

May State-Wide Teleconference
May 4, 2023 at 7pm

In Attendance

Suzzuk Huntington - Superintendent
Miranda Bacha (via zoom)- Academic Principal
Andrew Friske (via zoom) - Residential Principal
Alex Weissberg - Residential Dean of Students
Rachel Sorokin - Behavior and Mental Health Coordinator
Chohla Moll - Cultural Integration Coordinator
Kristen Homer (via zoom)- Nurse Practitioner/Clinic Manager
Rosie Palof (taking minutes) - Home to School Coordinator

Suzzuk Huntington

Welcome everybody! We have our staff here ready to present and it is right before the end of the school year things are happening, things are frantic, and it's really exciting times as things wrap up, so thank you for taking the time to come and join us today. Thank you staff for being ready to present.

Kristen Homer

Good evening. Just a few updates for you.

1. Covid - Unfortunately, about three weeks ago we had a return of Covid to the campus. Since April 13th we've had one to two kids with symptoms test positive most days.
 - a. We expect Covid to be on campus for the rest of the school year.
 - b. We are trying to limit the impact it has on our end of year activities.
 - c. If you want information on our Covid numbers
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SRlwPEwZ4Qz5m1xsbQPSd7sGdYIYMh8IR0GMG2vvGgE/edit#gid=1217171066>
 - d. Sitka has had significant numbers of Covid in the community.
 - i. This affects families coming for graduation.
 - ii. This affects families as students come home.
 1. Be aware and practice precautions.
 - a. Masking, social distancing, washing hands, fresh air, vaccinations, and testing
2. Health records - I want everyone to know how to access records over the summer. Any services they have received will be through Student Health or SEARHC will be in their electronic health record. If you need a copy you can access it through SEARHC.
 - i. <https://searhc.org/health-records-request/> and fill out the form or
 - ii. Call (907) 931-1391
- b. We share records with ANMC and most regional health services, but not YKHC.

3. Immunization - Records can be accessed through VacTrAK, available at your local clinic. Even though your student might have received an immunization in the clinic they should be able to access it through VacTraK.
4. Medications - RNs are working on refilling medications so students arrive home with at least a 1 month supply. If refill is needed over the summer, your local pharmacy can reach out to SEARCH Pharmacy (907) 966-8347.
5. Sports Physicals - If your student is planning on participating in a fall sport, try to have a sports physical done over the summer if possible. We are able to do them in the fall, but we can only do so many. We don't want students to have to sit out of practice if they can't get one.

It has been a good year. It has been a busy year. You can always reach out to me directly at 907-966-5205.

Chohla Moll

I enjoy coming to these teleconferences to share with parents and families all the fun things students are getting to do on campus.

What happened last month?

1. We were continuing artist workshops.
 - a. Fish Skin Tanning Workshop - Was very fun. I am saving fish skin now, so I can do more tanning
 - b. Yup'ik Headdress Workshop - Was conducted by our Yupik dance group advisor Rachel Morino last weekend.
2. Cultural Banquet - We had over 120 awards that we gave out to students with around 90 students in attendance.
3. Classrooms - I have been working with teachers all year, integrating guest speakers into the classroom. We had some guest speakers coming in last month.
 - a. New lesson development and implementation - Students got to listen to different stories and traditional languages, and talked about the importance of hearing stories in their original languages. We related that to reading Romeo and Juliet in Elizabethan English.

Coming up in the last few days!

4. Dance Group Performances - I was just with our Sugpiaq dance group. I could not get them to leave. They kept wanting to practice. All the dance groups will be performing at the MEHS Senior Awards Ceremony. Visiting families will get to see them dance.
5. Alaska Native Tribal Lawyer Retreat - They have asked some of our dance groups to come perform.

I can't wait for all the students to come home in the fall and hear all their stories of their time at home.

