**Campbell PTA Meeting**

**October 10, 2018  
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Approximate # of Attendees: 25**

1. **Welcome: Barbara Martinez, President**

* Barbara thanked Kate Sullivan, Campbell’s School Counselor, for inviting tonight’s guests to speak to the PTA about preventing substance abuse
* Guest speakers:
  + Jenny Sexton, Substance Abuse Counselor for Kenmore MS and Williamsburg MS and the elementary schools that feed into those middle schools
  + Detective Jackie Pagan, School Resource Officer (SRO) for Campbell ES, Carlin Springs ES, and Kenmore MS

1. **Preventing Substance Abuse: Kate Sullivan, Jenny Sexton, Detective Jackie Pagan**

* Jenny and Detective Pagan introduced themselves and thanked the PTA for coming – they were especially glad to see so many parents in the room
* Jenny and Detective Pagan work together presenting to students in health and PE classes in all middle school grades – helps to build trust and relationships with students: students to get to know them and what they do, and they get to know students’ concerns and what they need
* Presentation – key points:
  + Why Adolescents Use Drugs
    - This is what they tell us:
      * *To fit in:* “because others are doing it” (or they think others are using)
      * *To feel good:* adolescents may use to get the “high” because abused drugs interact with brain chemistry to produce feelings of pleasure
      * *To feel better:* adolescents who suffer from depression, anxiety, stress-related disorders, physical pain may use to self-medicate
      * *To do better:* adolescents may use to enhance academic or athletic performance in response to intense pressures and competitiveness
      * *To experiment:* adolescents often motivated to seek new experiences
    - Based on what students tell us, it is important for parents/caregivers to:
      * *Know your children’s passwords to social media!* Adolescents use social media to share stories about substance use
      * *Teach “street smarts,”* e.g. don’t take “short cuts” on trails around Four Mile Run, stay on well-lit, well-traveled sidewalks, etc.
  + Symptoms and Warning Signs of Substance Use
    - We get concerned when we see clusters of warning signs (see below), especially where no problems had existed before
      * *Physical signs:* neglected appearance; unexplained weight changes; sleeping in class; red eyes; runny nose; hacking cough; lack of energy/motivation; smell of substances on body, clothes, breath
      * *Behavioral signs:* changes in attitude/personality; changes in friends; drop in grades; excessive tardiness, absences, skipping class; difficulty maintaining attention; paranoia, hallucinations; excessive need for privacy; secretive or suspicious behavior
    - Red flags – we try to address these sooner than later, as these are often the earliest signs of a problem:
      * School absenteeism and failure – this tends to pick up around December
      * Problems with family/other relationships, beyond normal teen behavior
      * Loss of interest in activities
  + The Role of your School Resource Officer (SRO)
    - Detective Pagan’s office is at Kenmore – she has an open-door policy and a good relationship and rapport with students – they stop by and visit, say hello, ask questions, ask for help – and they also understand SRO has a job to do which may involve making an arrest if necessary
    - In middle school the focus is on prevention rather than intervention – it’s much easier to prevent a substance use/abuse problem – once there is a problem, intervention often involves the police and court system
    - Brief discussion about how court system works for young people under age 18:
      * Court appearances are much faster for youth than for adults
      * Focus is on providing resources for families and getting supports in place as quickly as possible, e.g. social worker, counseling services
      * Sometimes this can be the call to action for families to get help for their child if school supports or police involvement doesn’t work
    - SRO can help students and/or families identify youth-oriented services, will even help families navigate their insurance to find providers in network
    - Community outreach events:
      * Coffee with a Cop – held annually at Kenmore, helps students and families become familiar with SROs and supports in the community
      * Town Hall meetings – recently held a series of meetings on opioid crisis
      * Red Ribbon Week (National Family Partnership) – substance abuse prevention awareness campaign held annually in October, to coincide with Halloween (October 23-31, 2018)
      * National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week (NIDA) – includes science-based activities geared to youth, held annually in January (Jan 22-27, 2019)
