

**KWAJALEIN SCHOOL SYSTEM
SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 24, 2019**

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Kwajalein School Advisory Committee (SAC) was called to order by Brad Reed, USAG-KA at 7:02 p.m. in the Coconut Room.

Committee Members Present:

Brad Reed, USAG-KA
Victor Burnley, RTS
Stacey O'Rourke, MIT/LL
Mike Howe, USACE
Gus Aljure, DYNCORP
Dawn Gray, RGNNext
Stephanie Sandige, PTO
Veronica Moos, TRIBALCO
Eric Corder, RIKATAK PARENT REP
Susan Davis, Lead Admin KHS/GSES
Misti French, KSS Teacher Rep
Graeson Cossey, SGA

Visitors Present:

Mary Beth Taylor
Chelsea Reed
Christi Cardillo
Gary Stein
Dave Dethlefsen
John Borley
Melissa Hickman
Melissa Selzler
Ingrid Mounier
Barb Bicanich

1) Opening Remarks

- Brad Reed opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.
- SAC offers advisement on school policy. Brad Reed reminds everyone to take concerns to the school first. The school is the subject matter expert on policy practices.
- As a reminder, Kwajalein is a government contractor operated facility. The SAC meeting is not the place for contract discussion.

- The George Seitz Elementary School Student Council 2019 Officers gave a presentation on all they have accomplished this school year.
 - Used Toy Drive and Giveaway
 - Operation PBJ- Outreach for our students without power
 - National Day of Service - Dr. King's Birthday - Beckley Beach Clean Up
 - Kwaja- Clean- Saving the world one island at a time Reusable shopping bags (this is also a fundraiser) but it is to help the environment and Earth Day- Adopt A Spot Campus Clean Up

2) Monthly Reports

**SGA Representative: Graeson Cossey
KJHS Student Government Association President**

- The Kwajalein Jr./Sr. High School Spartan gear website is now up and running and available to order from.
- SGA has also decided on doing the service hour celebration at Emon beach this year due to the afternoon high tide.
- We have created a committee to start working on the Mani Day celebration for the beginning of next year.
- Prom is coming up this Sunday hosted by the Juniors with the theme Casino Royale.
- Romp will be held at the same time for 7th and 8th grade students.

Teacher Representative – Misti French

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Elementary Music classes are participating in the International Day of Jazz on April 30th
- First grade is working on Nonfiction animal books as a big project this month. Kids have researched an animal they are interested in and are now turning their notes into a book. Also they have had their seventh student move on to 2nd grade for L to J math facts fluency.
- 2nd Grade Students presented their ARTIFACT SHACK today. Each student chose a person in history to research and learn about the life story. Then they searched for an artifact to create an entertaining story to attach to that person. They also wrote an advertisement enticing students to come view the exhibits.
- 3rd graders had a great time sharing their Use and Reuse projects with our school and parents last week. Students designed and made toys out of recycled materials and at least one natural resource. They also created an advertisement, persuading people to play with their toy. Then, they practiced their writing skills by writing a *How To* paragraph on how they actually made the toy. Their toys were both creative and fun! The toys will be displayed in the 3rd grade classroom until April 27th.
- George Seitz was recently visited by celebrities including Mahatma Gandhi, Amelia Earhart, Mohammad Ali, Milton Bradley, and Maria Tallchief, to name just a few. Fourth Grade presented our Living Museum to GSES parents, fellow students, and faculty. Costumed students presented a brief history of these persons of interest and displayed posters featuring our research. Always a fun and educational event. Fourth Grade Life Science standards include the relationship between form and function and as such we've begun dissecting owl pellets in order to display the skeletal systems of the owls' prey. We'll compare these skeletons to the human skeleton, as well as look into the myriad ways life has adapted its form to function.
- In Character Counts students are learning the process of SMART setting goals.
- In 5th grade, students are studying immigration during the 1800s and the Industrial age and connecting the experiences of immigrants throughout history. They are learning that

most immigrants leave their countries for the same 4 reasons and are met with the same challenges when they arrive in their new countries. Connecting our historic studies with current issues helps to solidify the concepts.

