



YORKTOWN PTA MEETING AGENDA Monday May 10, 2021, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

1) **Welcome and Introductions:** Dana Milburn, PTA President

Ms. Milburn welcomed all the PTA meeting and presented the agenda for the night's meeting.

2) **Principal's Report/Q&A and Presentation from YHS Substance Abuse Counselor:** Dr. Kevin Clark, Principal and Ms. Kim Chisolm, YHS Substance Abuse Counselor. Dr. Clark introduced Ms. Chisolm, who gave a substantive presentation, followed by Q & A.

a) **Prevention of Substance Abuse and Addiction – Ms. Chisolm.** (See also Presentation Slides, provided separately on YHS PTA Website.)

Ms. Chisolm began her presentation by introducing herself and providing the PTA with a brief description of the work she did prior to joining the YHS staff. She mainly worked with juveniles and also currently manages her own private practice. Currently Ms. Chisolm serves as the Substance abuse Counselor for both Yorktown and Thomas Jefferson Middle School. The main services she provides at the schools includes:

- Education to students, families, staff and the community on the effects of substances, making healthy choices, healthy relationships, etc.
- Prevention initiatives such as red ribbon week and choose health week.
- Early intervention for students through one-to-one counseling and family and staff support.

Ms. Chisolm emphasized that most information between her and the students remain confidential, however there are a few exceptions to this policy. If a child signs a release of information form, Ms. Chisolm can communicate with the parents. In addition, if any of the following issues come up while counseling a student, Ms. Chisolm is also required to contact parents: harm to self; harm to others; physical abuse; sexual abuse; and if a student's safety is compromised. Ms. Chisolm stated that if she has a conversation with a student about things such as gateway drugs/alcohol or relationships, she will keep that confidential with the student.

Ms. Chisolm then proceeded to discuss the most commonly abused substances, how to identify potential use, and the substances' dangers:

■ **Tobacco – Cigarettes, Cigars, and Dipping Tobacco (Gateway Drug)**

Tobacco contains nicotine, which is a stimulant, so some side effects from nicotine poisoning can include: nausea/vomiting, increased blood pressure, abnormal heart rate (arrhythmia), loss of appetite, fatigue, dizziness, headache, anxiety, and hearing and vision changes. Tobacco is often the first gateway drug as it is inexpensive and easy to get.

■ **Vaping/E-Cigarettes (Gateway Drug)**

Ms. Chisolm provided images of various vaping tools and explained some of the differences between them. Many are discreet or look like other devices (for example, an asthma inhaler) so that they are easy to hide. Students may conceal their vaping

device in a variety of locations such as lipstick cases, water bottles, shoes, and Sharpie containers. A big attraction to students of vaping is the flavoring – the chemicals can come in flavors such as cotton candy, bubble gum, and fruit flavors. This flavoring is intended to directly intrigue teens.

The following are some effects of vaping:

- Increased blood pressure
- Constricted blood vessels
- Lowers body's ability to fight infection
- Stimulated heart
- Can cause a condition known as "popcorn lung" which is related to the flavored chemicals placed into the device. These chemicals systematically destroy the lungs' smallest airways. This results in more coughing and asthma attacks.

■ **Alcohol (Gateway Drug)**

Alcohol depresses the central nervous system and is rapidly absorbed from the small intestines (80%) and stomach (20%) into the blood stream. It lowers inhibitions and affects memory. It also causes poor decision-making and loss of coordination and control.

■ **Marijuana (Gateway Drug)**

Marijuana may be smoked, vaped, or used as an ingredient in food, brewed tea or oils. The psychoactive ingredient in marijuana is Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Some effects of marijuana use include respiratory issues – the chemicals in it can irritate the bronchial passages. It can also cause circulatory issues – the THC moves from the lungs through the bloodstream, increasing the heart rate by 20-50 beats per minute. Eyes of the user may look red because the blood vessels expand. Marijuana can also impair memory, judgement, and learning for teens.

Some students use it because they say it helps them with anxiety and the stresses of life.

