



Special Education Committee Minutes

March 1, 2018

Board Chair—Dana Schwartz

Administrative Liaison—Alyssa Marton

Attendance—Please see the accompanying committee attendance sheet.

Dana Schwartz called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

The minutes of the February 1, 2018 meeting were approved.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- Mary Worthington – Network of Victims Assistance (NOVA) program overview

Alyssa introduces both women:

We have Mary Worthington and Mary Rickman from NOVA they've done wonderful presentations with students. They're working with our intensive learning support students.

Mary W - It's an honor to be here. We're going to be back with 4th graders and starting our peer education and Upstanders in mid-April.

Quick intro: Mary R is an amazing educator been with NOVA 10 years, the last few years the majority of things I do is working with the special needs populations. Here and there other programs that we have throughout elementary through HS.

Mary W – I've been at NOV for 18 years. Help create awareness for children about their rights and responsibilities and making that connection, when in doubt, it's okay to check it out with a trusted adult and that's a really important component. We're delighted to be coming in a couple of weeks to be starting the programs with MS and HS, and this is a photograph of a student we worked with about a year ago, in the 18-21 group, different school district, we work with that age group about sexual harassment in the work place. Important for students to know their rights

and responsibilities. In this one handout, the things we'll be doing with your students are highlighted in purple and green.

Mary R – what age children do you have?

This young woman shared a story. When she was a HS student there was a boy who she really liked. Peer pressure. He said if you really care about me, (she is a child on the spectrum) you'll send me a picture. You know where I'm going with this. She felt the pressure, sent the picture, and it went viral within moments. She was suspended along with the boy, and she wants everyone to know that it's not okay.

My body belongs to me in the LES, and as children start to grow and develop and mature, and attracted to other people, and the interest in relationships and it is a challenge. The privacy of our bodies is not to be shared in any time of way with technology. We talk about that in 4th grade, that if anyone asks for a revealing picture or inappropriate picture what do you do.

But as parents, be mindful about the pressure students are having.

Mary R – That was a student who wishes she didn't do something because she wasn't knowledgeable. We were recently in a program with a student in same population who caught herself before it got to that point. She realized she was going down the wrong path, her words, and wanted to know how to get out of it. Great to catch her.

Mary W – That's one thing we do in prevention.

What I'm about to show you, this is really important. We have worked very closely to help develop this program with Temple's institute of disabilities. Beth F – educator at Temple, did a study with young people of developmental differences, she took a print ad that Gillette razors did, they had towels

Pink one is female, blue is male.

Many of the young people got it flipped.

I use this as a really wonderful reminder for all of us, our perspective and a person with an intellectual or developmental disability, even if we think we're saying something clearly it may be perceived in a different way. We must be multi-faceted in how we communicate.

Mary R is working with the 18-21 group and talking about social workplace and romantic relationships. We don't get into responsible sexual behavior for HS for the most part. If we think we have students who are in paired sexual relationships we want to make sure they know about statutory sexual assault the law.

Mary R – Two topics have been added, social etiquette is a huge area, they want to fit in so badly but don't know how to do that appropriately. The friend versus friendly – they think if someone smiles at them, they think that is their boy/girlfriend. They have a distorted view.

Mary W – We'll be here on April 4, and in the MS April 11, and the HS may 9.

Topics we'll be covering:

- Intro
- Safe Internet Use
- Social media
- Social etiquette
- Friend versus friendly
- Crossing the line of safety

We're about to pilot it in council rock, crossing the line of safety. Giving out too much info face to face and online.

B/c of that perspective we do social stories, acting it out, q and a, etc.

Parents/Guardians – recognize that we won't be talking about sexuality with your children, but we know it's a really important component, we ask you to think about where you have been talking about sexual health with your children, sexual functioning and sexual relationships. The other component is we hope you use correct terminology. We have a young girl who kept saying someone is playing with my pocketbook, and the teacher said, tell it to stop. Then the teacher realized she was using the word "pocketbook" in terms of her private area. We could have gotten that child help so much sooner.

The other thing is if someone is lurking or trying to find the appropriate person to target, regardless if that child is 3 to 18, if that person knows the correct terminology that is a red flag for the person trying to groom to this child. They know someone has educated this child. And most likely will have a line of communication.

Nuanced human interaction – perspective taking:

- Feelings
- Desires
- Motivations
- Intentions

Just b/c someone has a developmental delay or on spectrum doesn't mean they're not having sexual feelings. We're all sexual humans. Without the right understanding we can have consequences. We want to provide safety for your children and make sure there are not unexpected consequences of good intentions.

Personal space boundaries

Understanding someone else's behavior

Predict what other people may do or say – a lot of role playing

Think about one's own social behavior and adjust it accordingly.

