



PSE Grassroots Minutes

November 1, 2023

- Updates/Review Grassroots Meetings
 - These minutes are fluid and are accurate as of this moment in time. Sometimes things discussed can change.
 - All minutes will be posted on the PSE Grassroots page on the PFT Website. (<https://pft400.com/grassroots/special-education-grassroots-pse/>)
- **ED/ID**
 - Many students are dual diagnosed with Emotional Disturbance and Intellectual Disability. These students feel out of place when in a life skills classroom which has led to them not engaging in the programming and an influx of bullying and ridiculing. Also noted that they only have one paraprofessional.
 - Who determines that the life skills classroom is the least restrictive environment for students being placed in those classrooms?
 - Can rooms that fit these student's unique needs be opened?
 - ED/ID rooms do exist, but they also have one paraprofessional – no therapist. Talk to your program officer about putting in for support from low incidence team or the behavioral specialist team. You can also talk to the low incidence team when they make their regular visits about your concerns.
- **Lockdown**
 - Can itinerant teachers be given a key to buildings so they can lock a door in the event of a lockdown?

- Itinerant staff should have a key at every building. Patti suggests keeping them in your mailbox at the building so they are always there for you. Ask the principal or custodian for a key.
- The district sent an update about the Emergency Notification System (a vital need particularly for our itinerant staff who service many buildings). Staff were receiving alerts, but after the update, they stopped getting messages. As per a response from a support ticket, the issue resulted from a new procedure from Munis/Self-Service contact information.
- Even though those teachers followed the instructions in the email, designating their cell phone for the text messages, they were still not receiving them. They deleted their home numbers in hopes that it would fix the problem, but how many teachers are NOT receiving the important alerts based on a system error? How can we get this information out there?
 - It was said that text alerts automatically go to the home number. Please go into the Employee Self Service to make sure your home phone number is not in there. You can also send in a support ticket so they can make sure they have the correct number for these text messages.
- **CCS**
 - Are paraprofessionals being paid less for CCS services?
 - Yes, paraprofessionals receive their hourly rate. They should not be providing direct service.
 - Who is responsible for planning CCS activities (ITL's are being forwarded the directives, but is it their responsibility)

- This is the principals prerogative – Patti did training with the principals for the framework. It should be in their Principals Teams page.
- What will be required of caseload managers?
 - Keep track of your hours and service provided
- What will be required for data collection?
 - An online form will be coming out. There are some issues with service agreements that do not specify a service provided, but a support (autistic support for example). The form will work with eSchools to track the hours and create a declining balance.
- Will time be given to complete any additional CCS paperwork, or can that fall into planning time?
 - The form should be quick. It will fall into planning time that you are paid for with doing CCS.
- **High School Schedules**
 - Can counselors meet with PSE team regarding incoming freshman? Some students are not receiving the correct PSE support built into their schedule.
 - There was not a transition meeting last year because of all the paperwork requirements we had. There will be a meeting this year to discuss.
- **Staff Shortages**
 - If a teacher is out on a leave of absence (and teachers are working with coverages or day to day subs) – who is responsible for the required PSE paperwork?
 - If a Day to Day sub is not PSE certified, they are not able to do it. You should work with the case managers in the building. There is a form to submit for paperwork over caseload.

- With the movement of OCA students to satellite locations, there are rumors that Conroy will also be closing within the next 5 years. Is there any truth to this rumor, or a formal timeline?
 - There have been zero conversations about closing Conroy.
- There are substitute paraprofessionals being hired (as per the board minutes), but where are they being placed?
 - Substitute paraprofessionals are being hired until they can pass the paraprofessional test. This year HR implemented a competency test for paras that do not have the college credits required to become a para. New hires need to pass the test before they can be hired as full time employees. If they fail the test, they have to wait 28 days to take it again. They can take the test until they pass it, but remain a substitute until they do.
- Conroy programs are continuously being closed (ADL, recycling), to meet staffing needs, and they are still often short. Transitional programs are constantly taking on extra students or having the para assigned to them cover for others – which is resulting in the job sites for students being closed/cancelled. Could there be additional compensation for classrooms who are consistently working understaffed?
 - Great suggestion, but something that would fall into our CBA.
- There is a general concern among teachers that if it appears that we are “making it work” then they will not see a need to make hiring a priority.
 - Patti wanted to make clear that this is not the case. They are going for 100% staffing in our program.

- **Professional Development**

- The PD that learning support staff were told to attend was more directed towards classroom ELA teachers. Would it be possible to have our own virtual PD where we could talk to other Learning Support Teachers about what we are doing with the new curriculum in our classroom? (Thank you Mindy for setting up the Open Court Resource page)
- Will our PD on 11-7 be with Special Ed, or with content?
 - We saw PD locations for 11-7. Patti suggested that you make notes in the surveys we complete for PD that you want differentiated PD. The issue is that some people do want open court, but some want a PSE option. Mindy mentioned that she did talk to Ann Filmore today and there could be talks of having this option in January – but they need to hear that we want it to happen.
 - If you did not see the October minutes with the link to Open Court shared resources – go to this link on the 3rd page: <https://pft400.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/PSEGrassrootsOctober2023Minutes-Final-1.pdf>

- **If we can add – RISE Rubric**

- Pioneer and Conroy staff worked with principals and RISE consultants to modify the RISE rubric that that it was more reflective of those rooms (and regional classrooms). Components are the same, but they provided examples of what those components might look like in those programs.
- When we switched to the new PERFORM – the collaborative rubric is no longer there. Is it still available?

- I apologize for leaving this off! Patti said this would be a question for Alyssa Ford Heywood – if you email her directly, you will get a faster response than waiting for our next meeting: afordheywood1@pghschools.org

- **Any Questions?**

- Please send to Brittany in advance, so Mindy, Patti, and Nina have time to review and come with answers for us.

Looking ahead to December:

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 6th at 4:30PM.

Send any questions/comments/concerns to Brittany Shoup at brittanyfmccann@yahoo.com or 412-760-9644

2023-2024 School Year Meeting Calendar

December	12-6-2023
January	1-3-2024
February	2-7-2024
March	3-6-2024
April	4-3-2024
May	5-1-2024