- Student Council would like to thank the community for supporting the GSES Student Council and purchasing the Hand-made Reusable shopping Bags!!
- Student Council organized an earth Day Campus wide “Adopt a Spot” campus clean up on Saturday where the entire student body K-6th went outside and cleaned up. It is our hope that classes will continue to care for the spot to assure we are part of the solution to Keeping Kwajalein Clean!

HIGH SCHOOL

- For the past 10 Sundays, between 8 and 16 10-12 grade students have been attending 2-hour SAT/ACT Prep sessions at the high school. The last SAT of the year is Saturday, 4 May.

BREAKING NEWS!

- The marine science class collaborated with the engineering class and won **first prize in an international video competition about El Nino!** We produced a 5 minute video informing the public about El Nino and how to prepare for it. First prize involves a day trip aboard the Okeanos Marshall Islands, which will be sailing here toward the end of May to take our classes on the trip. Fantastic Job!

Principal GSES/KHS – Susan Davis

Past:

- The STEM Expo took place on April 11th, also in the MP room for grades K-12. There were 16 or 17 stations manned by community members representing various careers in the STEM field. There was a lot of great feedback from the students and teachers. Much kudos to the volunteers and to Heather Miller for making this a great event for our students.
- The Island Brew Café held on April 14th was a fundraiser for Spartan Espresso to raise money for a new espresso machine to help their operations.
- April 17th, Tarah Yurovchak and I held a Principal’s Coffee in the Coconut room. It was attended by 4 parents, joined by some SAC members at the end. Next year we plan to continue to hold these informal opportunities for parents to meet with us to discuss school issues and concerns, offer suggestions, ask for clarification, or just come to enjoy some coffee and get to know each other.
- The College and Career Fair was held last night in the MP room. There were about 30 colleges represented and over 40 students attended with family members. Thank you to all who volunteered their time to share their college and career experiences with our students.

Present:

- I am so excited to announce that at the elementary school, we have several students in multiple grades that have mastered their grade level math fluency tests by getting perfect scores 7 times. They have been moved up to the next grade level and we are so thrilled with our success with this. L to J has really made a difference in our students' ability to self-monitor their own progress and see their achievements in this area!

To Come:

- Prom is coming up on Sunday April the 28th. Curfew has been extended to 1:00AM for the *junior class only*. The juniors will be cleaning up after the dance is over at 11:30pm. May 1st is the upcoming Trades Fair for students to visit with folks about various trades and career paths. If you are interested in being a part of that and sharing with students, please contact Masina McCollum at the high school.
- NWEA testing begins at the high school on May 1st. Results will go home with students at the end of the school year.
- May 4th is College Day at the high school. Students are encouraged to dress up for this spirit day in their favorite college t-shirts and such.
- May 5th is the Ballroom Dinner Dance. It is advertised on the Roller as a potluck, that information has changed and it is now being catered. Tickets will be on sale outside the Exchange tomorrow afternoon.
- NWEA Testing will be taking place in the month of May. Dates are on the administrative calendar for your convenience at the SAC secretaries table. Please feel free to pick one up.

SIT Update:

- The AdvanceEd Accreditation Review team that consists of Dr. Maria Ojeda and Ms. Kelly Knipe are in the middle of their review for the Kwajalein School System. They have been working very hard reviewing information, listening to students, staff, leadership, and parents, and making observations. They will give a presentation to the community at the conclusion of their work tomorrow afternoon at 3:45 PM, here in the Coconut room. Parents and teachers are invited to attend.

KSS Enrollment Update:

As of Wednesday, April 24, 2019:

High School: 113

Elementary: 119

Total K-12: 232

(down by one since last month)

KSS Staffing Update:

- We will have a new K-6 PE/Health teacher next year and a 7-12 PE/Health teacher. This will provide more opportunities for our younger students to have PE more often and a solid foundation for teaching health. It also allows for our high school staff to be able to focus on their primary teaching responsibilities.
- Last month, we announced the resignations of Meghan Connor and Vanessa Wamsley at the end of this school year. We are in the process of hiring a 7-12 Math teacher and a 7-12 English teacher to replace them.