If you're sitting here thinking my son or daughter, this might be more than he or she may be able to digest, we have so many different situations with so many students, where a parent said, oh my daughter won't be able to participate and what happens? One parent sat in a meeting like this and was in tears. She said her daughter could not understand any of this stuff. Didn't even want her participating in the relationship topics. This was one of our #1 students! She volunteered for every role play. Sometimes we limit our expectations, our children are reflecting what we think they can do. Her older sister actually came to school and watched her reading and raising her hand to participate. It was delightful. Her older sister who was about 30, she came to me afterwards and said thank you so much this is awesome. One of many stories.

We make a really good connection.

Those nuanced human interactions: we hear stories, and what we want to do is learn from them.

It can be hard to tell if someone is smiling or smirking – good to look at pics in magazines and talk about that.

If your son or daughter is great at giving you a really tight hug, that may be ok for you, but as these young people are going out into the workforce and communities, do we want them hugging someone?

Other thing – slap versus a pat. Doing something that's really careful. Even about high fives. Not everyone likes or wants them. It's not appropriate anymore in 6th grade. Ask if it's ok for a high five. They don't do that anymore. He was on the playground and wanted to give another student a high five and a student in one of his classes, "let him give that to you he's special," he was SO HURT by that statement. It's not a middle school thing. Sometimes we have to do a reality check to see how much our kids are integrated into the typical population. Make sure we're teaching them age appropriate and peer appropriate social etiquette.

Another school district, a young man who came to a classroom with a bathroom in MS, and he's all excited, all his social skills about how to make friends. He goes down the hall unescorted and goes in the bathroom and there is another student using the urinal (8th grade). You leave a buffer if someone is using a urinal. No conversation. You look straight ahead. Unless you know someone.

[Sidebar from Dr. McKenna and Chuck Malone] Commercial showing urinal etiquette.

The 6th grader gave him a compliment on the 8th graders private area. At dismissal time the 8th grader was sharing the incident with his peers, a teacher overheard, wasn't sure what happened, a report was made, and the district decided the best practice for this 6th grade he needed a school escort, the school custodian. He was tagged as "that kid." No one did situational etiquette with him.

Pictures of bathrooms with urinals and toilets:
Close and Lock the door.
Leave a buffer.

Decision making: Boundaries

7 year olds – asking first. May I have a hug? Ask first. A parent needs to ask a son or daughter. We want to build that ask first. I always use a story for both parents, Aunt Susie at Thanksgiving, and she is coming to your home and you have a young son or daughter, and the doorbell rings, and you go to the door, and you look at your child and say, "hey give aunt Susie a hug!" rewind it – "aunt Susie is going to be here, how would you like to welcome her?" You can draw her a picture, give her a compliment, or say welcome, doesn't have to be physical. Giving that child a choice, asking first before we touch anyone is the safest thing to do. If we get into a paired relationship it comes into affirmative consent.

This picture is of a story that happened on a SEPTA bus. A young man took public transportation, he had a developmental disability. Hot summer day. He saw this girl and there was attraction. Like a magnet he sat right next to her. The bus was pretty empty. You can imagine maybe how she was feeling. Someone did a good job about saying, start a conversation, so we did that, no answer, did it again, no answer. He was getting frustrated. He took his hand and tapped her above her knee, skin on skin contact feels different. She pulled the bus cord. Police were called. The first thing he said to the officer, "I didn't touch her on her private parts of her body." We must teach them before they touch anybody they have to ask first. Also, leave a buffer on the bus. We do role plays about that.

Where would you sit? A picture of 3 bus seats. Leave a buffer. If no choice, you say, can I sit here? And we practice that.

Appropriate or inappropriate? Giving a parent a hug at home. Ask first. High five? Ask first. Giving a hug to a friend? Ask first.

When a child is small, whether with a teacher or parent, ask first. What happens is, when they become in a paired relationship it becomes second nature and becomes affirmative consent and can avoid problems.

MS – not your district – a young boy who had an intellectual disability and he wanted so badly to have friends. One student outside said to the young man, here's my backpack, don't look in it but take it in for me. If you do I'll be your friend. Security came.

Role play, 9 out of 10 times they take the backpack, we have to do it 3-4 times. Is that really being your friend? Amazing how they just do it.

Teaching appropriate noncompliance is important – don't look in the bag, don't tell your parent, it's our secret, all clues to think it might be a trick.

They target somebody who isn't going to question them. Even more appropriate that we're spending time on this now. This is a target population.

Parent X – I know many stories where a grown child has autism and the people who claim to be their friend had manipulated them to be the driver of a getaway car or illegal activities, b/c they were "easily duped," and they took the fall for it. I love the way you're framing this. "I'll be your friend if"

Mary W – we talk about it and say you don't have to do it, we have to reinforce that, and parents can do that too.

Upstander coming in – Joe told George it doesn't sound safe, and let's go tell security.

We talked about you having the conversations with your emerging adult children about sexuality and sexual function. A young man on the spectrum, severely disabled, and he was turning 30 and the staff was saying, what are you going to do for your 30th birthday? Have sex. Finally, someone had the foresight to ask this young man why is he saying that? In his late teens, he asked his parents what sex is, he had no knowledge, and for all those years, he remembered what his parents said, "Wait until you're 30." I tell this story as a reminder that this a young man with limited function. He remembered what his parents said.

