School Health Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2023

Members of the public are welcome to attend in-person. Fairfax County and City residents may make public comment by submitting a video or audio testimony by email to lmskurpski@fcps.edu prior to the scheduled meeting.

Members in Attendance:
P=Present   A=Absent

P	Boyd, Michelle	A	Koubaroulis, Danielle*	P	Smalls, Saray		
P	Cohen, Opal*	A	McLaughlin, Megan	P	Smith, Ann*		
A	Danner, Kara*	P	Mignano, Paul	P	Smith, Kimberly*		
P	De La Cruz, Kolette	A	Nachnani, Sherry*	P	Spanier, Holly*		
A	Demers, Bethany	P	Payne, Phyllis*	P	Spivack, Beth*		
A	Elhady, Merehan*	P	Rohmiller, Mary*	P	Steiner, Jen*		
P	Glenn, Adriana *	P	Schlink, Amanda	P	Wilkie, Ann*		
P	Greer, Kim*	P	Silvia-Torma, Brenda*	P	Yergin- Doniger, Ilana*		
P	Jadallah, James	P	Skurpski, Lea				

Non-Committee Members in Attendance

Donna Desaulniers			

1. Meeting Called to Order by SHAC Co-Chair Brenda Silvia-Torma, at: 7:04 p.m.

2. **Approval of November Meeting Minutes:** Motioned by Phyllis Payne and seconded by Ilana Yergin-Doniger. SHAC voted to approve the minutes.

   Approval of January minutes: Motioned by Ilana Yergin-Doniger. Kollette De La Cruz seconded the motion. SHAC voted to approve the minutes.

3. **Public Comment:** None

4. **FCPS Updates:**

   Lea Skurpski reported that:
   a. **Lorraine Trouton retired** after ten years of employment with the division of School Health Services at FCPS. Brenda said that Lorraine was the first person she met when she joined SHAC. She is thankful for Lorraine's efforts to help students and staff during her tenure.
   b. **COVID State of Emergency Status:** Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to end the local COVID State of Emergency, effective March 1, 2023.
   c. **State government-sponsored Mental Health Summit:** Mike Axler is looking for one parent volunteer to attend meeting held on March 29, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. -

3:30 p.m. Participants will be asked to provide input to help shape mental health for K-12 and higher education. Summit will be held at College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA.

    d. **Dr. Reid will join SHAC's meeting in March 2023.** Please send all questions or thoughts for Dr. Reid to Brenda by March 1st.

    e. **Schools Hardest hit by Covid in Spring '22**
We received the requested data from Facilities re: the 12 hardest-hit schools. Ilana Yergin-Doniger will analyze the data & report back.

5. **Presentation:** "Overview of Fairfax County Youth Survey" was provided by Donna Desaulniers, Acting Coordinator, School Psychology Services, FCPS. Information related to the Youth Survey & its results can be found online at: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/data/youth-survey/

The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered to 8th, 10th and 12th grade students. An abbreviated survey was given to 6th graders.

Survey measured behaviors, experiences and risks & protective factors. Survey results are used for prevention, treatment and intervention purposes. Staff look at trends and develop community and school programs. Schools may use data to inform school goals. Staff are encouraged to look at pyramid-level data.

- 44,548 students completed the survey (78% of students in surveyed grade levels).
- 38% of 8th,10th, and 12th graders self-reported feeling persistent hopeless or sadness; 17% considered suicide; 6% attempted suicide.
- 33% of 6th graders reported feeling so sad or hopeless that they stopped engaging in regular activity for two or more weeks in the past year.
- We were shown the trend since 2015. Since 2015, the survey has shown gradual increases in the number of students who report feeling hopelessness.

Note: Despite the increase this year, Fairfax County youth had consistently lower rates of persistent sadness/hopelessness, considered attempting suicide, and attempted suicide compared to their national peers (based on the CDC's Adolescent Behaviors and Experience Survey)

We received a lot of detail on how this breaks down by different categories of students.
- Females are more at risk than males.
  - 48% of females report persistent sadness or hopelessness compared to 21% of males
  - 21% females reported thoughts of suicide v 11% of males
  - 8% reported suicide attempts v 4% of males
- Students who list other/multiple ethnicities or who list Hispanic ethnicity are slightly more at risk: Students within those categories report persistent sadness, suicidal thoughts, or suicide attempts at higher percentages than students in other racial or ethnic groups.
- Transgender students are at great risk.
  - 75% of transgendered students reported persistent sadness/hopelessness compared to 36% of non-transgendered students.
  - 61% of transgendered students reported thoughts of suicide v 14% of non-transgendered students.
  - 24% of transgendered students attempted suicide v 5% of non-transgendered students.