      * National Prevention Week (SAMHSA) – campaign focused on mental health and substance use disorders held annually in May – includes a prevention resource fair with information and activities with the school psychologist and social worker – this usually coincides with SOLs, so students come check out the resources during breaks (May 12-19, 2019)
  + Substance Use Reported by APS Students
    - Vaping is the number one offender
      * Flavors (“juice”) make this especially attractive to young people
      * Juuls and Suorin are the most common vape devices – they look like flash drives and charge in laptops like via USB ports; very easy to hide – many students know what a Juul is by 5th grade
      * Anything that can be liquified can be vaped, e.g. nicotine and marijuana, also recently we are seeing students vaping alcohol, cocaine oil
      * Vaping is unregulated and contains a ton of chemicals! Also, vape devices have lithium batteries in them which can explode when overheated (and because they charge in computers, they get hot)
    - Alcohol – still seeing a lot of young people using/abusing alcohol – on average boys try alcohol by age 14, girls age 15
    - Marijuana
      * Shifting legal landscape and differences in laws between jurisdictions make this somewhat challenging to discuss with young people, but the fact remains that possession of marijuana is a federal crime
      * Also seeing fentanyl and other substances added to marijuana
      * Edibles are a whole different ballgame
    - Prescription medications
      * Opiates/opioids – only seeing pills, no active heroin cases in APS (but we know heroin is in the community and it’s cheap, so we have to talk about it with students) – however these medicines are common, e.g. students get prescriptions following wisdom teeth surgery
      * Xanax – acts like alcohol so it’s difficult to tell if a student is drunk – students are taking whole Xanax “bars” at one time (the bars are not much bigger than a vitamin pill but contain four doses)
      * Synthetic substances can be easily purchased online – these online retailers are very sophisticated and are difficult for police to track
    - Over-the-counter (OTC) medications and other substances
      * Dextromethorphan (DXM) – active ingredient in many cough medicines, e.g. Robitussin, Nyquil – ingested in large quantities acts like PCP
      * Nutmeg (!) – when snorted acts like PCP
  + What a Parent Can do to Help
    - Start these conversations with your children! Don’t let the SRO and school counselors be the first ones to talk with children about substance use and abuse
    - Education is key! Key points to discuss with students:
      * How substances affect the body and brain – e.g. opioids work by blocking pain receptors in the brain, and a person can become dependent on pain medication after taking them for just four days
      * Addiction doesn’t care who you are – e.g. 1 in 4 people will become addiction to opioids; students know of famous people who have died
      * Caution about drinking from open containers, eating unwrapped foods
      * Don’t share prescription medications – it’s illegal and unsafe
      * For students with prescriptions e.g. for ADHD – don’t put pills in your pocket because then we don’t know what it is, if it’s yours, if you got it from or are giving it to a friend, etc.
* Discussion – ways to frame parent/child conversations to support substance use prevention
  + Teach coping skills for navigating risky situations, e.g. substance use, shoplifting, bullying
  + Have a code word or phrase that children can text or use on the phone if they feel unsafe, e.g. “how’s the dog?” or even just “X” – make it clear you will pick them up with no questions asked if they are in an uncomfortable situation and need to get away
  + Explain about taking care of one’s body – e.g. we don’t share hair brushes, medicines, etc. – or if you are having a drink with dinner (for example), explain how you are doing so safely (“I am having this one glass of wine and I’m not driving anywhere”)
  + If you have a history of addiction or depression/other mental illness in your family – talk with your children about what this means for them, increased risk factors, etc.
  + Normalize non-use, e.g. tell children they aren’t the only ones who haven’t been drunk
  + The majority of young people aren’t using substances – but the younger they are when they start using, the more likely they are to become addicted
* Detective Pagan and Jenny Saxton displayed several vape devices and items that can be used to stash substances, all easily ordered from Amazon
* Kate Sullivan closed the session by explaining that APS created positions for substance abuse counselors such as Jenny Saxton based on the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) – this is part of wraparound student services that APS offers – parent are encouraged to reach out to SROs and Jenny Saxton with questions or for more information