■ **Prescription Drugs: Stimulants, Opioids, Depressants**

These drugs can become an issue for student because they are sometimes prescribed a medication to help with a medical condition and then the students like how they feel on the medication and try to stay on it.

There are several health consequences to these drugs:

- Stimulant Abuse: paranoia, high body temperatures, irregular heartbeat
- Opioid Abuse: drowsiness, nausea, constipation, and slower breathing
- Depressant Abuse: slurred speech, shallow breathing, fatigue, disorientation, lack of coordination, and seizures (upon withdrawal from chronic abuse).

Abuse of any of these substances may result in addiction.

■ Over the Counter Medication (OTC)

As most are aware, all individuals now need to show an ID to purchase certain cold medications like Sudafed, Advil Cold and Sinus, Robitussin, etc. Many of these over the counter medications have the ability to alter your mind and when combined with substances such as alcohol, it can intensify the effects of the substance. Ms. Chisolm suggested that parents may want to consider locking up the cold medications.

Side effects of abuse of OTC medications include:

- Impaired motor function (such as walking or sitting up)
- Produce numbness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Increase heart rate and blood pressure
- Abusing any type of mind-altering drug can affect judgement and inhibition and may put a person at heightened risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)

■ Synthetic Drugs – K2/Spice

K2/Spice has the following short-term affects: feeling really relaxed, seeing and hearing things that are not there, being very confused, feeling anxious, fast heart rate, and vomiting. Long-term side effects include kidney problems and seizures. These drugs also have addictive properties.

■ Club Drugs – includes GHB, Rohypnol, Ketamine, MDMA (Ecstasy) Methamphetamine and LSD (Acid)

The effects of these drugs are similar to synthetic drugs and include: drowsiness, memory problems, impaired judgement, seeing or hearing things that are not real, extreme heat or thirst, aggressive behavior, loss of consciousness, dizziness, blurry vision, nausea and vomiting. Club drugs can also cause seizures, coma, and death.

Ms. Chisolm reported that the top three substances most commonly used are still: nicotine/vaping, alcohol, and marijuana. Occasionally, the substance abuse counselors will see some use of the other drugs, but these are the main three.

Ms. Chisolm then discussed the signs of substance abuse for which parents might want to be aware. They include sudden decline in grades, skipping class or school, dropping sports or other extracurricular activities, and sleeping in class. On the family side, a student may be withdrawn, less likely to participate in family activities, be more secretive with their phones, may have more money, or you may notice alcohol is missing. Personal and physical symptoms may include weight changes, burns on hands or clothing, sleeping too much or too little, wide mood swings, and changes in peer groups. Ms. Chisolm asked that parents be open to have a conversation with students about these items, especially if they are showing some of these signs.

Ms. Chisolm provided a number of resources for parents seeking help in this area and highlighted the following organizations: See screenshot for resources – she highlighted:

- Above the influence (Support for teens who choose not to use)
<https://abovetheinfluence.com/>

- I am Sober – a sobriety app that provides daily support and encourages teens daily to avoid abuse. <https://iamsobber.com/>
- Arlington Teens – a local community resource for teens in our area. <http://www.arlingtonteens.com>

Ms. Chisolm asked that parents contact her if they have any questions and she emphasized that email is the best place to contact her for a quick response since she works out of two different schools. Her contact information is as follows: kim.chisolm@apsva.us Office phone: (703) 228-2641 and her google voice number is (202) 854-8696.

