

Tamalpais High School Site Council Minutes

Date: Wednesday, Nov 1st, 2023, from 3:20 – 4:50pm, Mountain Room, Library

7 SSC members in attendance: Dr. Kimberly Clissold (principal), Laura Figueirinhas (parent), Dabney Ingram (parent), Mehreen Ahmad (data), Alyssa Sandner (teacher - Intervention coordinator – left at 4pm), Laura Erikson (science teacher), Mary Krawczyk (art teacher – arrived late).

Call to order: 3:30 pm by Laura Figueirinhas

Agenda and minutes were not addressed today due to lack of quorum at early part of meeting.

No public comment.

Topic 1: SSC training by Dr Clissold. Presented slides which will be distributed digitally to all SSC members. Key responsibility of the Tam SSC includes to review and update the Single School Plan for Student Achievement (SSPSA); ensure goals and strategies are measurable and based on data; expenditures meet requirements; maintain documentation; measure effectiveness of improvement strategies; and to seek input from school community. Our actions are limited to publicly posted agenda. Lots more data analysis and evaluation happens surrounding the WASC process, which is every 6 years at Tam (prior WASC was completed in 2021-22). The SSC may at times decide to create additional sub-committees or meetings for deeper work. This presentation was followed by discussion about how to follow Robert's Rules – making motions, voting, making sure one person isn't taking over the group, etc. *Idea for logistical ease for sharing agendas/minutes with the public: drop the agendas/minutes in a folder that has a link accessible to view (but not edit) online.*

Topic 2: Site Council Bylaw discussion. Clissold motions to postpone this discussion until we have more people at the meeting. Mary seconds. Discussion: Even though we barely have a quorum, let's wait until we have student voice here and a bit more diversity of perspective. All in favor. Motion approved.

Announcements/reports:

Principal: Shared at length a summary of the school's and district's response to anti-black speech. Including handouts. A "Stop and Learn" will occur 4 times this year (where every teacher pauses their instruction and teaches the same lesson school-wide), with a corresponding parent/caregiver night to keep parents abreast of the school's efforts. Teachers were prepared to teach the first Stop and Learn lesson about the n word. The school and district want to make it very clear to everyone that if you are not black you may not use the n word. Starting with this very basic education. Tam is organizing a parent and caregiver meeting shortly to share details with the parent community. Pausing and pivoting to address racism and teach anti-racism is important as an educational institution.

Feedback on first Stop and Learn: Got myriad responses from students. Some didn't know they couldn't use the n word. Students coming from different places with their understanding of how to be anti-racist. A community coalition and ongoing dialogue is needed. For example, if you aren't saying the n word, and aren't harmed by it, then what's your role in this work? What's Tam's role as a school? It's to educate. The first call to action is to listen to those harmed.

A question asked was, Is this hatred or just ignorance? Basic education needed because for some, it's just been ignorance. Also need to understand the difference between prejudice vs. racism. No other experiences of discrimination can relate to what it's like being black.

Principal wants to support all people in our school community – both those harmed and those making mistakes. School should be a place where people can learn and self-correct safely. Wants the community genuinely unpacking comments together. Context is so important; zero tolerance is easier to implement as a principal, but it harms kids because context matters. Racism and privilege are both taught.

Principal open to any and all feedback and resources from SSC.

Otherwise, school is rolling along day to day as usual. Students doing well. Some identified as needing support.

Teachers: Been a heavy few weeks. Processing a lot. Students are tired. A lot of people out sick. It's not low morale, just tired. Days are getting shorter, college apps due, lots of sports climaxing. One teacher mentioned she wished we had more education on self-care for students – lots are burning out that can then turn to substance use. For teachers, the Stop and Learn felt generally productive – didn't feel useless. Lots of rich conversation. A student in one teacher's Stop and Learn shared some questions around discrimination against white people – how make sure this effort doesn't build resentment. Teachers would like to share their feedback about their students' comments. Principal said there will be space for that to keep learning and growing. How make the shift from "not being a racist" to "being anti-racist." Additional discussion points included: we need to get comfortable being disruptive; BSU's recommendations and asks; need to teach about the difference between "calling in" vs. "calling out" people. Principal: Our purpose as a school is always to learn and help each other.

Students: none present so no update.

Classified: nothing new to report.

Parents: shared questions from parents specifically about the racist incident – some of questions were addressed during principal's report and will be further addressed in upcoming parent event. Encouraged Tam to connect with the middle school to proactively start this education sooner.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50pm