1. **EL Overview: Maureen Nesselrode, Principal**

* Maureen clarified that EL (Expeditionary Learning) is Campbell’s instructional model – EL is not a “program” or a “curriculum” – it’s more than outdoor education and hands-on learning
  + Campbell is the only EL school in Virginia! There are a few in DC
* How does Campbell decide what we’re going to do every year in EL?
  + Implementation Review – what and how we are doing in implementing the EL model
  + Annual work plan – tied to school management plan and monitored by visiting classes
* Megan DeRitter is Campbell’s EL advisor – she spends 20+ days on site at Campbell each year to monitor/advise, does professional development for Campbell teachers and staff, “learning walks” to go into classrooms and observe the EL model in action
* We will be integrating service learning into one expedition per grade level this year
  + Different than community service, this is focused on applying learning to the community
  + EL Education is providing professional development to support this effort
* Campbell is working to become an EL Credentialed School – similar to accreditation
  + This is an intensive year-long process, all teachers are contributing – involves putting together a school-wide portfolio to demonstrate that we are using the EL model with fidelity and provide evidence of high quality student work, student character, and student mastery of knowledge and skills
  + If Campbell becomes a credentialed school, we could:
    - Become a model for other public schools demonstrating how to follow state standards and adhere to EL model
    - Hold site seminars, form professional learning communities
    - Use student work as models and continue adding depth to expeditions
* EL Education National Conference coming up in November – 5 Campbell staff are attending, Maureen is presenting, student work may be displayed (e.g. last year’s 2nd grade farmers market posters) – this is a great opportunity to bring back new ideas to implement at Campbell, network with other EL schools, learn more about credentialing
* Ron Berger, EL Education’s Chief Academic Officer, will be visiting Campbell on October 19
* We watched the video “Austin’s Butterfly” showing students reviewing and critiquing a peer’s scientific drawing (in this case, of a swallowtail butterfly) and the student revising the drawing based on peer feedback – many of our students are doing this in their fall expeditions
* We had a brief discussion about expeditions – how long do they last, what are they about, etc.
  + Each grade level does 2 expeditions per year, one in the fall and one in the spring; each expedition spans 4-6 weeks
  + They are usually linked to science or social studies
  + Upper grades usually start earlier in the school year versus primary grades; younger students are still getting used to school, and the upper grades have to finish a bit earlier in the spring because of SOLs
  + Students don’t necessarily have homework related to expeditions, most of the work is done during school
  + There is usually at least 1 field trip (“field work”) per expedition
  + Expeditions culminate in a showcase, where students present to families what they did and learned during the expedition; information will be coming home soon about that

1. **Treasurer Report: Amanda Lowenberger, Treasurer**

* Budget highlights:
  + Main expenses were: Outdoor Classroom, back to school breakfast for teachers, PTA meetings, web hosting for PTA site, PTA leadership training
  + Income sources: Amazon, donations, spirit gear, PTA dues
* Funding requests:
  + Green screen ($73.93) – Ms. O’Connor gave an overview of uses: meteorologist project, interactive art projects, book and writing projects
    - Already in budget in Grade 4 line (PTA did not need to vote to approve)
  + 15 copies of Wish Tree by Katherine Applegate to be shared amongst 4th grade students for a book club with an “adaptation” theme ($216.15)
    - Already in budget in Grade 4 line (PTA did not need to vote to approve)
  + Emergency food pantry ($300) – sealed case stocked with shelf-stable items to be kept on site at Campbell; staff and teachers would be able to access the pantry to discreetly provide food for families in need/crisis (e.g. deportation, hospitalization) when the school is aware of such an issue
    - Requested by parent of 1st grader at Campbell after researching food insecurity in Arlington; parent will be responsible for keeping pantry stocked
    - Breakfast items will also be included for students who come to school too late to get breakfast in the cafeteria
    - This is a pilot year, so we will be tracking use to see how it goes
    - Q: Is this in use in other schools? Yes, that’s where the idea came from
    - Q: How will we keep the foodstuffs safe from critters? Water- and air-tight commercial grade container included in request
    - Q: How will we let families know about this? This won’t be widely broadcast throughout Campbell; staff will know when there are families in crises/need
    - Motion to approve the emergency food pantry; seconded; approved

**New Business**

* No new business

1. **Closing: Barbara Martinez, President**

* Reminders: Fun Run on October 12, Restaurant Night October 29
* Next PTA meeting on November 13 at 6:30 PM