



## Arizona School for the Arts

Parent Town Hall

Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

**Zoom Meeting ID: 860 3695 8731 Passcode: 684463**

### Attendance

Leah Fregulia, Head of School/ CEO	P	Carolyn Smith, Executive Assistant	P		
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### Agenda Items

#### School Update

- Senior Leadership Team Restructure
- Solar Shade Structure Construction

#### Sexuality Education Curriculum

#### Questions and Comments

### Minutes

The meeting began at 5:31 p.m.

Leah Fregulia introduced herself as well as Carolyn Smith and thanked the parents for attending. She then reviewed the purpose and sequence of the meeting.

Leah introduced each member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) via photos and gave a short synopsis of each member's responsibilities at the school, highlighting the change from a two Vice Principal to a three Dean structure. She also shared the revised organizational chart to show the various reporting threads to the SLT.

She then gave an update on the construction of the solar shade structure as well as the delivery of concrete outdoor furniture that ASA received through a grant from QCP which will be placed in social and performing nodes.

Leah went on to say that this meeting was to serve as the first of two public hearings for the Sexuality Education curriculum that will be in front of the Board of Directors for approval at the October 24<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. She explained the steps to get to that point including the website links to the curriculum and relevant state law that have been sent to families via email, the public meetings that will be held before October 24<sup>th</sup> and the formation of the Sexuality Education Curriculum Council which will also be reviewing the proposed curriculum before the board meeting.

She then opened the meeting to questions, letting the attendees know that if she did not know the answer at this point and time, she would get back to them as soon as she did.

- A few parents were eager to know if the curriculum was mandatory because they did not feel that their children were ready for all or parts of their grade level lessons.
  - Leah explained that by state law, the curriculum was purely opt-in and parents were able to choose in which, if any, lessons their students participate. She told the parents that alternative lessons would be provided for students who were not taking sex ed classes.
  - Leah further explained that many of the lessons chosen for the younger grades have more to do with puberty and how to set healthy boundaries for themselves and she urged them to look at the lessons for their child's grade in the provided link.

- She said that ASA is encouraging all families think about participating because a lot of thought has been given to the curriculum to make it age appropriate. Many of our students have expressed a need for this type of curriculum and we want to be able to provide it in a safe and monitored environment; but some families may want to do this on their own and we respect that.
- Leah was asked the basis on which this curriculum was developed and how it is scaled across the grade levels.
  - The curriculum chosen was based on the National Sexuality Education Standards and developed by Advocates for Youth. ASA chose this group because they have done thorough research into what children need and are asking for by age group. The national standards are adapted to what they see required in some states and what every child should know by the time they graduate from high school whether they get that information from school or home.
  - The *Rights, Respect, Responsibility* curriculum was chosen because it includes lessons on what a person's bodily rights are and what it is like to build healthy relationships at a variety of ages.
  - Nothing has been chosen outside the bounds of Arizona law and all grade levels stress that abstinence is the best protection against pregnancy and STDs. Where any of the Advocates for Youth lessons go outside of those boundaries, those lessons will not be taught.
- A parent asked how the curriculum was being communicated to students and what the activities would be for students who opt-out of some or all of the sex ed lessons. And how will we prevent divisiveness between students who opt-in versus students who opt-out?
  - Leah explained that the opt-out activities are under development now and that she does not have any specifics yet. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will get these lessons though the Life Skills program and there are a whole range of lessons that can be taught such as building self-esteem.
  - None of this has been shared with students at this point until it is vetted with parents and the Council. Before it is introduced, students will get an explanation of how it will be taught and the sequence of the lessons; we will also reach out to parents two weeks in advance so they know it is coming. It will not be done in one quarter, but be spread throughout the year. Each time a lesson is taught, parents and student will be notified.
  - Our approach at this school has always been about choice and we will stress to our students that each family chooses to handle this type of information differently is to be respected and supported as a choice.
- A parent asked how the lessons would be taught. Would one module be taught in one class or spread out over several classes? Will building trust between their peers and with their lesson facilitators be part of the lessons and how will we make sure there is not learning loss between lessons? How does the curriculum address the gender spectrum?
  - Leah explained that by state law, there cannot be more than one hour of sexuality education per day, so all of these lessons are one-period lessons. For example, the seven lessons for 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be spread out throughout the year, one lesson per class Life Skills class.
  - There can be recaps of the last lesson before each new session and there are touch points built in throughout the lessons.
  - The Life Skills teachers for the middle school students build a sense of trust by nature of the course. The sex ed curriculum will be taught by known teachers and not outside facilitators.
  - The lesson facilitates discussion about stereotypical gender rolls and the ethos at ASA is a safe space and students who wish to share their identities, can or not as they feel comfortable.
- Another parent asked in which high school classes these lessons would be taught. Also, if she chooses for her child to opt-out of certain lessons, how can she be protected from a recap that she doesn't want her child to know about and when will the opt-out lessons be available for review?

- For high school students, it will be divided up depending on how the lesson fits in with other curriculum instead of it all being taught through science classes. The grade level teams will decide how it will be implemented; it will be a team effort.
- Leah explained that how the recaps are handled will be decided when we see how many opt-out students we have.
- Leah said that she did not want to make any promises when the opt-out lesson would be made available, but it would be in plenty of time for parents to make their decision about participating.
- Will there be tests and quizzes on these lessons?
  - No, by law, we cannot test, quiz, survey or grade assignments on any part of this curriculum. Homework is an invitation to have a conversation with parents, and will never be collected or graded. And the same is true of the opt-out activity.

As there were no more questions or comment forthcoming at this session, Leah invited parents to email questions to her or bring them up at the next Town Hall meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>, should the attendees think of any.

The meeting ended at 6:22 p.m.