- One additional resignation that we received in the past month was for our K-6 Music teacher, Tara Smith. She will be leaving us at the end of the school year, as well. Tara has been teaching at George Seitz Elementary School for several years and will be missed. We wish her well on her new adventures at home in Missouri. If you know of any elementary music teachers who would like to apply, please have them go to the Dyn Corp Careers website to do so. They can also contact me at my school email so that I have an awareness.
- We are also going to be hiring a high school computer science teacher and a K-8 academic support specialist. These positions are new and we are excited to have these added positions to increase our ability to meet student needs!

Additional Information:

The areas for advisement for next month on KSS Policies include the Special Education Policy revision; 3000 .02 Age Limits will be clarified; 5000 .04 Use of School Facilities, and hopefully, the 4000 Series Homeschool revision will be ready for advisement. We will post the new policies on the Portal in a document for parents to review rather than emailing policies to all parents. Please contact the school or your SAC representative if you have any feedback for the policy updates. All but the Homeschool policy will be posted by Wednesday of next week.

With feedback from SAC, the school will be formulating a plan to focus on several areas of the school policies next year. These areas include: several policies in the 2000 Series Instructional Organization; several in the 3000 series Students; and a few in the 5000 Series Miscellaneous.

3) Discussion/Action Items:

A. School Calendar

The school presented 2 calendars. The advisement was to vote on the calendar. SAC recommends 2 year advance on school calendar for planning purposes. Calendar A has no change from the current calendar. Calendar B has the dates align to end first semester before winter break. Parents, faculty and students all weighed in with online surveys. There were 8 committee members present to vote and 1 absent vote. Brad Reed will only vote in a tie.

- Vote for calendar A – Stacey O’Rourke, Dawn Gray, Veronica Moos, Stephanie Sandige, and the 1 absent vote from Christina Dodson. Calendar A had 5 votes.
- Vote for calendar B – Victor Burnley, Mike Howe, Gus Aljure, and Eric Corder. Calendar B had 4 votes.

B. Important Dates of future SAC meetings

1. 15 May 2019

4) Public Feedback & Council Comments

With help from the community, SAC has provided lots of feedback to the school on policies to update as part of the yearly review process. The school works hard to share information with SAC. Sometimes, both the school and SAC have their hands tied. Both must abide by legal advisement. Make sure you get with the school or your SAC representative with concerns on policy or handbook issues. SAC is willing to take these concerns back to the school.

Audience member asked about how the members decide to vote. How did they canvas their constituents? Do the votes of the members reflect the opinion of the constituents they represent? Brad Reed explained that members vote based on information from their constituents and information received from the school surveys. Gus Aljure said he sent emails out but didn't receive a lot of feedback. He is voting based on the majority of the 22 people he spoke with while out in public. Dawn Gray said she had 15 people vote and 2 had no opinion. She is not including her opinion in this vote. Brad Reed said the members discussed in the planning meeting how to best represent this vote.

Audience member asked why the students have no say in this. Brad Reed suggested that the survey results be provided to the Commander so he can take it all into consideration. The SAC minutes are submitted by Mrs. Hill for command legal review. They are then presented to the Commander for his consideration and signature.

Tarah Yurovchak asked SAC if they considered all the information shared by parents and students in their votes. Brad Reed said SAC was given a presentation by the teacher representative based on the survey information. He also received input from his constituents. Dawn Gray said it was a difficult process to meet what everyone wants. There was no clear driving evidence that one option was better than the other. Victor Burnley said that very few of his RTS constituents have kids. He put a lot of weight into the students being overwhelmingly for one calendar over the other. He voted accordingly. If a SAC member doesn't have enough people to go to, Victor feels they vote along with the survey results. An audience member asked if the student majority voted for calendar B. Graeson Cossey explained that the survey went out to the students by email. Many teachers took their classes to the computer lab to vote. The data is available if anyone wants to see it. The students were overwhelmingly for calendar B. It is hard for students to have their semester finals after winter break. The semesters here end much later than college semesters. The shorter summer on the transitional year was okay. Christi Cardillo said over 80% of the students voted for calendar B. The teachers were an even split. Christi Cardillo asked about the Parent Teacher Organization representative's vote. She wondered if they considered the surveys. Stephanie Sandige explained that she talked to PTO members and the board. The majority of her constituents were in favor of calendar A. Ingrid Mounier pointed out that she is on the PTO board and was never asked for her opinion. Stephanie Sandige said she sent out an email but didn't ask each board member individually. She will check and see who the email was distributed to.

