

**Riverview School District  
Board of Directors' Roundtable  
October 24, 2017  
Riverview Educational Service Center  
Duvall, Washington**

The Riverview School District Board of Directors held a Board Roundtable on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on October 24, 2017, at the Riverview Educational Service Center in Duvall, Washington.

**Board Members and Participants Present:** Kristin Sulzer-Uselman, Dr. Anthony L. Smith, Jessica Bierhaus, John Bomar, Chantel Thurman, Dr. Ken Heikkila, Theresa Tenney, Laura Smith, Danny Edwards, Carol Van Noy, Jodi Fletcher, Sabrina Parnell, Molly Lutz, and Sheri Erhardt

Ms. Van Noy began the meeting at 5:00 PM.

**RSD School Board Protocol for Roundtables**

**Purpose:** Meet with the group, get input and updates, and better understand their needs and roles.

**Process:** Open dialog with group.

**Payoff:** For the RSD Board to make better decisions by understanding the needs and roles.

**Agenda and Minutes:**

**1. Introductions and Explanation of Process**

*a. Introductions: Dr. Anthony Smith, Superintendent*

*b. Explanation of Process: Carol Van Noy, School Board President*

**2. Laura Smith: Brief review (10 minutes) on defining ACEs and impact on our children.**

*a. ACEs based on a major study out of California. Abuse, Neglect, Household Dysfunction are the major categories that make up the "core ten," and there are other issues as well that contribute. The order is stress-discomfort and then positive or negative coping strategies. Most people have at least one ACEs and that is a great way to approach a conversation.*

*b. Laura shared data from the Healthy Youth Survey and compared CHS to King County averages as well as state averages.*

*c. A focus of the conversation is how we can impact resilience. Resilience is a key to success. Kenneth Ginsburg, MD, MS, Ed, FAAP identified the 7 Cs of resilience. The research also demonstrates that having a significant adult mentor/role model in one's life has a positive difference-maker.*

3. Open dialogue based on the guiding questions that follow.

### **Guiding Questions:**

1. **What challenges do we face with ACEs, both in our schools and the community?**

*Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:* Described the old model with focusing on academics first versus now where we are working on looking at the whole child.

*Kristen Uselman:* A big issue is identification.

*Jessica Bierhaus:* Influencing what is going on at home can be a challenge.

*Danny Edwards:* There tends to be a stigma attached to it.

*Sabrina Parnell:* I'd like to know more about the kids Jessica sees.

*Jessica Bierhaus:* I work on the special education identification and learn about the ACEs as I am evaluating students. Ultimately it shouldn't be a special education screening process, it should be more universal.

*Sheri Erhardt:* I think we are identifying these students. The difficulty is serving them. Testing and counseling sometimes is a year-long process to receiving support.

*John Bomar:* At the RLC we have kids with multiple ACEs and we are receiving support at the building level and still need more resources. Support for students and helping them get to the support is a real challenge in this district.

*Sabrina Parnell:* The support is difficult to access at all economic levels.

*Laura Smith:* At CHS the Friends of Youth counselor is not consistent – really wish it was more consistent at this important transition time.

*Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:* Because of the focus on academics, sometimes these things don't get addressed – we have things built into the system that are time bound – we might consider relaxing systems to provide kids with the time they need.

*Dr. Anthony Smith:* Much of what I am hearing is around the need for social workers or something like it to help with connections to resources and be that advocate that can work with internal and external systems to gain support and help within a wrap-around framework.

2. **What are we currently doing to educate, identify, and intervene on behalf of students impacted by ACEs?**

*Carol Van Noy:* What are we doing with training for staff?

*Molly Lutz:* Many of our staff does not know what to look for with differentiating trauma from a true disability.

*Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:* We have some training, but it is not in depth.

*John Bomar:* We have Right Response for special education staff but nothing standardized overall.

*Jessica Bierhaus:* PBIS has helped students with ACEs.

*Sheri Erhardt:* There are a number of Trauma Informed workshops that are available regionally in the form of one to two day courses.

*Carol Van Noy:* Our classified employees, including bus drivers could be among the helpers to identify students.

**Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:** *Our counseling and school nurse staffing has significantly increased over the past ten years.*

**Jessica Bierhaus:** *Some districts pay school psychologists more and offer bonuses to other hard to fill positions as well.*

**Dr. Anthony Smith:** *We need to look at our options with upcoming bargaining with REA.*

**Carol Van Noy:** *Peer tutoring and training for tutors can be helpful.*

**Laura Smith:** *We have consistent peer training with suicide prevention at the middle school and high school.*

**Jodi Fletcher:** *Are we teaching kids how to handle stress and coping skills?*

**Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:** *We have a variety of curriculum and efforts, however not really consistent. We need to do more to help students share where they are.*

**Sabrina Parnell:** *There is so much pressure on these kids with social, 24 credit, etc. Some parents living in privilege push very high expectations onto their students.*

**Dr. Anthony Smith:** *We might need to examine our current structures and placeholders, such as advisories or other models to help students with information, coping skills, and strategies. Mental health issues among our young is becoming a national crisis.*

**Sheri Erhardt:** *I've found the best programs are wall to wall and are common practices among all staff at all buildings. This includes strategies and quick little reminders. These function as coping mechanisms – it needs to be connected to their daily lives.*

**Theresa Tenney:** *Tips and consistent messaging to parents would be very helpful in reinforcing positive behaviors.*

**Molly Lutz:** *Teaching students how to plan and deal with stress is often helpful.*

**Chantel Thurman:** *Wholeheartedly agree with Anthony that this is a national crisis. We have been churning out counselors and it is not enough to meet the needs. Trauma is also generational. Some of the models are not sustainable enough. Our schools are the place to make a difference at an early age, such as mindfulness, but it needs to become a national priority and then we could make an incredible difference in the next couple of generations.*

**Sabrina Parnell:** *Shared a personal story about some of the challenges our students face.*

### **3. What should our schools and district be focusing on for the future in regard to ACEs?**

**Danny Edwards:** *Please begin by providing us with a wish list of how we can help.*

**Molly Lutz:** *I think training for everyone, including volunteers. The more knowledge and tools staff has, the better we are.*

**John Bomar:** *Also training our students on how to respond and deal with things or help friends.*

**Dr. Kenneth Heikkila:** *How do we listen better to kids, regardless of what age they are? Guide them to individual choices that are good for them.*

**Laura Smith:** *We could look at other models such as the model in Walla Walla and have community trainings.*

**Chantel Thurman:** *The education piece is big – part of this is raising awareness and it will be surprising the difference it will make.*

*Jessica Bierhaus: Educating our students, more psychologists – I like Dr. Smith’s idea of recruiting social workers – overall more mental health resources in the schools.*

*Kristen Uselman: More nurses – we are trained and can help solve the problem. There are buildings that need more services. The FTEs don’t match the school day.*

*Sheri Erhardt: The wall-to-wall effort is important. We assume kids know, but they don’t.*

**Conclusion:** President Carol Van Noy thanked everyone for their input.

There was no action taken.

The meeting ended at 6:35 PM.

**APPROVED BY THE RIVERVIEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THEIR  
REGULARLY HELD MEETING ON NOVEMBER 14, 2017.**