

PTO Executive Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2020
7 PM via Zoom

Attendance: Paul Jones, Christine Koobatian, Hollie Ward, Jen Nikolich, Colleen Bower, Yvette Lomaro

PTO Scholarships

The guidance department contacted Christine about where to send the applications. Shanna Hampton is the Chairperson. A discussion ensued about how to manage the committee with social distancing. Paul suggested that we reach out to Carrie Tremlett for an update as to how many applications were received. Shanna can decide if she prefers the committee to review the applications electronically or hard copies. She will be able to use the copy machine at PHS to make copies if needed, but must email Paul to set up a time to be let into the school. Christine will follow up with Shanna.

Grading Decision

The educational environment is not the same as classroom learning. The administrators reviewed the recommendations from the CT Department of Education. The process of creating a grading structure that met the needs of all students has been ongoing over the past four weeks. We have families in many different situations and are impacted in various ways from this current health crisis, so the goal was to create a grading procedure that took that into consideration. Over the past four weeks the administration has looked at a variety of grading procedures and reviewed all stored grades for the year and the percentages of all of those grades as they related to the overall semester grade. Formulas were created that would allow each student the best opportunity to be successful. The third quarter grades did not largely impact students in a positive manner. In fact, including the Q3 grades affected about 93% of students negatively. Because of this, and time missed at the end of the third quarter that students could have used more effectively had we been in school, the decision was made to make Q3 and Q4 pass fail. For the small percent of students who were positively impacted by their Q3 grades, adjustments will be made to the first semester grade to reflect that. The plan is to put each student in the best possible light. The higher average will then be reflected in PowerSchool as the semester average that sets up each student in the best manner for success. The goal is to create an equitable solution that also provides the ability to individualize based on the needs of students. Once the grades are updated, Paul will send out communication to parents and students. Students (or their parent) should reach out to Dr. Jones or their guidance counselor once those are posted if they want to review the calculations used for them. It was also noted that grades in PowerSchool were never deleted. They are there for students to have access to, and to help their guidance counselors in writing their college recommendations. Any change that is inputted will be positive for that student.

Videoconferencing

This is not required and we understand it will look different at the high school, middle, and elementary levels. The live part might look like an office hour time for a Google meeting, a

teacher working individually with a student or like an advisory teacher time. The recommendation is that teachers record the sessions, but it is not required. All school rules still apply to students. There are privacy, equity, and access issues for full live teaching online. This is still emergency management of the current situation. There are no illusions that the students are getting 100 percent of what they got in the classroom. Teachers are attempting to mitigate any academic learning gaps in the future as much as possible and they will do their very best to close that gap when school resumes. It is important to protect the social and emotional well-being of all students.

Workload and Communication of Assignments

A structure is being looked at for when communications can be issued by subject area to limit communications. The goal is to make it more effective and efficient to streamline things for students and parents. This will help the student create a schedule and manage it. Parents should first reach out to the teacher if it is a workload issue. If it is an issue of someone in their family being sick, please send the email to the student's guidance counselor and they can help disseminate that information.

Events

We are still reviewing events that could still occur and how we could run them based on when we are allowed to have large gatherings. We want to provide all students, and especially the Class of 2020, with as many opportunities as we can. The CIAC has not made an announcement on Spring sports.

Fees

We are reviewing fees to create a structure to refund fees that students had paid and were not able to use such as parking and pay to play. It will be based on when school resumes, and if the programs will be put in place for the balance of this school year.

Next Year's Schedule

Next year's schedules are still going to be distributed by the end of this school year. It has not been determined how that will happen.

Junior Personal Essays

Brian Jehning has sent out multiple communications about the college essay as well as other information and emails have also gone out from the guidance counselors via Google Classroom. Students should be checking their communication from both him and their school counselor.

Tuesday, May 12th at 7PM will be the next PTO Board meeting.