- Lesbian, gay, & bisexual students are at risk.
  - 65% of LGB students reported persistent sadness/hopelessness versus 30% of heterosexual students
  - 42% of LGB students considered suicide v 10% of heterosexual students
  - 17% of LGB students attempted suicide v 4% of heterosexual students
- Students from food-insecure homes are at greater risk.
  - 63% of students in food insecure homes reported persistent sadness/hopelessness v 37% of food secure students
  - 32% of students in food insecure homes considered suicide v 16% of food secure students
  - 18% of students in food insecure homes attempted suicide v 6% of food secure students

<u>We learned how many hours kids spent on screens outside of school hours:</u>
- 33% of students reported using screens for 4 or more additional hours outside of the school day for reasons unrelated to schoolwork.
- 28% of students reported using screens for 1 hour or less outside of the school day for reasons unrelated to schoolwork.

<u>We learned how many students' text while driving:</u>
- 52% reported that they have texted while driving in the past 30 days. (Committee members discussed how this statistic is hard to understand, as the survey was sent to many non-drivers. Is this statistic only from 12th graders? Does it include 10th graders who drive? Younger students who don't drive?)

<u>We saw that feelings of persistent sadness/hopelessness increase with hours spent on screens.</u>

Fairfax County Youth Survey 2021

On an average school day, how many hours do you play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work?

compared to

During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?
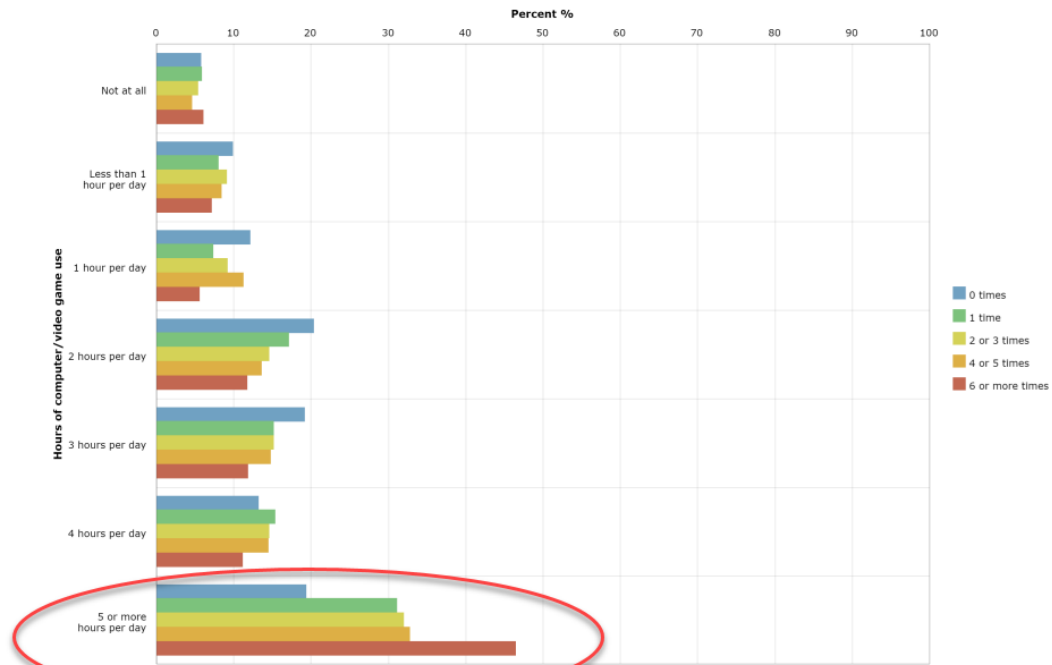
Dataset: 8th, 10th, and 12th grades
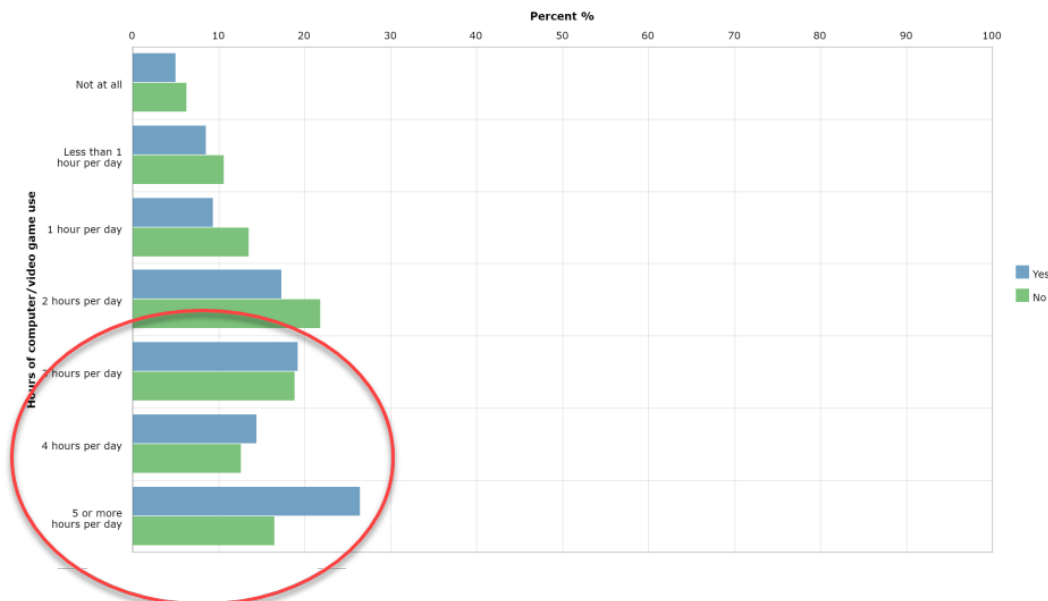
We saw a chart comparing number of suicide attempts to reported screentime:

