

## Minutes of the Go Team's Work Session

Date: December 9, 2019

Time: 4:15 to 5:45

Location: Inman Middle School

**Go Team members in attendance:** Ben Easley, Anne Head (for the beginning), Dr. Maxwell (2<sup>nd</sup> half), Alison Amoroso, Go Team Chair. (Ms. Schultz had a last minute conflict but has shared information.)

**Guests:** Mr Webb, teacher (and former Inman counselor); Curtis Carmicheal, board member of the Hope Hill Elem Foundation, business owner in Old Fourth Ward; Diane Jacobi, liaison to APS, GO Team support

Alison Amoroso, chair, started the session at 4:25 due to some difficulty finding a space to meet. Alison invited Mr Webb and Mr Carmichael to participate in the work session by giving background regarding the mentoring programs they are currently involved in.

Alison reviewed the purpose of the meeting: The theme of this meeting is the Go Team school improvement initiative. The work session will delve into the details of an initiative that addresses mental health needs among the students with the aim of closing the achievement gap and serving our students/families, as identified by Go Team members and school leadership, and aligns with the strategic plan. An idea that has been discussed is a type of mentoring program, especially one which could be connected to school programs which already exist or with faculty who have proposed ideas.

Ms. Head underscored the need for emotional and social support and learning, and the group spoke for a bit about the need for students coming from the small population of Hope Hill Elem to such a large school, but that there are students all over the cluster with emotional challenges. Mr. Easley said there is now small group counseling with some girls with a professional therapist that was implemented this school year.

Mr. Webb described his plan to use the curricula with a group of boys in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade during connections time for the book, "Ignorance Is No Defense: A Teenager's Guide to Georgia Law" to empower the boys and promote empathy and support for each other to make good decisions. This curriculum has had good results. He said it is not something that peer counselors could implement, but other adults could run similar groups.

Alison shared some research that Go Team member Vince Jones emailed to her about a nonprofit that operates a mentoring program in the Auburn Street area, and the importance of consistency and training for mentors. The group discussed and underscored the need for consistency and the difficulty of running a mentoring program.

Mr. Carmichael described the speaker program he is running as a volunteer in an APS high school that has excellent participation and engages at-risk students in career exploration but ties to social and emotional learning. He brings in community speakers in different fields who have expressed interest in assisting in other schools. The program is during school hours.

Parents have called the school to express gratitude for the program and encourage the school to maintain it.

Alison shared information about the mentoring program she operated in Boston for high-risk girls which was also a skill-building with social/emotional component and a strong mentor training and supervision component, and the peer counseling program she was part of in middle and high school.

Ben discussed the importance of an after-school bus so that students could participate in a mentoring program and it would also help engage more students in sports and clubs, which are also protective. The group spoke about a peer counseling option, and Dr. Maxwell discussed the idea of Inman Middle school students mentoring HHE 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

There was no formal recommendation to the Go Team. Discussion went till the scheduled end of the meeting.

Adjournment was approved at 5:45.