards to Dreambox and Imagine Learning, is there a Spanish option in those apps.

Dr. Shirley asks what do you mean by Spanish content.

Parent shares that all week she has been printing information, but she is not finding information to keep her engaged with the Spanish portion of her lessons.

Dr. Shirley shares that we have posted resources to be able to listen to stories in Spanish. There is also a resource for Science lessons where students can listen to stories in Spanish. As of yet, we do not have a program for Spanish in Imagine Learning.

Parent asks if there has been any update in terms of length of time of school closure.

Mercedes shares that we have not heard anything beyond. The last directive from the Governor is from Friday March 13 and that was the 2-week directive. We have not received any information beyond that. If and when we receive any additional information, we promise that you will be the first to know. This is a challenging time because the information is coming so quickly. There is a challenge of miscommunication. But, we are committed to getting information to our families.

Mercedes opens to Mayara for the Q&A section of the website.

Mayara shares that if you open our school website, shares website, that on the first page there are daily updates. Sometimes there will be updates depending

on the information that comes in. We are trying our best to keep our platforms updated so that you have the information as we have it. If you scroll down, there is a box that say “Talk to Us”. This is where you can put any suggestions or questions. We will use this to address our parents’ concerns in a timely fashion. We want to connect with you as it is a great way to communicate. Phones are not the best way to communicate as the school is closed, so please use our platforms. The platforms could be Dojo, the website.

Mercedes says we will go over 5 minutes and ask a question around where parents can hear information first,

Mayara shares that Robo call will be used as we have been getting good feedback. But, sometimes, the system can be jammed because all schools are using the same system. So if you want to see something new, go to Dojo, Facebook, Instagram, or the website. That is where you will get the most up to date information. You may receive a Robo call after, but check the social platforms first.

Parent asks if the websites can be posted.

Mayara says yes.

Parent shares that the Robo calls are much appreciated even if they are delayed because she is not always able to access the links.

Mayara shares that Robo call will always be used. But, Robo calls will not be used when we receive written information such as letters from the CDC. But, things such as closings will be shared through Robo calls.

Mercedes shares that there is also a recording of this. Can we post it?

Mayara shares that yes, they can be shared. We would like feedback from parents around the use of Zoom for phone calls. When the Admin Team met yesterday we agreed that we are moving in UNIDOS and with that it is important for your feedback.

Parent shares that Zoom is very helpful. It could even be used for parent conferences, as there is a preference for virtual as opposed to in person.

Mayara shares that this virtual meeting will be posted online. Any parent who did not attend will be able to see the minutes.

Mercedes did share that today the school made the decision to send home even essential employees because of the reproduction of the Coronavirus. We are committed to our student safety and our staff safety. If you call the Front Office, there will be no one answering, as they are not in school. Please encourage any families to reach out using the website section “Talk to Us.” Make sure you are using that tool as there is no Front Office staff working until the 30th of March.

Mercedes thanks all for being on the call. There will be another call next Wednesday. Please spread the word about the call. Parents will also be able to access the recording and minutes on the website. Stay healthy, stay safe and we miss you all.

Student ask if she can show something.

Mercedes responds yes.

Dr. Shirley notes that it is Dreambox and that she has done a lot.

Mercedes say keep up the great work.

Student shares that she hopes the virus goes away so that she can return to school.

Mercedes shares that we do too!

Mercedes closes with goodbye at 12:37 p.m.