

District Parent Council Meeting Minutes January 10, 2022

Attendees: Liz Luyendyk, Sarah Allen, Niki Robinson, Corinne Dyksen, Jane Manfredi, Katie Cavanaugh, Vincent Lyon-Callo, John Hood, Karen Shapiro, Joy Magyar, Ginger Shay, Carly Patel, Andrea Hallead

Welcome and Introductions – *Sarah Allen*

Principals Report – *Andrea Hallead, OHS Interim Principal*

- Wonderful athletic and performance arts season capped by Winter Concerts.
 - divided school into quarters so they could play for their peers COVID approved.
- Final Exams: important to have exams, but needed to take some of the pressure off given COVID, it was decided to weight exams no more than 5% vs normal 10-15% for their final grade, students are appreciative.
- Modified “Be Excellent Day” program was a good refresher on day to day procedures, remind staff of resources for support, multiple topics highlighted via video, teachers given short lesson plans and points for discussion.
- Received feedback on the new backpack procedures for second semester. Students generated problem-solving ideas. Meeting with student leadership re: backpacks further to hear student ideas.
- Semester 2 planning: events modified or cancelled depending on COVID directives. Winter Dance to be evaluated shortly. Touch of Class (lunch fundraiser for Okemos Cares): think we can go forward with it (fun lunch) with normal COVID protocols, Radio type show for the talent show, Diversity assembly- trying to see how we can do it safely as it is very valuable.

Question from parents:

- Lunchroom is very packed and students are uncomfortable and can we adjust this?
 - We do have hallway space students use (before Covid times as well as now) that runs from the main office past the gyms if they do not want to use the cafeteria tables. We do not have additional space outside of that hall and cafeteria that is indoors due to space and supervision limitations. Our students naturally cohort themselves with their friends during lunch which is a great help in the event of contact tracing and for small groups to sit apart to the extent possible.
- Can students switch lockers because they are far away, can they switch where their locker are or volunteer for switching? Daughter afraid to go to locker before lunch as she won't get a table. Principal to discuss the logistics.

- Behavior - in other buildings are they coming in at the lower age range of behaviors, where do you feel HS students are?
 - Developmentally/socially students are a bit below where we would expect for HS- aka social media SnapChat conflicts.
 - The staff try to proactively work with students and peers and parents that can give them a heads up to refer students to counsellors for conflict resolution. They can then start restorative practices.
- Do these restorative justice practices always work or are there other previous ways that have to be used sometimes?
 - Restorative practices have been used for about seven years. More traditional discipline items are in the handbook but we want to stop it before using no contact agreements etc. Sometimes they have to take breaks from school but this is a last resort.
- Junior meetings, what are they?
 - College and graduation prep talks. 9th graders talk about 4th year plan, adjustment to HS, Sophomore- career exploration, Junior year- college search and planning process, individual meetings about visits, careers, vocation, and other post-secondary plans.
- Freshman and Sophomore year - are they individual or whole class for these meetings?
 - Individual meetings as well remotely last year and grade level Google classrooms for students to access as well.
 - Parent comment - if the meetings are not required student won't do it as she is uncomfortable. Maybe encourage it more as students could benefit but not approach it on their own.
- How often do counsellors meet with the seniors since time was lost last year?
 - At the start of the year they met. Seniors would need to ask for additional meetings. "Need to knows" are in the Seniors Google classroom.
- Zoom, any increased behavior issues and the PM function that students can use?
 - Teachers can decide if PM can occur, teachers can turn it off (only send a PM to the teacher).
- Are teachers aware of the PM the students can do with each other. Using Zoom as direct messaging, not via video chat. Since they have access to Zoom via the school log in they can DM (open their own new Zoom rooms).
 - This is something that the staff will look into.
 - Follow up answer was given: "There isn't anything we can do from a tech standpoint to shut that down, but I will communicate with our teachers at the next meetings to make them aware of how students may be using Zoom."

Superintendent's Report – *John Hood*

- COVID numbers are monitored, if the schools become a point of significant transmission he will close classrooms. Community cases (due to New Years, etc), not a lot of transmission at school, but looking at some sites today for some targeted shut downs. Attendance 88-89% last week overall. Winter if flu 88% or lower, so not outside normal winter illness levels. 94-95% typical HS attendance, not in the winter though.
- Got grant funding for 3 contact tracers (trace bus to leaving afterschool including lunch) 0-3 feet 15 min unmasked considered close contacts.
- Target closures as needed, quarantine has moved to 5 days, which is a benefit as they miss 3-5 days from school maximally vs. more before.
- No known HS walk out last Friday. Attendance percentage was actually higher than typical days.
- If ill and excused from school there aren't truancy days. Please don't send your kids if they aren't feeling well. We will help them catch up, and adjust for finals etc..
- Question HS FB page, for kids that have to stay home, could Zoom be turned on so kids can listen from home?
 - We can't count those kids if students decide to stay home to just stream from home. Hard for teachers to Zoom, teachers don't like dual modality and don't think listening in helps, teachers prefer to talk during flex time or after school, not as easy as turning on Zoom with all the technical issues it takes to be able to do that in each classroom. Also don't want kids to have pressure to be Zooming when they are sick too.
- Bond Community Met - Trustee Cavanaugh to discuss, looking at 100-200 million bond without raising taxes. Aim to keep taxes at 7 mils vs dropping to 4.
 - Wed. 6-7pm and Thursday 7-8pm listening sessions.
 - Last board meeting people don't want us to reconfigure schools, but keep it flexible.
- Mascot committee: student committee met 3-12th graders, narrowed from 4 options to 1. Wednesday night taking name to Mascot Committee for district to approve to board on the 24th and adopt at the first Feb. meeting. 16 HS kids spearheaded this with supervisors.
- Security Updates: security update last meeting- follow up training with new staff on run fight hide training, staff want more training on the fight portion of the training.
 - Secure vestibules, electronic locks etc to be discussed. Policyperson to be on the bond committee.
 - Community Ed- no electronic locks, got a quote, \$60 k for Edgewood. It will be outfitted as such.