Rachel Sorokin

1. I just wanted to start off with sharing all the data from this year to see what the Wellness Team has done.
 - a. Tobacco Cessation students served: 52
 - b. Substance Abuse screenings: 56
 - c. Commitment to Clean Students: 16
 - i. This has been a really successful program this year. It is voluntary, though it may be part of a student's success plan. There are weekly check ins with the students. We are there to provide support and accountability as they make that really important commitment to staying away from substances.
 - d. Prevention Group students: 32
 - e. Average encounters per week made by Wellness Team: 172
 - i. I was excited when I saw that number. I know that we spend a lot of time with students, but it was exciting to see that number.
2. Thank you - On behalf of the entire Wellness Team, we are honored and grateful that we have been able to support and work alongside families and students this year.
3. Goals for next year - As we look forward to next year, we are excited to be increasing our supports in the following areas to meet the needs of students:
 - a. Implementing yearlong weekly tobacco/vaping cessation groups using nationally recognized evidence-based program developed by American Lung Association N-O-T (Not on Tobacco) and INDEPTH It focuses a lot on vaping. There will be small groups.
 - b. Focusing on suicide prevention/intervention programs for campus. We already do some things, but we want it to be more process oriented.
 - c. Incorporating cultural connections into Wellness
4. I want to share this quote with you

"There are two ways of spreading light--to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."
-Edith Wharton

I just want to say that we are so thankful that we get to be that support, but also to be the mirror for your students. We have seen some amazing things from the students this year.

Parent: Expressed gratitude for the focus on vaping prevention.

Alex Weissberg: Vaping was more of a problem at the beginning of the year. Based on observations it dropped off over the course of the year.

Alex Weissberg

What happened last month?

1. Triathlon - We had a Triathlon for the first time this year. The video was amazing. Big thanks to Jodi Evans and Mr. Fitz. (Jodi Evans headed up getting footage of the triathlon and prom. She did an amazing job!)
2. 3 Banquets last month - Cultural, Fine Arts (90), and Sports Banquets (220) All banquets were really well attended. Lots of support amongst peers.
 - a. Colton Paul got the Athlete of the Year Award (outstanding performance at NYO and his World Record). We had the Bob Brown Award go to Elston Dock and the Lillian Lane Award go to Tessa Anderson. These are student athlete awards that went juniors and seniors who have lettered in multiple sports and maintained academic excellence.
 - b. After parent comment: We will make that date of banquets more public in future years. And we will continue to livestream the banquets.
3. UCC came up with some new ideas
 - a. Triathlon
 - b. Saturday Garage Sale
 - i. It is an opportunity for students to sell items that they don't want anymore or don't want to take home.
 - ii. It was a great pilot program, and we will do even better next year!
4. Whale Watching Cruise - was a success! They made tacos and saw a bunch of whales. Sound like they had a great time.
5. Camping Trip just happened recently. (20 students)
6. Staff Appreciation Lunch - Student government put on a lunch for the staff.

Coming up in the last few days!

7. Coliseum Rented Friday - Marvel Movie will play just for MEHS students.
 - a. We are encouraging students to pack up. If they get down to two bags they get a free ticket.
 - b. We have a rides to the PO after school everyday!
8. Saturday School - We will take all the students out to the Rec for a barbeque.
9. Recreation Lock in at the gym on Wednesday.
 - a. We do Upper Campus Awards. This is a chance for us to recognize students for being awesome in the dorms.
10. Saturday Recreation "Pig Roast" which will end in fireworks.

11. UCC - selection process is underway. Members are selected through residential staff. They recommend students that they think would be good leaders on upper campus. 20 more students are selected for next year. They will come early to help with new student orientation. They come up with a lot of good ideas. I appreciate them.

Miranda Bacha

1. National Honor Society- April 24th we had our induction ceremony. It was led by Christi Anderson and Kerry McAdams. The society is built on character, leadership, scholarship, and service. Suzuk Huntington was the guest speaker, and over 20 students were added to our chapter of NHS.
 - a. Congratulations to: Ashley Rexford, Maelyn Westdahl, MaKenna Beans, Camron Isaak, BevAnne Akaran, Deanne Killongak, Naomi Jones, Brenaye Berlin, Kennedy Johnson, Kayla Arrow, Tyson Olsen, Oscar Mangrobang, Sage Martin, Alex Smith, Peter Griggs, Cash ARrington, Sarah Bahnke, Khaila Gratis, Mosina Nick, Rhoda Kotongan, and Nevaeh George.
2. Student Government - The new Advisory Board Student Representative is Phebe Garcia.
3. We had our Second Annual Tribal Resource and Career Fair organized by Jack Boland.
 - a. Organizations came to campus to assist the students get connected to resources, tribal scholarships, and internship opportunities.
4. Prom was themed "Starry Night" and took place at Sitka Fine Arts Campus. Thank you to Jessica Deviche, Andrew Friske, Alex Weissberg, and Tracy Dupee. The students looked amazing and had a good time.
5. Artfest - 8 students went to Yakutat.
6. Course Requests - Ms. Livermore met with students last month to collect course requests. Priority is given to upperclassmen so they can meet their graduation requirements.
 - a. Continue to offer Lingít, Iñupiaq, Yup'ik
 - b. New classes next year are AP Computer Science Principles and Spanish 2
 - c. Reach out to Ms. Livermore or me with questions. Sometimes kid's interests change over the summer, so we will do some tweaking to schedules in the fall.
7. End of School Events
 - a. Awards and Recognition Assembly
 - b. Barbeque/ Picnic
 - c. May 10th Awards and Baccalaureate
 - d. Graduation May 11th

