Notes on the Virtual Coffee with Principal Barr, April 21, 2020

Chsca president Marybel led the gathering with Mr. Barr, assistant principals Brian Baldizar, Beth Battey, and Michael Merino, along with two dozen parents. Chsca secretary John Landry prepared the notes.

**Online Learning**

Academically the students are handling online learning better than expected. Attendance has been about 95%, and the administration knows why nearly all the missing students are out (mostly because they’re working to replace income lost from furloughed parents, or caring for relatives). There’s been some inconsistencies in online instruction and some technology snafus that the principals are continuing to address. They’re also working on ways to encourage kids to take a break from screens and go outside for a while.

The main challenges are the same as before the pandemic, student mental health. The school’s social workers are as busy as ever, and the weekly crisis team continues to meet.

Jevonya Allen, the executive director of the Classical Alumni Association, was on the call, asking for ways the alumni could support students now. Field trips that the alumni had planned to fund have been cancelled, so there’s some money available.

**Graduation**

The administration is exploring the possibility of a virtual event. The senior class would like to have a summer gathering so they can see each other off.

As with all these timing questions, Mr. Barr said the school will be guided by the district and the science, especially what the Department of Health is saying.

**Juniors Preparing to Apply to College in the Fall**

The pandemic has upset the schedule that Mr. Toro laid out in February. Instead of visiting college fairs and colleges, students can attend virtual fairs and campuses. See the link to the FAQ page on the school’s home page for these and other resources. Mr. Barr also urged all juniors to start reaching out to their guidance counselor to talk about the process.

**Changes to the Spring Semester**

Mr. Barr is waiting to hear from the state commissioner to decide next week on whether to make spring classes Pass-Fail.

Most final exams will be replaced with essays or papers.

Juniors taking the spring research workshop will still give their presentations, but these will be virtual. Parents interested in volunteering to help judge the presentations can reach out to Mr. Baldizar, [brian.baldizar@ppsd.org](mailto:brian.baldizar@ppsd.org).

The June attendance schedule is unchanged. Seniors’ last day will be June 4. Everyone else will go through June 17th or 15th. [Confirm]

**Summer Plans**

The school will send out summer reading lists. The first-year orientation, August sports practices, etc, all depend on the state of the pandemic. Students may not be able to enter to empty their academic and gym lockers until the school reopens, because the entire school has now been sanitized. We may not know about school reopening in the fall until August.

Mr. Barr will host another virtual coffee on Tuesday, May 5th, from noon to 1pm.