

SUTTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Date: **September 5, 2023**

Time: **5:30 p.m.**

Location: **Sutton Middle School Northside Campus**

Recording:

- I. Call to order: 5:35 pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Dr. Dominique Merriweather	Present
Parent/Guardian	Shauna Achey	Present
Parent/Guardian	Laura Collins	Present
Parent/Guardian	Tania Wismer	Present
Instructional Staff	DeMarkius Lamar	Present
Instructional Staff	Shelly Riddle	Present
Instructional Staff	Antoine Edwards	Present
Community Member	Ana Flores	Present via Zoom
Community Member	Fran Egan	Present
Swing Seat	Charneka Jones	Present via Zoom

Quorum Established: **Yes**

III. Action Items

- a. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: **Wismer**; Seconded by: **Egan**
 Members Approving: All
 Members Opposing: None
 Members Abstaining: None
Motion Passes
- b. **Approval of Previous Minutes from August 14, 2023 meeting:** *List amendments to the minutes: None*
 Motion made by: **Lamar**; Seconded by: **Collins**
 Members Approving: All
 Members Opposing: None
 Members Abstaining: None
Motion Passes

IV. Discussion Items

a. Discussion Item 1: [Student Device Distribution Update](#)

i. Engagement Plan

1. **Feedback from Administration**
2. **Feedback from PTA**
3. **Survey given to staff members (86 responses)**
 - a. 60.5% interested in having a class set of devices for students and would not like for students to be issued devices
 - b. 39.5% not interested in having a class set of devices for students and would like for students to be issued devices.
4. **Survey given to community/stakeholders (305 responses)**
 - a. 51.8% not interested in having my child take home a student device; would like for devices to be kept at school with teachers.
 - b. 48.2% interested in child being able to take home their student device; would not like for devices to be kept at school.
 - c. Read select community comments
5. **GO Team Input on next steps based on information presented**
 - a. Jones – supports devices being kept in classroom for equity and accessibility during class (devices charged and operable).
 - b. Flores – supports devices coming home as Agape can monitor them and Agape has limited number of devices.
 - c. Riddle – supports devices being in the classroom. Imperative that they are working. Caveat in terms of accessibility if there is a student who doesn't have access at home, they would be able to check out a device.
 - d. Lamar – supports devices being kept in the classroom to ensure students have them.
 - e. Egan – supports devices in classroom with caveat for equity. Do we have extra? Merriweather pushing for 100 devices per campus for students who have need to take one home.
 - f. Collins – strong case for having working devices in the classroom but shares equity and accessibility concerns so supports having laptops that can be checked out and also

- having laptops for teachers to check out in case there is one in the classroom that doesn't work.
- g. Merriweather – when looking at what trying to do instructionally for students according to continuous improvement plan, a lot of that work is occurring during the school day and so impedes instruction when rely on students to bring working laptop to class. Homework is important but is it really going to move the 3% improvement needle? Dire need to have devices for instruction in the building during the school day.
 - h. Wismer – supports students being able to bring devices home. Daughter couldn't complete homework on phone. Teachers asked students to raise hands if needed device but that is embarrassing and need another way of identifying students who need devices.
 - i. Edwards – supports having devices at school. Has been able to pivot for the last month and give homework on paper and use classroom time for online assignments.
 - j. Achey – okay with devices staying at school as long as homework is not stopped. Believes homework is a critical component that can help move the needle.
6. Next steps: Dr. Merriweather recognized that there is not a perfect solution that can satisfy everyone. Communication with grade level teams about homework expectations needs to be extremely clear. After hearing input and reviewing surveys, Dr. Merriweather feels comfortable moving forward with classroom sets. Sutton can try for this semester and re-evaluate for next semester if necessary. Goal to have communication sent out by Friday with next steps.
- b. **Discussion Item 2: 2021-2025 Strategic Plan**
 - i. **Review of APS and Sutton Strategic Priorities**
 - 1. **Discussed how DLI fits into Strategic Plan**
 - ii. **Connecting the Strategic Plan & Continuous Improvement Plan**
 - 1. **Targeting Instruction (sub-groups)**
 - 2. **Social Emotional Learning**
 - 3. **Community Engagement/Parent Outreach**
 - c. **Discussion Item 3: Data Discussion. Detailed results available on presentation handouts.**
 - i. Spring 2023 MAP Results
 - ii. 2023 Georgia Milestones Results

1. Discussion on how Sutton prepares for Georgia Milestones
- iii. Glows & Grows
- iv. Highlights of Continuous Improvement Plan
- v. Data
 1. APS School Comparison
 2. 2023 vs 2022 Georgia Milestones Data Comparison
 3. Subgroup Comparative Analysis by grade and subject (details in documents presented at meeting)
- vi. Discussion on data and desire to have further disaggregation of school level data by race, gender, socioeconomic, etc. and importance of meeting subgroups to share information out in the community. Dr. Merriweather encouraged GO Team to attend the ten yearly community outreach events where we go over data and break it down to particular subgroups with specific and targeted communication.
 1. Can revisit subgroup performance and needs for subgroups.