b) Q&A

- **What are the boundaries for her job?** Much of Ms. Chisolm’s work involves psychoeducation in health and PE classes. She rotates around the freshman and sophomore classes and she will focus on the topics that the teacher feels would be most helpful to their specific students. This might mean one class holds a discussion on peer pressure, another class may receive a comprehensive review of substances and how they impact the body, another class may have a discussion on relationships, etc. **Ms. Chisolm does not provide therapy** – she offers services that are more preventative in nature, but as a school employee, she cannot provide ongoing care. Ms. Chisolm also cannot tell parents what to do, but she can point parents in the direction of where they can go for support. She talks to students about things other than substances and is available to discuss anything a student may want to discuss. Her office is located in the nursing clinic, separate from the counselors to avoid the perception of stereotypes coming in to see the substance abuse counselor. If a student would like to talk to her, they simply ask for a note to go to see the nurse.
- **What happens when a child is referred to her? What is the process?** When a student is caught/referred to Ms. Chisolm, it is possible to submit a referral for them to Second Chance Arlington. Second Chance, according to its website, “ is an educational program for Arlington middle and high school students to help them avoid using alcohol, drugs and certain other substances. Second Chance is not treatment or therapy. Students showing signs of early substance use will benefit most from attending Second Chance. Students who are found to be under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, and/or certain other substances may be diverted to Second Chance in lieu of school suspension by Arlington Public Schools or prosecution by Arlington County Juvenile Courts. Parents who are concerned about or see signs of early substance use can refer their teen, and teens can refer themselves For more information, their website is: <https://secondchancearlington.org/>
- **Recently, a Williamsburg student wanted to share his story and experience of substance abuse with his peers, so he stood up at a substance abuse assembly at school and talked about it. Does YHS ever have current students give presentations to each other?** YHS and YHS PTA plan to host an event in early fall next year, which might include student(s).
- The Unity Club is another resource for students and parents. It is a meeting place for Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery fellowships based on the 12-steps of AA. It is a safe, secure, and supportive environment, creating a sanctuary for the newly recovering alcoholic and addict. For more information, their website is: <https://unityclub.com>

At the end of Ms. Chisolm's presentation, Ms. Milburn asked if she could provide the PTA with a list of resources to include in a future PTA newsletter, so parents can keep an eye out for that.

c) End-of-year, Graduation, Next Year, Social Emotional Learning for 2021-22, and Visioning/School Culture Discussion Process at YHS – Dr. Clark

Dr. Clark thanked the PTA for their contributions and support of The Italian Store lunch boxes provided to teachers last week. Students are continuing in hybrid/virtual mode however, the end of the school year will be a bit complicated with some unusual schedules. Starting next week, is the first set of AP tests. Students in AP World Languages and AP Music Theory will have their AP exams on Friday, May 21st, so that day will be a virtual synchronous school day for all other students.

The week of May 24th is a normal hybrid week, however, the following week (June 1-4) will be a fully asynchronous week. Teachers will be assigning 90 minutes of asynchronous work for each class during that week and each teacher will hold 2 office hour sessions that week.

SOLs will be held on various days between May 17th and June 7th; teachers have informed their students of what SOLs will be on which days. If a family wants their students to opt out, they can check the YHS website for information on how to do this, or they can reach out to Wendy Boon at wendy.boone@apsva.us.

The week of June 7th, there will not be a Patriot Period, but teachers will hold office hours and it will otherwise be a normal school week.

All final exams will be completely virtual this year and there is a special schedule for those. Periods 1, 2, and 3 will be on Monday; Periods 4 and 5 will be on Tuesday; and Periods 6 and 7 will be on Wednesday. YHS has made some modifications with teachers so that the finals can only help the students improve their grades, especially for those students that may be at a D or an E. The intention is so that hopefully those students can avoid having to repeat a class. Otherwise, Dr. Clark is encouraging teachers to make their finals optional.

As for AP tests, they will be held at the times of either 12pm or 4pm. If the students are taking the test online, they will need to download a specific app from the College Board. The YHS website has detailed information covering all of this, so, please refer to that for the specifics.

Seniors will begin senior experience on May 24th, so the seniors' optional finals will be between May 12-14. Because the AP exams are later this year, if any seniors taking an AP exam are on senior experience during that time, they should just coordinate with their senior experience mentor to let them know that they will be unavailable on that day.

