



FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DISTRICT SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

March 15, 2018



Fayette County Public Schools Superintendent Manny Caulk established the District Safety Advisory Council to examine best practices in school safety and develop specific recommendations to ensure all Fayette County Public Schools are safe places to learn and work.

The Council is comprised of 26 students, teachers, parents, principals, district officials, Lexington-Fayette Urban County representatives, community advocates, law enforcement officers, business representatives and faith leaders.

The group will meet six times during the month of March and deliver a white paper with recommendations during the first week of April. You can follow the work of the council by visiting www.fcps.net/advisorycouncil.

TONIGHT'S DISCUSSION

The third meeting of the council focused on the topic of mental health. Guest speakers were: Bethany Langdon, Don Rogers and Erin Rooks from Bluegrass



Community Mental Health, Rashmi Adi Brown from CHES Solutions Group, Ashley Ritchie, RN and Tara Stanfield from Health First Bluegrass, Dr. Catherine Martin from the UK Department of Psychiatry, Jennifer Perry from UK Adolescent Medicine, Velva Reed Barker, LCSW and Geoff Wilson, LCSW, from the Offices of Paul Dalton, Brittany Thompson from The Ridge and Jessica Campbell from Our Lady of Peace.

Dr. Martin, who is a child and adolescent psychiatrist, began the conversation by saying that individuals, families, peers, schools, community and social media are key components of addressing mental health issues. She shared research on perpetrators of school violence that found:

- 2/3rds of youth perpetrators had experience with weapons, and firearms and were available through their families
- Many were bullied or persecuted
- Many suffered from depression and had suicidal ideation
- Very few had had mental health evaluations
- Attacks were planned; not impulsive
- Most had shared their plan in advance with a peer

Her suggested action steps included mental health screening, attention to depression and self harm, opening lines of communication between individual youth, their families and their peers, addressing bullying, and supporting school staff. She also mentioned firearm safety and raised the question of whether better tracking of social media could help identify students in need of support.

Stanfield noted that the United States has the highest cost of health care in the world, but produces some of the lowest outcomes. She told council members about the "integrated health care model" Health First Bluegrass has launched to enable teams of health care professionals to address the needs of the patient from a more holistic standpoint where primary care doctors work directly with behavioral health care providers and other specialists like pediatricians and obstetricians/gynecologists.

Ritchie gave an overview of the Healthy Kids Clinics, which are located in Arlington, Booker T. Washington, Breckinridge, Cardinal Valley, Harrison, Mary Todd, Tates Creek, and William Wells Brown elementaries. The clinics are staffed daily by a clerk, registered nurse, nurse practitioner and behavioral health therapist. The following professionals rotate through each week: psychiatrist or psych APRN, behavioral health focused pediatrician and dental care providers. Last year the school-based clinics served 4,371 students and families and provided 18,855 visits. Ritchie noted that 72 percent of the students who came to the clinics because they felt sick were able to receive care and return to class without missing a day of school or requiring a caregiver to miss work.

Thompson explained the services available at The Ridge for patients between the ages of 5 and 17 and shared a new model being piloted in one high school this year providing in-school care and support for students four hours a day. "We are trying to be proactive instead of reactive," she said. "Trying to catch the kids before they need the higher level of care."

Reed Barker shared that since the violence in Marshall County, KY, and Parkland, FL, she has seen an increase in children expressing fear about going

to school. She said positive relationships between students and adults in school were at the core of helping students feel safe and said every student should have at least one adult they feel they can trust at school. She urged the council to recommend fully staffing schools with one counselor, social worker and psychologist for every 250 students. "When will we say children are our most important asset and put our money where our mouth is?" she asked.

Adi Brown echoed those sentiments and told the council that students are the best source of information about what's really happening in schools. "We talk, we hear, but we don't listen to what kids are saying," she said.

Wilson shared the sobering statistics that by the age of 16, one out of four children will have experienced significant trauma, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, the death of a parent or sibling or a serious accident. He said that 20 to 25 percent of children have a depressive disorder; 20 to 25 percent have an anxiety disorder and 15 percent are dealing with substance abuse. Out of every 100 children, Wilson said, 30 to 50 percent of them are in need of intensive mental health support. Additionally, Rogers noted, Kentucky has among the highest rates in the nation of children who don't live with a biological parent.

The expert panelists shared examples of how mental health services can be delivered at school in order to serve more students, and spoke of the critical need to provide training in trauma informed care and social-emotional learning to teachers, staff, and law enforcement officers. They also repeatedly mentioned the need to take tasks like testing coordination off the plates of counselors so that those professionals would be able to see more students. Asking students to put their name on a list and wait days to be able to see a counselor is unacceptable, they said.

When asked what one actionable recommendation they would suggest the council consider, they gave the following answers:

- Implement Mental Health Screening for every child in every grade at least once a year.
- Develop a comprehensive resource list for schools and teachers.
- Reach out to the General Assembly in support of HB 604, which would provide health professionals for every 1,500 students.
- Schools need to catch up with how kids have changed and adapt the curriculum accordingly to include required courses on things like using social media, stress management and healthy coping skills.
- Provide time for professionals to do what they do and really listen to the students and give kids the time to be heard
- Use the counselors you have, free up their time and get away from the medical model where you put your name on the waiting list.
- Tobacco and opiates are the biggest killers and you need to work with families to address these issues.
- More training is needed for staff, it's often more important to NOT do the wrong thing than it is to DO the right thing. Motivational interviewing training for teachers could help them so they don't say the wrong thing in that moment.

The panelists also said that the growing mental health needs of our students is a reflection of a community-wide problem and complimented the district for the

myriad efforts already in place to help children. "Do not overestimate what the school system can do," Wilson said. "This is a bigger problem than what the school system should be charged with. It involves homelessness, poverty, social problems, opiates, what's happening at home, are the guns locked up, how did the kids get access ... you're limited as to what you can do."

Perry pointed to Colorado, Chicago, and surrounding counties already partnering with UK Adolescent Medicine as examples of best practices for the Advisory Council to consider.

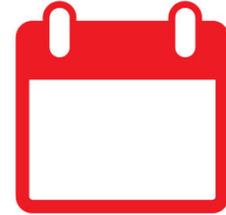
UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 20, 2018

6 to 8 p.m.

Topic: Social Media

Location: Lafayette High School, 401 Reed Lane



March 22, 2018

6 to 8 p.m.

Topic: Facilitated Discussion of Recommendations

Location: Frederick Douglass High School, 2000 Winchester Road

March 29, 2018

6 to 8 p.m.

Topic: Facilitated Discussion of Recommendations

Location: Henry Clay High School, 2100 Fontaine Road

HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

If you have questions, comments or suggestions for the council, you can email them to advisorycouncil@fayette.kyschools.us. During the meetings, public comments are being collected electronically through [slido.com](https://www.slido.com) or the [sli.do](https://www.slido.com) app. We are working with a professional facilitation team to review everything we receive via email and [sli.do](https://www.slido.com) and ensure that your thoughts and comments are captured as part of the work.



SEE FOR YOURSELF

Meetings of the District Safety Advisory Council are recorded and will be televised on Spectrum cable channel 197 beginning the Monday after each meeting. To access them on demand, visit www.fcps.net/advisorycouncil

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