Fairfax County Youth Survey 2021

On an average school day, how many hours do you play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work?

compared to

During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?

Dataset: 8th, 10th, and 12th grades

Percent %

Legend:
- 0 times
- 1 time
- 2 or 3 times
- 4 or 5 times
- 6 or more times

Y-axis (Hours of computer/video game use):
- Not at all
- Less than 1 hour per day
- 1 hour per day
- 2 hours per day
- 3 hours per day
- 4 hours per day
- 5 or more hours per day

Protective Factors and Mental Health Issues:

- When youth report at least three protective factors, (school, home community), their risk for all mental health changes is lowered. If these students have six protective factors, the risk is almost 0. Three (protective factors) is needed to succeed.
- "3 to succeed" works.
- How can families support their students?
  - Be available to help.
  - Know child's whereabouts.
  - Involve student in family decision-making.
  - Show all family member's respect.
  - Share disapproval of drug use.
- How can schools support their students?
  - Recognize and praise efforts.
  - Speak with adults,
  - Foster open communication with parents, even when kids doing well.
  - Discourage bullying

- How can neighbors support students:
  - Be caring and available to talk.
  - Communicate disapproval of drug and alcohol use.
  - Encourage participation in after school activities.

o   Give positive feedback.

6. **Breakout Group Discussions:**

<u>Breakout group discussion of EdTech Triangle Presentation (October 2022 Mtg):</u>
- Participants: Mary Rohmiller, Jen Steiner, Phyllis Payne, Beth Spivak, Sean Mignano (note-taker: Phyllis Payne)

We didn't have time to develop specific potential recommendation(s) for our year-end report, but perhaps SHAC could consider the questions:
- *Do we want to recommend the adoption of the EdTech Triangle as a framework for FCPS?*
- *Do we want to recommend that the school board create school level forums to bring together key stakeholders (parents, students, and teachers) to provide feedback about the current in-school and after-school experience with technology?*

Our committee conversation included some consensus about these points:
1) We liked the clarity and simplicity of the triangle and the suggestions for different age groups.
2) We couldn't help comparing how easy the triangle is to understand to the broad and wide and varied elements of what FCPS is doing and has available.
3) The example of FCPS using a science app rather than hands-on opportunities felt like a negative rather than a positive – unless one is using it for some extenuating circumstance like a moral objection to dissecting an animal.
4) Computer tools should be the exception rather than the go-to.
5) It would be useful to share parent experiences with FCPS administrators to let them know what our parent/student experiences are.

Some other points were shared by an individual and we didn't have time to explore whether we shared a consensus.
Examples of busywork. Examples of computers/technology making a task HARDER rather than being

supportive:
- Take a photo of math homework to get credit rather than simply handing it in. It can take 20 minutes to show the homework in the proper light and submit it. If the light's bad, no credit. It's painful.
- Avoid busywork.
  > EdTech Triangle (notes from October) – "Encouraging teachers to avoid needless screen-based homework (in the "disruptive" category on the triangle). Dangers of using a screen before bedtime because it affects the release of melatonin and children's ability to fall asleep. Also, parents complain that it is harder to keep track of what's happening in the classroom when homework is on the device."

Concern:

What options do parents or children must NOT engage with technology and screens?
- Our kids don't have tablets and didn't have computers until COVID.
- Only the "transformative" level of the triangle makes sense to me.
- Some teachers are whispering to use the traditional methods and resources – handwrite stories.
- Parents want choices. Screen time should be different for different kids.
  - EdTech Triangle provides screen time limit recommendations (from October notes) "How is the triangle applied at different ages? … Consider what age you are working with and what's appropriate at that time. For example, implementing "transformative tech" would be challenging at a kindergarten level. Therefore, you would be using less tech with kindergarten classes. Currently, lower grade levels tend to use the devices as filler, games, etc." … "If our goal is to maximize wellness and educational outcomes, there will be less use at the younger grades. Transformative activities can be taught without screens – e.g., coding can be taught with blocks; robotics is hands on."

