Parent Advisory Team (PAT) Notes Summary

In planning for the upcoming school year, the district invited parents to participate in a series of live feedback sessions conducted via Zoom on April 21st and 22nd. Parents joined breakout rooms in small groups together with district employees who facilitated the meeting and took notes. The notetaker summarized the parent discussion on a shared google document that was displayed to all participants via a shared screen—parents could see the notes in real time and suggest revisions if the notes didn’t capture the essence of their comments. Discussion was centered around 3 topics: immediate needs, summer needs, and needs for the 2021-22 school year.

To efficiently summarize the notes and develop emergent themes quickly, a semi-automated technique was used to efficiently cluster notes together into groups with consistent phrasing. Feedback themes were grouped together into the following general categories. For each theme, an exemplar excerpt from the comment is provided for context.

Immediate Needs
Of the notes analyzed, 73% were assigned to one or more derived themes. Themes are provided in descending order of relative frequency (i.e., starting with the most prevalent themes.)

1. School Connection and Engagement
   a. “Feel that my daughter would benefit from the opportunity to socialize during lunch or other times/activities where they can interact with their peers/friends. They need the opportunity to work and finetune their social skills. Social opportunities are needed DURING the day not at the end of the school day.”
   b. “The creation of social clubs and sports clubs for all grade levels. The kids and parents want to get out. We’ve been in lockdown and keeping to our social bubbles. We need to reconnect. Get active.”

2. Celebration, Appreciation, Acknowledgement, Empathy
   a. “Celebrations that are above and beyond graduations such as acknowledging in a public way those students who are making continuous progress better choices, for example”
   b. “Importance of elementary moments/closures/celebrations, ex.: teacher recognitions/PTO events.”

3. Graduation and Promotion
   a. “Desire for an in person graduation ceremony for high school especially since they haven’t had any portion of their year. The venue doesn’t matter. Just want a plan in place for an in person graduation whether it is a football stadium or not, knowing how many tickets they will get. Communicate out the date, venue, ticket information, and what graduation may look like as soon as possible.”

4. Instruction and Returning to Campus
   a. “Teachers did an amazing job this year with DL. Teachers moved from physical classroom to Zoom google classroom. Consistency with Zoom instruction while COVID cases increased in the community. Decreased amount of stress without having to worry

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about COVID testing, and exposure to other kids that may have been exposed to COVID. Huge comfort with limited exposure to COVID. DL prepared children how to navigate with technology Zoom, google classroom. Very grateful to the teachers and the schools with how they took care of the kids and taught them. Allowing students back on campus with concurrent learning model and allowing students to remain on DL two options, has been great.”

b. “Students need to feel confident in their returning to school full time and what that will look like.”

5. Health, Wellness, and Safety
   a. “I’m hearing an exorbitant amount of hand sanitizing is happening. Per CDC guidance, sanitizing is not as effective as actual hand washing. Germs become resistant when it is used too often. Is there a change in plan for this next year?”

6. Socialization
   a. “Focus on socialization and getting kids off of the computer.”

7. Academic Intervention
   a. “Need tutoring or afterschool programs that are offered in person.”

8. Technology
   a. “Students need continued access to Chromebooks. 1 Chromebook cart per classroom.”

Summer Needs
Of the notes analyzed, 71% were assigned to one or more derived themes. Themes are provided in descending order of relative frequency (i.e., starting with the most prevalent themes.)

1. SEL and Student Support
   a. “Learning to transition into MS or HS how to maneuver on the campus. Focus on social emotional interactions. Elementary could benefit with developmental parts of learning.”

2. Instruction, Courses, and Sessions
   a. “Fine arts/Visual arts during summer learning bridge the gap to get students prepared.”
   b. “Have multiple sessions during the summer for students to sign up later in the summer, and to allow for plans changing.”
   c. “Address the curriculum missed due to DL.”

