

Community Advisory Board

The Children and Education Subcommittee meet virtually, via Zoom on June 1, 2020

Subcommittee Present: Hilary Reilly, Joseph Dragone, Jordana Dym, Laurel Logan-King, Shameka Andrews, Willie Dean Jr.

WMHT Present: Joseph Tovares, Michelle Thivierge

The meeting began with a review of the WMHT Home Classroom initiative the station launched in March in coordination with Capital Region BOCES. At the time of the meeting, the station was entering its eleventh week of the ten hour on-air broadcast. The committee had a fruitful conversation around the utilization of the programming and looked at some analytics around use. As might be expected, there was an initial surge of use and a tapered drop off. This mimics trends throughout the country around similar programs. The committee offered insight around educator burnout and overall fatigue from the pandemic as other indicators around the dip in numbers.

The committee next discussed ways to evaluate the initiative. While the station, with the help of BOCES, did release a survey asking for input of overall use and effectiveness, the responses were minimal. We discussed possible timeframes to offer the survey again. One committee member suggested also seeking student feedback.

Next the conversation turned to summer learning and what the fall could potentially look like. Committee members shared how, in their work environments, they are looking to the summer, to offer virtual learning opportunities for students that typically take place in person, professional development days and looking for ways to leverage PBS Learning Media and other PBS resources in these opportunities. At the time of our meeting, the fall remains unknown. There are guidelines and suggestions, plans being made and rendered but overall, it is unknown what the new school year will ultimately look like.

We discussed how while remote learning was the necessary response at the time, its use underscored the importance of the classroom community. The committee shared, each from their own perspectives, the need for community support, social emotional learning and self care. Schools, while halls of learning are also hubs of connection. While educators worked to build those connections remotely and had two thirds of the school year to build off of, it does not offer the same opportunities as face to face contact. We discussed ways to possibly build mindfulness or movement breaks into remote learning and shared resources and partnerships around these topics. Next the conversation turned to how resources that school districts/educators/BOCES uses are vetted for use on their websites. PBS related materials are vetted resources.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Michelle Thivierge