- Testing at Home Program: all students and staff to get 2 tests at home. They have not arrived yet. They are ordered. EL and Haslett got them, hoping ours will arrive soon. No answers from the state as to why they aren't here and it is not that we didn't advocate. Equity issue to have to drive to a site to test. He worked with Rep. Brixie and Sen. Hertel to get tests for the test to stay clinic even. 3,500 tests ordered. We have enough to test through early next week.
 - Testing: 1 hour long 120 kids tested (similar to pre thanksgiving), to be inside tomorrow.
- Intentionally day off Friday - it is Diwali, also helps to get a COVID reset Thursday through Monday so less kids miss school. Some equity concerns with shut-downs- elementary school doesn't have devices at home and it takes time to get them. Secondary schools can be a quick switch- they should bring home devices every night.
- Dr. Slee going to rewrite the equity plan. Update end of the month. Justice leaders collaborative training district wide. No subs so teachers can't go to training.

Board of Education Report – *Vin Lyon-Callo*

- In addition to Mr Hoods comments, the cleaning company has changed. We are hoping for some dramatic improvements.
 - Mr Hood stated we hired Peckham (includes staff with disabilities and challenges) and have great training and service. Will start before the 24th at the HS.
 - Parent Comment: Parents happy to hear re: cleaning. As a sub it isn't attractive when a child vomited in elementary school and it wasn't cleaned til the next day at noon.
- Evaluation for the superintendant – good
- Bond – preparing for that
- Sub issue? Anything to be done? Issue all over.
 - Building subs upped from 5 to 17- they work everyday.
 - Asked for parent group suggestions?
- Who is the Cornell Principal after Angie Trypak resigned before break (she has now become a RTI coach), Peggy Baldwin is the new interim principal (she was interim at BW and Hiawatha in the past as well as para-pro at Montessori, she has a literacy background). By spring break we will post the job.
- Vin said they have an outside group to look at if we can stop turn-over of the administrators.
 - Mr Hood said they are looking at why do people stay and look at all employee groups, concern re the great resignation.

- There are community concerns about our reputation with all principals retiring- but fact is they were just eligible to retire. Some had other family reasons. Some directors postponed retirement in fact to help the district through the beginning of Covid.
- Questions: can teachers leave whenever? No recourse if teacher tried to resign?
 - No, want to keep someone who doesn't want to be here. Tries not to do mid year hires as we don't want to steal from elsewhere. Ideally make change over summer. In Montessori all three have left. Food service, filling and retiring etc. common across state.

Presentation – *Stacy Bailey – Curriculum updates*

- What did we implement this year, what are we reviewing this year, new evaluation tool (equity focused).
- Curriculum, aligned with state standards, Okemos expectations, and that it connects to students. How is it mirroring who they are or window to different individuals they don't normally experience.
- New Curriculum 2021-2022 approved by Board June 2021.
- Budget given every year to update materials.
- Strategic Plan 2019- Priority 3- high quality practices and programming, enhancing core and aligning supplemental materials (especially important with online learning, so expanded digital licensing) for eg. Mote - allows teacher to provide verbal feedback on student assignments.
- Textbook Adoption Process
 - Readability, standards, design, features, Guidelines for identifying bias
 - Then committees (Elementary), department chairs (MS), area coordinators (HS)
 - Then District Advisory Council then BOE
- Elementary ELA big purchase (Reading Street before that, they were going to be extinct and online components going away)
 - Goal: it has diverse characters and authors, differentiation options, technology component
 - 3 years to fully implement the curriculum
- High School - 8 areas new textbooks, languages are sequential, Environmental Science and Wildlife Bio new class, AP classes updated materials with a digital component
 - Sr English- StudySync, online textbook. Adaptive to their reading level, option that isn't AP.
 - AP Calculus: needed because digital version not available. Needed it to be robust so they are successful with the AP test