3. Academic Intervention, Tutoring, Small Groups
   a. “If we can lengthen the day to include those students who do not have midday access by either childcare, enrichment or full day summer offering. Similar to ASES Day Camp.”
   b. “Small group instruction for students to help with core curriculum. Rotation schedule based on area of expertise.”

4. Transportation
   a. “Single parents have to be at their work and have no access to Transportation. Busses are vital for a full return. I only elected DL because of the lack of Transportation. I hope there is a change to bussing implementation, with disinfecting, foggers or distancing. Parent schedules do not allow for the lack of bussing options. There have been huge improvements and the disinfecting options are not time consuming. Fogging is proven and being done throughout the country.”

5. Virtual Options
   a. “Have different options for people for virtual or in person. For virtual different options at their own pace online or live virtual.”

6. Intersession
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a. “Year-round offerings to support those schools/students who don’t have the traditional summer break. Don’t let those schools and students fall through the cracks.”

7. Student and Parent Input
   a. “Can offer summer school to all families and see how many are interested? Some of our children look good on paper but may not be. Get input from families for targeted instruction of their child.”

8. In Person Options
   a. “Summer learning in person is very important for students that distance learning have not been working. Small classes/groups to target students’ specific needs.”

9. Credit Recovery
   a. “Academic Credit Recovery classes that are free/accessable to students and available over the summer.”

10. Assessment and Progress Monitoring
    a. “Will there be results from State testing by the beginning of summer, or some type of measure so parents know if their child needs additional support?”

Fall 2021-22 Needs
Of the notes analyzed, 75% were assigned to one or more derived themes. Themes are provided in descending order of relative frequency (i.e., starting with the most prevalent themes.)

1. SEL and Non-Academic Needs
   a. “Group students in ways that will support them including social emotional learning, academics, socialization, etc.”
   b. “Offering enrichment programs, digital art, architecture design thinking, coding, virtual physical activities, theatre, music, STEM.”

2. In Person Learning
   a. “5 days a week, full day, engaged, in person learning if it is safe, especially for our Black students.”
   b. “Move away from doing all of the work digitally as we move in person. Students need to learn using books and paper with learning time and work away from computers. Digital might be easier for teachers but students need nondigital learning opportunities.”

3. Extracurriculars and Events
   a. “Combo fun events/activities virtually and in person events that need to be in person.”
   b. “Would like to see school back to the way it was in 2019 dances, football games, events, leadership team planning traditional high school events.”

4. Virtual Learning
   a. “More clarification on what Virtual Academy looks like.”
   b. “Once teachers made the transition to virtual learning want to know if both types of instruction can be a good path for learning. Can in person and virtual learning continue? Like it is now a choice for in person and a choice for virtual learning like what is going on now.”

5. Academic Support
   a. “Kids need to be back on campus and not be distance learning. Seeing the negative ramifications on student learning. Offering make up credit recovery differently than when they failed the class.”
   b. “For summer and next year, I’d like to see in person tutoring resources for families that request them.”

6. Class Size, Scheduling
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7. Transportation
   a. “Single parents have to be at their work and have no access to Transportation. Busses are vital for a full return. I only elected DL because of the lack of Transportation. I hope there is a change to bussing implementation, with disinfecting, foggers or distancing. Parent schedules do not allow for the lack of bussing options. There have been huge improvements and the disinfecting options are not time consuming. Fogging is proven and being done throughout the country.”

8. Returning to Campus
   a. “A lot of anxiety about returning to in person instruction not sure how things were going to look like and which of her friends were going to be there. Very helpful in reassuring them about returning to in person instruction. Some have become accustomed to the past year with DL. Students are worried about the new policies and safety protocols. They need social interaction.”

9. Assessment
   a. “Will there be any testing to determine where students are academically either this summer or beginning of school year?”
   b. “EOY testing is an extra burden on teachers/students.”

10. Recess, Breaks, Meals
    a. “Breakfast and lunch meals are happening on campus. Students are able to eat at school.”
    b. “What about the ability to get released at lunch in the next school year for kids with other activities. Is the Sheldon school model an option? Will there be opportunities for flexibility in schedules?”