Eric Corder reminded everyone that just because SAC advises one way does not mean it will happen. Stacey O'Rourke had a request. If calendar B should come out for 2020/21 school year, she would like to see the overall window of how students did taking finals before break compared to previous years when finals were taken after break.

Brad Reed explained how the process works. The calendar discussion started earlier in the school year. There have been open conversations about the calendar options. Public input was encouraged but meetings were attended by only Mrs. Yurovchak and Mrs. Reed. A bigger turnout is needed for discussions at every meeting prior to voting. Everyone in attendance of public SAC meetings hear the future plans. We try to get the word out.

SAC tried very hard to stick to the work plan for the year. With the home school policy and special education policy, SAC and the school were hog tied by how the process works. Both must abide by legal advisement. SAC is always open for improvement. SAC wants to be proactive and not reactive. Brad Reed always has an open door. The school has provided a lot of information for what to look at closer next year.

Audience member referred to the student council presentation on fundraisers. Is there a budget line item for playground items. It seems like there are more creative ways to spend money for our friends on Ebeye. Why should the kids need to spend money on their own recess equipment? Brad Reed responded that this is not the forum to discuss how the school spends money. That doesn't mean your concern isn't heard by others here. Have to talk to the school directly? Tarah Yurovchak explained that she used to be the Student Council advisor and the kids usually decide what to raise funds for. Student Council did fundraisers for playground equipment because there was no funding from KRS. Veronica Moos pointed out that outdoor toys rarely last more than a year. Other organizations like Jim Jera raise money for our friends on Ebeye. Dawn Gray added that even if playground toys were supplied, the kids may still choose those things. Susan Davis pointed out that Student Council hasn't purchased all the equipment. The school recently received an order of playground balls. Even though the school orders things, the supply gets depleted during the year. It has become a tradition for Student Council to pick out equipment to buy. They have pride in ownership. Brad Reed stated that questions are always heard and never looked down on. There is a different forum to discuss how the school spends money. SAC wants the community to be well represented and involved.

Audience member asked what we are doing here. We can talk and talk but decisions cannot be made in the meeting. It all feels like a waste of time. Brad Reed reminded everyone that SAC is a policy driven committee. Everyone has a valid opinion. We should all be driven by the best interest of our children. Dawn Gray said she felt the same when she attended the meetings as a community member. She wanted more verbiage. As a SAC member, she now sees that the committee is policy driven. Audience member commented that all opinions have value, even when they differ. Another audience member requested a forum with an opportunity to openly discuss concerns. He felt SAC meetings were his only avenue to bring up concerns. He understands we can't change the contract but he wants to be heard. Brad Reed said he would pass this along. Mary Beth Taylor said she is always willing to listen. Write down your concerns and bring them to her. Susan Davis recommended following the chain of command published in the handbook.

Eric Corder asked about a late ferry for the Rikatak students after Prom. Tarah Yurovchak said the ferry will depart Kwaj at 11:30 p.m. and that she would be riding the ferry back with them. A parent asked for verification of increased supervision at the Prom. There will be 3 parent chaperones and 3 school advisors. One adult will be monitoring the restrooms. The only

restroom open will be in the classroom building. The locker room will not be open. There will also be a police officer present. In total, there will be 7 adults monitoring about 70 students. Audience member asked about the rule of not inviting guests outside of school. Susan Davis said this information is included in our school handbook. Barb Bicanich said that in the past, students would invite a date from Ebeye. The dates would show up to the dance before the student. It wasn't clear who the guest was waiting for and people stationed at the front door were uncomfortable having the guests wait outside. Tarah Yurovchak explained the teachers want the students to come together to celebrate and have fun. Inviting youth from outside of school changes the dynamics. Under the current policy, home school students can request permission to attend school dances. Tarah Yurovchak reminded the audience that the school dances are hosted by the Student Government Association. The SGA falls under practices and not policy.

Closing Committee Remarks

- Next SAC meeting will be May 15.
- SAC will determine the work plan for the 2019/20 school year.

Future Agenda Planning

- Agendas will note future policy or non-policy issues up for discussion.

5) Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Susan Davis, K-12 Lead Administrator Kwajalein School System

Brad Reed, Chairperson, SAC