School Council Meeting 11/4/2020

DFA is 37-60% in person

In attendance: Laura Irwin, Almira Vazadarjova, Tiffany Tatem, DH Zhong, Jimmy Bowers, Victor Yu, Renee Austin, Chris Melcher, Gina Bassford, Renee Kelly

1. Minutes from 5/6/2020 meeting- some adjustments on spelling changes only, approved.
2. Renee Austin and Donghang (DH) Zhang voted in as new parent members to School Council. Both have students in middle school. Council still needs a member in the Business Category.
3. Council Contact list was updated.
4. Council Membership and Officers were reviewed. Suggestion by Chris Melcher made to have officers serve two (2) terms. Council voted to have Victor Yu and Jimmy Bowers to serve another year, and for officers to serve for at least another year. Discussion ensued around possible term limits after 2 terms, possibly capping the size of the Council, and a possible Advisory Board.
5. Mandatory Training: RCBOE is to send everyone an e-mail with a link for the training. Everyone should be on the lookout for the e-mail.
6. Update on construction- Dr. Kelly reported construction is going well, new furniture was delivered to Media Center last week. They are working on the new lighting and installing Promethium Boards at both ends of the Media Center. There will be workstations where students can actually write on the furniture when in collaborative groups. External construction is progressing, but will likely not be completed by January, 2021. The new building will house 2 dance studios, 1 can be used as a blackbox performance area, audiovideo production with it’s own soundproof recording areas and green screen, there will be a courtyard for filming, a computer lab and 2 make-up space classrooms. Inside lighting will be LED.
7. Dr. Kelly reported DFA is currently at 62% in-person learning, compared to the rest of the county which is at 30-40% face-to-face. Eighty-four distance learning students plan to return to in-person, which will bring the percentage to 74%. The school seems to be improving responses to COVID + contacts, the most recent case included only 9 students. Discussion was held around safety protocol measures. For many classes, students are able to be kept 6 feet apart, however, there are some larger class sizes where this is not possible. Discussion occurred around air ventilation and decreasing aerosols using fogging in the classrooms. Richmond County does have a Environmental Specialist.
8. Tiffany Tatum and Jimmy Bowers weighed in on how the teachers are coping. Retired teachers have stepped up to help teacher morale with food and prizes. Dr. Kelly reported many teachers are expected to always be “on” to respond to students and parents, even late into the night. Teachers are challenged to teach both in-person and on line. They are not getting any down time to recharge. Fellow teachers and Administration are supporting the faculty. Gina Bassford mentioned she and teachers are getting 100+ emails a day. One of the challenges are the students that are not reaching out and they want to make sure those students are not lost. Sending positive communication to teachers would mean a lot. Almira Vazadarjova suggested a Council Award at the end of the year.
9. Year book ad for School Council. Discussion occurred about how ad left Victor Yu out. Council voted to request that another ad be placed gratis this year.
10. Masters Week in the fall- there will be school that week.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.