

Minutes PTSO Meeting November 5, 2020

(Stephanie Southwick scribe)

Scholarship discussion -- 5 scholarships that will be reduced -- can the PTSO raise money to compensate?

Mr. Wilson -- Presents transportation as it relates to student by zip code, bussing, and trax stations -- geographic / demographic shift -- bussing considerations to be voted on by the board

Synchronous / Asynchronous learning -- teachers and students are doing well. We are seeing 95% of average daily attendance. Some students struggle to complete work, the same ones who consistently have struggled in previous years. Students need to use the asynchronous time to ask questions and receive help who need it.

There are two job openings for aides to work at AMES -- to provide support for students. 28 hrs/ week. Additional support for 9th grade students, and those who are struggling. Online tutoring is on the docket, but it's difficult to hire people who are willing to work in person.

Robin -- reach out to AMES alumni?

Mr. Wilson -- reached out to alum via facebook, sending emails out.

Additionally, we need to go back to where we were years ago, to have formal mentoring and partnership with upperclassmen with freshmen to have them pair and support students and can build connection and AMES culture.

Third thing -- Asynchronous work for parents: Keep the students online. Hold them accountable to stay during Asynchronous time to receive support and spend the time. Synchronous time may be extended, as well as internship.

Lastly, a call to action to AMESians: We don't have the option to do in-person tours, we don't have bodies in classrooms. Wwe are under an order to keep our gatherings under 20, and yet we are going to be closed until the lottery opens up. The traditional recruiting we have done in the past is no longer an option, and we need to find new ways to get a full freshmen class. We need students, and parents to spread the information via word of mouth to get the word out about AMES

JNB -- video clips about what makes AMES great is a good way to share information and might be an effective recruitment tool

Michelle Stahley: Perhaps we can Encourage students and AMES parents to submit video and stories?

Robin: Robotics -- what makes AMES great? Share on the website?

Jaycie Taylor-Begay : social media, as a way to get info out. Additional input: Study groups to allow grades to mingle and connect and support each other and boost student engagement.

Denece Taylor-Begay: have we considered allowing students to mingle and combine across grades? It may be something to pursue. Teachers may be able to pair up with each other and create cross-curricular teaching activities and engagement, with some before-hand preparation to give students a chance to interact with each other and share ideas.

Mr. Wilson: without seeing people and being able to speak with each other, there are some things that go under the radar. AMES was founded as a STEM school, with the goal of being an early college high school. To serve underrepresented students and provide students with college prep that they would not get at their boundary schools, not to be a title 1 school. Providing a college prep program to students who are underrepresented in higher ed is our focus. We require out of school work out of our students, and that prep does not always happen at their boundary schools.

Overview of the classes -- but we celebrate that we bring everyone into the building and they graduate.

Guest speaker on the counseling common room for tomorrow (nov 6th)

Julie -- AMES to-do list by each grade, is that something students can use?

Kari -- Spring summer checklist that juniors got during their CCRPs -- starting early is the way to go, and it's difficult to get juniors in that headspace, but it's worth pursuing. It's difficult to toe the line how to encourage students without overwhelming them.

Stephanie: How can we help these kids get to know each other during this year? Let's turn it to the group -- we would love ideas!

Mr. Wilson -- in response to this, we will be upping the amount of the breakout activities that students will be engaged in during 9th grade.

Michelle Staley -- it's difficult for parents to encourage students to do this, and the kids are shy, so it's a difficult situation because it is a skill that students need to learn.

Julie -- we have some parents present who have 9th graders, any ideas of ways to support your students and the opportunity to get to know students on the school grounds? What ideas does the group have?

Jolene Casey -- Some sort of outdoor social? To meet in person and stay 6 feet apart

Robin -- Can we do Zoom sessions, lunch with the principal, come drop in during lunch for a loosely structured zoom session?

Amy Khan --- lunch zoom groups? Impromptu interactions in a virtual friday group, mix it up? Gaming? Puzzle, scavenger hunt? All virtual that prompts participation, not a class, but a fun way for students to get to know each other, not necessarily with the constraints of being in person and not risking the virus. Rotating virtual social scene.

Robin -- Virtual movie night? Send a bag of popcorn and include the chat and do a virtual event together? Online interactive gaming and need to talk to each other in the process?

JNB -- online interactive games, there's an activity that supports socializing

Jaycie -- utilizing different chat apps would be great to use for different groups of students -- group.me or discord to hear voices while interacting in games -- Among us, video apps, games, etc, ways to utilize to get student engagement and socializing

Julie -- create a recap and sign up for people to support and "chaperone" these activities? Who could lead these kind of activities?

Could we create a calendar and have the upperclassmen run these activities for the freshmen?

Kari -- Could we have upperclassmen facilitate these activities with underclassmen? We observe and monitor and introduce ourselves, how do we do it safely and make it school-appropriate? Student body officers facilitate?

JNB -- game night? Watch and observe? An AMES twitch stream to view the game so we have observers and players?

Jaycie -- would be happy to facilitate and help in anyway.

Julie -- Fridays are a good day? What do we think after teacher meetings (9-10:30)?

Mr. Wilson -- Thank you for the ideas! Keep on us and we appreciate the support.

Julie -- housekeeping -- Stacey Arens suggested using Peach Jar to target specific middle schools as a way to support recruitment efforts. Do people who donate money to AMES receive a tax credit?

Mr. Wilson -- there are several ways to donate to AMES. The PTSO/AMES donations can be written off on taxes, there are also ways to donate to the foundation for a specific cause.

Ideas

Maybe facilitate some 9th grade discord game nights, virtual gaming? Set up and facilitated by AMES? Some upperclassmen guiding the game?

Jack Box games -- group games with audience participation, can be played through Phones and on Twitch