Another story – a young couple who got married, both had disabilities, went on their honeymoon, and a support staff asked how it was, I did exactly what you told me! And he said, good. I took the condom, I took the condom and put it on the banana, and put it on the night table. Perspective. We have to be SO specific. And reinforce.

We DO NOT tell them how to use a condom though.

Technology: child generated pornography, predators online, there's a lot of opportunities to find porn. People with autism are collectors. I can tell you situations where the unexpected consequences of good intentions. Collecting images on the computer, children under 18, and they got slammed by law enforcement. Really important to monitor your child's internet use. Look at what they're collecting. And have these convos.

Dealing with Pressure: q's from kids

1. Why does it seem every person I date only wants one thing?
2. How do you tell someone you don't want them to touch you?
3. Why does someone ask you how far you've gone with another person?
4. If you're in a situation and someone wants to kiss you?
5. How do you handle it if someone tells you to take off their clothes?
6. Why does someone try to manipulate another person?
7. You plan a date and before you even go out and that person asks if you want to have sex.

Parents were shocked by these q's from their kids. One q after another.

The reason I share these with you, people just assume the feeling of vulnerability doesn't happen, but it does. We need to provide a safe and trusting environment for these young people 18-21. For younger kids, we're working on the foundational parts that build self-esteem and talking to a trusted adult, and reminding them to think before they act. Even if you have young kids, they have q's about what they see. So it may not be something for them, but boy do I have some q's about what's going on. We can't assume they're in a vacuum b/c they're not.

5 stages of internet grooming: ON BACK OF THE PAMPHLET

One girl recognized the red flags, realized the person was starting to engage in behaviors that she recognized as risky. This person wanted her to sneak out to meet them. She recognized that is a grooming stage. She knew it wasn't appropriate. She met this person on college campus. Luckily she recognized this.

Another student, a person was texting her how awesome and beautiful she was, but they never met. It was nice, but that can be part of the grooming process. Make sure they are aware, that feels good, but that can be a trap. Don't let our guard down and give out info.

One young woman whose mom was monitoring her snapchat and a stranger was saying how "exquisite" she was.

*My child understands the differences between dating and friendship?

Social story: all MS and HS a girl named Amy a boy named Ben, they started talking, and she shared a funny video with him. Ben has a crush on Amy. He thought b/c she shared a video they might be boyfriend/girlfriend. He started telling everyone. Now Amy likes him but not like that. She's just being friendly. He was feeling sad. Now he realizes she doesn't feel the same way. Brought in an Upstander – Jacob asked Ben to come over and play a video game. But now Ben understands just b/c someone is friendly doesn't mean they want to be their girlfriend.

We've used this scenario in 3 different classrooms and it's been great.

We recognize that each of us is unique and want or not want a relationship. But we want to be respectful and give everyone the guidelines about what a healthy relationship is. We'll be talking about the 18-21 about sexual harassment in the workplace.

True story video, two autistic young people. Latoya and Nico. Romantic friendship!

I like to end on that note.

Here are a couple of handouts. The first one is for parents of younger children. I presented it at a conference a few years ago about touches. A copy of that article. And this is something that Mary, Tori and I like to give to parents, I'm going to send this to you, Alyssa, and it has q's about comfort level, you can fill it out anonymously or give it to us with your child's name on it. It would be really helpful for us to have info about your children's likes and dislikes.

Does anyone have any questions?

Parent X – can you monitor Snapchat?

Answer: There are 3 different applications, Casper, Snap Saver and Phantom, you can intercept and get that.

Principal: We have a nice partnership with iSMART and they do a cyber bullying for 5th grade, and last year we started an Upstander program to train 2 students from every 5th grade class and they go into the 3rd and 4th grade classes and teach.

I'd like to add a parent session for social media. Maybe at the HSA or a separate night session. Maybe during a back to school night. Just wanted to do something like that.

A detective was able to provide parents with some true situations that were really powerful. Last week we had 110 parents come to the program.

Parent Y: I remember another session and you had a girl chatting, and a creepy old guy pretending to be young, responding to her, you don't know who's on the other line!

Mary W: Not everyone is who they say they are! Report anyone who asks for pictures, or talks to you about adult things, for 4th graders, who tells you not to tell a parent, asks to meet in person.

Public Comment

- For the next meeting doing a presentation about police safety, so we have these video tools we use, BE Safe the movie, what do our kids need to know about police.

One quick thing to add: Alyssa: about concerns re Florida, Chuck will share info about our ALICE raining, the focus is getting out of the building, our goal is to get them out, if for some reason you have concerns about kids who may not go out of the building, we need to figure out what to do for those kids if we have a crisis like that. Expect to hear more about this. 7:05 said a kid's name! Need to redact

Dana Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 7:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Marton
Director of Student Services