End-of-Year senior activities will include:

- June 5th – Prom reception: this will be held outdoors at YHS.
- June 15th – Senior experience share-out. The seniors will meet in small groups to discuss their senior experiences.
- June 16th and 17th – YHS will hold the pick-up/drop-off of all materials for seniors. Seniors must be sure to return all YHS owned items to the school in order to pick-up their caps, gowns, and tickets to graduation.

- June 16th – Senior picnic: this will be held in collaboration with the PTA combining the senior picnic and senior graduation party. This will also be held on campus in two different locations in order to allow up to 200 students to participate. A sign-up will be sent closer to the date and we anticipate this picnic to be held from 11:30am – 2:30pm.
- June 17th – Rehearsal for graduation: this will be at 5:30pm and students will receive their real diploma at this time.
- June 18th - Graduation will be held at Greenbrier Stadium with each student allowed two guests (if the state opens up for more guests to be allowed, we will notify parents). The graduation will begin at 10:00am and there is a rain-date set for the same day at 7:00pm if needed. The event will be professionally live-streamed as well as recorded for future viewing.

YHS has been in planning mode for the next school year. Dr. Clark said that they are hoping for as normal a return to school as possible. Currently, YHS has approximately 60 students that have chosen to be enrolled virtually and for the most part, they will be taking classes through a virtual APS program.

Dr. Clark shared with the PTA the premise behind the current initiative for developing the new vision for Yorktown High School: At Yorktown, we achieve Equity, Excellence, and Empowerment. The ROCS program is our current social and emotional learning (SEL) program, and it is a strength of the school. However, it has been at Yorktown for approximately 20 years and while there is no intention to eliminate that program, YHS leadership would like to enhance the program. When developing the revisioning process at YHS, there was a decision to focus on leading with equity and to see excellence by using SEL skills. The team working on the revisioning process is utilizing three big ideas to achieve the new vision for YHS: Equity, Excellence, and Empowerment. How YHS will define these three ideas is described below:

Equity: Actively identify bias, inequity, and discrimination at Yorktown in current and historical contexts and make institutional, curricular and instructional changes, and engage in anti-bias and anti-racist practices to ensure each member of our school community feels valued, respected, and empowered.

Excellence: Yorktown students will develop critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration and citizenship skills (known as the 5 C's in VA Portrait of a Graduate). This will emphasize balance and an emphasis on career-aligned course planning.

Empowerment: To be empowered involves developing Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) skills: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making and having Respect for Others, the Community and Yourself (ROCS).

Dr. Clark stated that a survey will also go out to students about their experience with various Patriot Period activities this year and they will use this feedback as they proceed with the YHS revisioning process.

Finally, Dr. Clark provided a brief update on spring sports. The sports teams have a covid testing program in place. This is being used as a trial to see if a covid testing program can be implanted in the fall for all students. He also reminded parents that August 2nd will be the start date for next fall's sports activities.

d) Q&A

- If a student has an AP exam or an SOL and as a result has to miss a class, will they be marked absent and do they need to let their teachers know? The absence will be marked as a school related absence and their teachers are aware of the dates of these exams, so it will not be a problem.
- If Covid restrictions are fully lifted, will more tickets be made available for the graduation? Dr. Clark stated that if restrictions are lifted further, they will try to give students more than two graduation tickets. [Note: restrictions subsequently were relaxed, and each student has been offered up to four tickets to graduation.]
- Will students be called out by name and be allowed to walk across the stage? Yes.

3) **Member Thoughts/Ideas for PTA's work Ending this Year and Planning for 2021-22:** PTA Board

Due to time constraints, this was not able to be discussed in detail, but Ms. Milburn asked that if any PTA members had thoughts or suggestions for the PTA in regard to planning further activities for this year or next, that they please let her know.

4) **Approval of April 19, 2021, Meeting Minutes:** Berrin Ozbilgin, PTA Secretary

Ms. Ozbilgin stated that the link to the minutes from the April 19, 2021 PTA meeting were provided in this week's PTA Newsletter and asked if there were any questions or concerns. With no questions asked, Ms. Milburn called for a vote to approve the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

5) **Financial Report:** Dan Sennott, PTA Treasurer

Mr. Sennott reported that the PTA currently has a balance of approximately \$58,250. In the past month we distributed a few grant reimbursement checks for teachers and we paid for the YHS graduation yard signs for seniors.