- Geometry: used several places. Replaced as digital license retired. It had a lot of examples
- Algebra 2 honors: update on text
- AP Chemistry: updated so we could have digital content, embedded videos and animations. Good formative assessments
- Environmental Science and Wildlife Bio: Mammals of MI (good for local animals) and Environment: The Science Behind the Stories
- Spanish III and German II: update current text and licensing, continuation
- Curriculum under review
 - Middle School Social Studies, HS- various classes, May or June meeting with the board
- New Curriculum Review Tool
 - Assessing bias in standards and curricular materials
 - Rubric areas: invisibility, stereotyping, Imbalance and Selectivity, Historical Whitewashing, Fragmentation & Isolation, Linguistic Bias, Cosmetic Bias
- Questions: Montessori Level:
 - ELA is a similar resource but want to hold true to Montessori principles. Same materials and how we implement it look different.
 - Math very different. Not introduced at Montessori, we kept the Montessori math approach.
- Question: If we have to shut down, how does Montessori work?
 - Response: Online and not same hands on manipulatives, however it wouldn't be the same length of closure as in the past, now much shorter.
- Fastbridge numbers vs traditional performance? Fall testing similar between buildings. Also she will talk about in the past and where we are now - similar to 2019/18/17 or ?? This will be looked into.
- DEI to be used to evaluate the new textbooks but plan to evaluate the past more recent as they can. Highest priority are ELA and social studies.

Superintendent ASK→ District needs to put together a district professional advisory committee, make sure the content is aligned towards districts goals. Meet two times, 2 parent reps, only meet included a day that was going to be counted towards student instructional hours. Meet one time in June and one time in August. Virtual, 1 hour at the most. Teachers, 2 staff, 2 admin, and 2 parent reps. Email the DPC email if you are interested.

Sarah shared that the old Reading Street curriculum was dismantled and recycled in the Summer 2021 with the use of the Paper Gator that is located behind Central Elementary School near the Media/Tech building. The curriculum textbooks are sometimes bought back but these were old enough that they couldn't find a new home so instead of going to the landfill they were recycled. (about 500 boxes.)

Building reports

OHS – *Niki Robinson*

- PTO meeting is January 12, 2022, 8:45 meeting
- Sigma Phi Beta, Fraternity of African males Sat Feb 12th 9:30-2 PM, workshops with youth
- Choir and Robotics - Donate to Dine at Culvers, Jan 10th 5-9 PM, Tuesday Jan 11 5-9 PM

Chippewa – *Karen Shapiro and Kristin Arnett*

- CPG held its last meeting on Friday, 12/10.
- Coach Matt Riggins is offering strength and conditioning sessions for our CMS students.
Tuesday & Thursday Evenings, 5-7 pm, Chippewa MS Gym/Weight Room/Multipurpose Room.
Gym time will focus on hand-eye coordination drills, stick work and conditioning.
The Weight Room will focus on strengthening your entire body.
The Multipurpose Room will focus on agility, speed, and quickness.
- 7th and 8th grade Girls basketball tryouts were last week. Team rosters were posted in Google Classroom on Friday January 7th, one hour after tryouts have concluded.
- CPG arranged winter gift cards for teachers through signup.com. The specific cards were chosen by the teachers, and teachers were notified about which families gave them gifts. This year's gifts surpassed last year's and was a success all around.

Kinawa – *Sarah Allen and Niki Robinson*

- Backpacks in lockers went well last week. The students did fine adjusting to the “new to them” protocol.

Cornell – *Liz Luyendyk and Corinne Dyksen*

- Interim Principal is Ms. Baldwin.

OPM – *Katie Cavanaugh and Niki Robinson*

- June 6th fun day fundraiser, Field day

Bennett Woods – *Jane Manfredi*

- BW students had a great PJ and hot chocolate party before winter break.
- Mrs. Kurzeja also orchestrated a class sing along for the holidays!
- Mrs. Baker has done a great job of virtually displaying Bennett Woods student's class and hallway art!
- Next parent meeting Jan 20th at 6:30 PM

Hiawatha – *Carly Patel and Joy Magyar*

- The new washer and dryer purchased by the PTO has been installed.

- The gym floor was refinished over winter break and looks great. We are reminding students and those using the gym for basketball practices to please leave boots and/or wet shoes outside the gym to protect the floors.
- Next PTO meeting is Thursday January 13, at 7pm on Zoom.
- Culvers Jan 24th 5-9 PM
- Taking yearbook orders. Staff providing photos.
- Brainstorming ideas for the spring at Hiawatha happening.

New Business / Follow up information gathered

- Report back with follow up information regarding Lost and Found at the schools
 - Chippewa – PTO sent pictures out to families, did hear back from parents telling their kids to pick stuff up and they don't do it. Donating items soon. Ideally parents have access to it outside. It is in the lunch room against the wall.
 - Cornell – Niki Berridge was organizing the effort, no plan yet to get parents in to look at stuff, there's a shelf by the lunchroom
 - Bennett Woods – they have a table by the lunchroom
 - It'd be helpful if principals sent info out in their newsletters as well.
- Last meeting: discussed loitering afterschool at HS for athletics is there a room for adult supervision? Niki - 2:45-3:45 rooms at library and there are teachers there before their athletics stuff. Going on for a few months now. On early release or half days - need to figure out more.

Adjourn

Next Meeting: February 14, 2022 – Central Montessori (online)

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Website: www.okemosk12.net – Families – District Parent Council