**Mesquite Education Association**

**FR Questions – March 2019**

1. **Why is spring break on the 2019-2020 draft calendar that was sent out in November, different from spring break on the final approved 2019-2020 calendar? This means that dual credit classes have a different spring break at their school than they do at Eastfield College.**

When we surveyed surrounding school districts, we saw that most scheduled their spring break for the second week in March. We decided to set our spring break for the second week so that our employees with students in our surrounding districts would be on spring break with their children.

1. **Can you explain the process for Autism testing, such as who is input taken from, what time of day should observations occur, and etc.?**

As in all referrals for a suspected disability, there are multiple pieces of input. The parent, teacher(s), nurse (for vision and hearing screening), as well as any other staff that see the student are asked to provide input. Specific to Autism, the speech therapist, licensed specialist in school psychology, and diagnostician complete formal and informal assessments. Observations are a part of the evaluation with frequency and duration to be determined by observer and data gathered during said observation. Additional parent and teacher input is gathered from the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System Third Edition, (ABAS 3), Behavior Assessment System for Children Third Edition (BASC 3), Social Emotional Learning Edition (SSIS-SEL). Interviews are attempted with the parent, student if applicable and teacher, but are not mandatory if the preponderance of evidence from their previous input is obtained. There are many variables that impact the sources and types of data used in any evaluation. If there is a specific case and or student that needs to be discussed, please contact your campus special education coordinator.

1. **With the new choice high school about to open, when can we expect adult learning to follow similar expectations? I see so much about micro-dentials, badges, and other ways to personalize PD I would argue a one-size-fits-all for adult learning is even more important than ever. Would it be possible to expand the Pay for Knowledge program to cover PD offered by respected leaders such as George Kouros on Instagram and Dave Burgess on Twitter?**

The new Choice HS is expected to open in the Fall of 2021. Our professional learning department has taken great strides in offering multiple options for staff growth. They are differentiating their opportunities for staff, and are exploring ways to increase options for blended learning opportunities so that PL can be more personalized. We are very fortunate to be able to pay our staff for their learning opportunities. Pay for Knowledge is currently based on staff attending the sessions in order to verify attendance. Monitoring online professional learning, not offered by the district, is not something we have the capacity to manage at this time. Any PL that we provide, or teachers attend off site, would need to follow our PL model to ensure deep learning, collaboration and practice.

1. **How is our dental insurance provider chosen? Since the change from MetLife to Standard, I have yet to have a dental visit where I didn’t have to pay more after the visit. Standard does not cover as well and refuses some items that MetLife used to fully cover. I realize we are looking for cheaper insurance, but I feel quality is more important that quantity. I would prefer to pay 5 or 10 dollars more a month to have a better provider. The extras I have to pay with Standard are far more than the 5 or 10-dollar increase. Any chance of going back to MetLife or another provider? Can a survey be done before choosing a provider?**

In order to get the full benefit of your dental plan you should always use dentists that are in-network. For routine visits there should not be any big out of pocket costs other than the $10 preventative fee if you're using in-network dentists. MISD has a benefits committee which is made up of district employees. They review all of our insurance plans on a regular basis. We go out for bids when the time comes to renew or make changes. Unfortunately, MetLife premiums were going to be significantly higher than what they had been in the past and they were making changes to the policy which would not have been in our best interest. Standard Dental Insurance offered a better deal and we were able to lock in the premiums with a three-year contract. This is our last year on the Standard contract. The committee will begin looking at options soon.