6) **Report from Nominating Committee for 2021-22 PTA Leadership:** Jillene Bushnell; Sally Granade; and Leigh Ann Lindquist, Nominating Committee

Ms. Granade read the following list of proposed candidates for PTA Leadership positions for the 2021-22 school year:

- Dana Milburn, President
- Kate Sheehey, 1st Vice President
- Katrina Brubaker, 2nd Vice President
- Christine Shelly, Communications Vice President
- Dan Sennott, Treasurer
- Julie Halferty, Secretary

Ms. Milburn stated that we will ask PTA members to vote to approve the above slate of officers at the June 7th PTA meeting, at which time nominations also can be made from the floor.

7) Report on Filling PTA Chairs' Positions for 2021-22 School Year: Jamie Pilot, Volunteer Coordinator

Ms. Pilot reported that the PTA is still looking for volunteers to fill the following Chair positions:

- Advisory Council on Teaching & Learning (ACT&L) Representatives (two needed)
- Family Network (two needed)
- Fund-raising
- Graduation (Boat?) Party Co-Chair (with Berrin Ozbilgin)
- Hospitality
- 10th Grade Parent Representative
- Science Fair
- Teacher of the Year

Ms. Milburn asked PTA members to please consider volunteering for one of these positions; they are all a great way to be involved in your students' school!

8) Report on Creation and Distribution of Yard Signs for Seniors: Jennifer Leonard, Junior Class Parent Representative; Ashley Rehr, Senior Class Parent Representative

Ms. Leonard reported that through the help of a team of parent volunteers, they were able to deliver yard signs to all the graduating seniors over the weekend. She asked that if anyone knew of a senior that may have been missed, to please let her know and also that extra signs are at the school if anyone wanted to pick one up.

Ms. Milburn thanked Ms. Rehr for planning and organizing the pick-up processes overall, coordinating with YHS staff, arranging for Senior Class family volunteers, and coordinating the Friday sign pick-up by volunteer teams.

She thanked Jeff Stahl, the senior class YHS Counselor, for coordinating the Saturday sign pick-up by volunteer teams.

She also thanked Ms. Leonard for arranging and coordinating the sign design, printing, and delivery, as well as arranging Junior Class family volunteers.

Finally, Ms. Milburn thanks all parents that came out to help in delivering the signs to our graduating seniors! The help was greatly appreciated!

9) Report on Staff Appreciation Lunch: Rabia Oubenadi and Lori Stultz, Staff Appreciation Chairs

Ms. Milburn thanked Ms. Oubenadi and Ms. Stultz for their assistance in the staff appreciation lunch and other work they did throughout the year to show our teachers how much we appreciate their hard work.

10) Announcements: Dana Milburn and PTA Leadership

- Ms. Milburn reminded parents that they can still contribute to the No Frills Fundraiser this year; and if their companies provide matching gifts, please consider asking their company to make sure they contribute to our PTA to match their employee's donation.
- June Events:
 - Wednesday, June 2: How to Build a College List, Pandemic Edition
 - Thursday, June 10: Supporting Your Student with College Essay Writing
 - Possible event: Rights and Responsibilities in Turning 18
- APS Budget was finalized last week
- Student mental well-being will continue to be a high priority next fall with possibly bringing in social and emotional learning experts to speak with our students and possible provide some teacher training.
- May is National Mental Health Month
- This week is National Substance Abuse Prevention Week
- YHS PTA is proud to be an Arlington County Complete Vaccine Committee Partner – See Newsletter for helpful information on vaccination, registering for the vaccine, and CDC information on the prevention of spread.
- Reminder: Senior Survey Deadline is May 21, 2021
- The Spirit Wear link on the YHS PTA website is working again.

11) Adjourn – Dana Milburn

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.