Computers are a blessing for students with some IEPs:
- The transformative portion of the triangle and the supportive portion.
  - "Every child with special needs is unique and technology use should be guided by the educator. There's a section in the report that better responds to this question. In brief, use technology in whatever way the IEP team sees as helpful. Remains at the top of the triangle." (from the October minutes)

Ask a different question:
- How much are we conceding to technology?
- We know it is addictive. We have a chemical and biological response. If child is addicted, having to use the screens is like asking an alcoholic to do their homework in a bar.
- Heightened screen time is isolating our babies.
- Shouldn't we be leaders in matching the science to our policy?
  - "The EdTech Triangle was built through the interpretation of the best available current data – best practices." (From October notes)
  - "We need to have a broad philosophy of limiting tech to enable other important elements of the classroom." (From October notes)
- We need an honest evaluation at the school level with all stakeholders involved as to what's what.

Tangent: How much homework do your children have?

8th Grade– 3-4 hours of homework at night, particularly towards the end of the quarter – mostly screen – discontinuity between elementary and MS.
Question: Are they allowed to use the "remediation time" to do homework? Yes. He's using that time and still has this much homework (end of the quarter is worst).

- Advisory period 20-30 lesson (e.g., HS course selection), then shift classrooms for study time (loss of time), and then they can do homework, so for an 1 hour 20 minute block, he usually gets about 30 minutes to work on homework (and that's assuming there are no make-up tests or other assessments that take up that time). Maybe eliminate passing time to increase time available for completing homework. Different schools do this differently.

FCPS Teachers/Screen Schooled Author's Presentation (November 2022 Mtg):

Participants: Kim Greer, Dr. Holly Spanier, Brenda Silvia-Torma (Note-taker: Brenda)

Summary: Younger students need face-to-face engagement versus online. We have concerns about supervising students while at school with screens…are they actually working on their schoolwork or on games and other inappropriate screentime? We have concerns about accessing inappropriate content on school computers while in school—firewalls?

Potential Recommendation:

1. Add a few technology- and social media-related questions in next year's staff engagement survey.

    a. Questions could include inquiries about teacher's use of social media in completing/accessing classroom homework and projects.

These are things we may want to include as recommendations, but we did not discuss this in February:

- Remove 1:1 computer access for younger grades. Make laptop carts available for each classroom.
- Provide hard copy textbooks for anyone who requests one.
- Provide teachers, staff, and families with training about cost and benefits of technology.
- Technology should be use intentionally instead of automatically. Is there a different/better way to teach the students?
- Homework should be submitted no later than 9pm. No reason to have the window open through midnight.

What can and should schools do?

THE SPECIFIC:
- Take homework offline
- Ban cellphones in all schools (except in cases of demonstrated need)
- Pull back from 1:1 (FCPSOn) – keep laptop carts available for all; provide take homes where necessary (and desired)
- Stop social media use in student-facing communications
- Provide for a low/no tech track through all schools. Just one classroom per grade level (or subject in MS/HS, where possible).
- Provide hard copy textbooks
- Eliminate e-Hallpass.

THE GENERAL:
- Reconsider what BEST practices actually means (use tech where it is BEST, and do not where it isn't)
- Train teachers and parents about the costs as well as benefits of device use
- Be sensitive to the fact that many students (and their parents) struggle with appropriate technology use.

FCPS EdTech Staff Presentation (January 2023 Mtg):

- **Participants:** Opal Cohen, Kolette De La Cruz, Ann Smith, James Jadallah, Amanda Schlink, Ann Smith, Kimberly Smith, Ilana Yergin-Doniger (note-taker: Ilana Yergin-Doniger)
- **Recommendation:** We can present to the School Board an overview of how things are currently done
    - Hierarchy/process for EdTech
- **Recommendation:** Communicating out/strongly stating to educators in classrooms re:
    - The 9 Big Ideas for Media Balance & Wellness in the Classroom
    - The approaches towards screen time discussed by Mr. Kelley (Is this the best way to meet instructional objectives? What is technology displacing in the classroom when it's being used? Screen time shouldn't be a reward.)
- **Recommendation:** To provide audio-only options in the menu of teacher tools provided to teachers (e.g., a wellness/relaxation break that doesn't involve kids watching a video while listening to the audio)
- **Open questions:**
    - Can we find out the amount of time that kids are required to be on programs?
    - What is the amount of screen time spent online in middle and high school? Do we have any idea?
    - Do teachers have to get approval for flipped classrooms?

7. Adjournment: 9:03 p.m.

Meeting Handouts: Youth Survey Presentation Slides_2152023.pptx shared by speaker after meeting

Meeting Notes Drafted by: Kim Greer