Parent: Are there automotive classes?

Bacha: Not now, but in the past we did have a partnership with Sitka High where our students could go there for Small Engines Class. It ended because of Covid. It is something we would love to have again.

Weissberg: We do have Driver's Ed. Students can get driver's licenses.

Parent 2: Is it only for students to get permits?

Bacha: Last year there were more students who wanted to take the class than we could support. Students without a permit got prioritized over those wanting to get licenses. We are hoping to continue offering the class going forward, and we have two staff who will drive in the evenings with students who want to schedule and practice for a driving test, and we will get them to the DMV if they make an appointment.

Parent: One thing that I would like to see improve is the pronunciation of last names.

Chohla: When I have tried to read names during special times. I have had students record their names by taking a video of their mouth. I do agree that we need to say names correctly.

Andrew Friske

1. Musicfest
 - a. 34 students went to Ketchikan. It was the largest group we have ever taken.
 - b. Ms. Gluth is doing an amazing job
 - c. 5 students have qualified for State Solo and Ensemble. They will go to Anchorage May 12th and 13th.
2. Basketball - Boys and girls basketball teams did well at the State Tournament.
 - a. Girls got second and also got the Sportsmanship Trophy.
 - b. We had a recognition for the girls at the assembly yesterday and unveiled their banner.
3. Cheerleaders did a wonderful job both at regionals and at state.
4. Prom was great. The weather was horrible, so everyone stayed inside. It was easy to chaperone.
5. Banquets were attended by roughly 379 students.
6. NYO won state!
7. Esports got 2nd at state!

Lots of Mt. Edgecumbe representation around Alaska!

8. Encourage your students to pack! New system this year should work really well. They need to pack stuff up. They can only bring two 50lb pieces of luggage on the plane.

Suzzuk Huntington

Thank you for a tremendous year, for your grace and your patience and your support, and being here. It has been really exciting for me, along with overwhelming and intimidating at times. We have wonderful staff, excellent students, and the traditions that we have here are so strong.

Everytime I stop to introspect about how we are doing, everything reaffirms that our structures and our programs are still worthy of being proud of. We always have work to do, but we are always moving forward with our best efforts to meet the needs of each student collectively and individually. It has been a wonderful first year for me.

1. Summer Parent Meetings - I want to step away from calling them teleconferences because it feels so antiquated. But we will have meetings (zoom and via phone) this summer to talk about admissions and offer tips and tricks. I hear our staff in the summer answering the same questions throughout the summer. We can share as a group and have an opportunity to address some concerns as a group. We will still answer the phones though.
2. Teleconference Minutes - All the minutes (and the powerpoint from last time) from the teleconferences this year have been uploaded to the website under Teleconference <https://www.mehs.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=250768&pageId=20779832>
3. Advisory Board meeting took place this afternoon. It went almost 4 hours! They continue to be an excellent group to work with and for. They meet quarterly.
4. The admission process is in full swing!
 - a. Our first round of acceptance letters goes out later this month.
5. Superintendent Honor Roll (3.75-4.0)
 - a. 63 in 10th-12th graders were invited to a special luncheon on Tuesday.
 - i. steak, salad, cake, green beans
 - b. 26 freshmen earned certificates, but must maintain that level of excellence until next year, in order to be invited to the luncheon.
6. Summer construction
 - a. Bathrooms - Academic building & Gym will take place this summer
 - b. ADA Accessibility - upper campus girls dorm, boys dorm, chair lift
 - c. Kuspuk outer stairs

My real, deep pleasure and honor to be serving you. Thank you for your time.

Parent: Are there leftover yearbooks from the last 3 years?

Suzzuk- Call the office to follow up. We will ask Karla in the front office.

Have a good summer!