V. Information Items

a. Principal's Report

- i. Projected Enrollment: 1564; Current Enrollment: 1555; Difference -9
 1. Recently had new students so have now exceeded projected enrollment.
- ii. Plan for FY24 Leveling Reserve of \$189,053 - was banked last year in case teachers were lost due to enrollment. Can now use the funds to provide teachers with additional support, resources, staffing should there be need. What would be good resources to support instruction, to support subgroups, etc.? Pin this for future discussion.
- iii. Need at least three GO Team Members to attend GO Team Summit at Phoenix Academy on Saturday, September 23 from 8:30 am – 2:30 p.m. Chair will follow up with GO Team members via e-mail.

VI. Additional Discussion Items

a. Dress code Policy Review

- i. Dr. Merriweather sent out communication regarding the dress code after receiving feedback from parents about a perceived disconnect between information presented at Town Hall and the revised dress code. Decided there is a need for teacher training on expectations as well as a protocol to refer dress code issues to administration without giving personal opinions. Don't want any students to feel targeted or uncomfortable. Have had zero students receive referral, be suspended, or be removed from class because of dress code. Teachers will receive formal training

and students will receive presentation during SEL. Dr. Merriweather will address communication on the staff level.

b. **Backpack Policy Review**

- i. Parents with concerns about why backpacks can't be in the classrooms. Dr. Merriweather acknowledged that backpacks were included in dress code revision discussions last year. Space is limited in classroom and hard to personalize learning with 30 backpacks in a class. Additionally, there is a safety concern – better able to surveille what students have on them without backpacks during the day. Achey brought up that this comes up every year and students adjust. Merriweather doesn't see need to reinvent what is really working.

VII. Announcements

- a. Next GO Team meeting is at 5:30 pm on October 3, 2023. It will be in person with a virtual link.
- b. All new GO Team members must complete their GO Team orientation if have not done so already. Later in year there will also be Ethics and Budget trainings.

VIII. Public Comment

- a. Review of Public Comment Procedures – sign up was available in advance through Google Form on Sutton's GO Team website. Each speaker will be given two minutes unless approved by the Chair for more time. Members of the GO Team may not respond to public comments during the meeting.
- b. Kim Ball signed up in advance to speak about the dress code. Thanked Dr. Merriweather for dress code communication sent out this week. Would be great if communication was sent out at the same time it was addressed in school as there seemed to be disconnect between what students heard and formal dress code policy. Helpful we can get in front of the communication as students are sometimes not the best communicators or they hear what they want to hear or things get lost in translation. Appreciates all of the communication that has gone out since then.
- c. Rachel Miller also signed up to address the dress code during Public Comment. Echoed what Kim Ball said. Disconnect between what students heard at the Town Hall and what the dress code is. Concern that parents are not receiving communication that is the same as what the students are given. Students did receive warnings based on what was said at the Town Hall but doesn't match actual rules. Need for clear communication between teachers, students, and parents. Do appreciate communication that was sent and communication like that earlier would have been helpful. Amy Sharma signed up for public comment but was not able to attend so Kim Ball read Amy Sharma's comments addressing systemic communication break downs between administrators,

teachers, parents, and students on matters that require everyone to be on the same page (i.e. dress code, locker usage, electronics policies, bathroom breaks). Child doesn't feel safe at school if doesn't know rules and expectations. Appreciates Dr. Merriweather dress code clarification letter. Fears additional miscommunication. Would like GO Team to define communication protocol that easily and coherently communicates the same message to administration, staff, students, and parents. Amy Sharma would be happy to be a part of a subcommittee or team to work on defining protocols and to help communicate clear messages around issues as they arise.

IX. Adjournment

Motion made by: [Egan](#); Seconded by: [Edwards and Lamar](#)

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

ADJOURNED AT 7:02 p.m.

Minutes Taken By: [Laura Collins](#)

Position: [Secretary](#)

Date Approved: TBD, Draft for approval 10/03/2023