

District Parent Council
March 21, 2022
12:00 – 2:30pm – online Zoom

Attendees: John Hood, Dr. Nicole Beard, Dean Bolton, Sarah Allen, Jean Lee, Karen Shapiro, Liz Luyendyk, Jane Manfredi, and Joy Magyar

Welcome and Introductions – Sarah Allen

Superintendent's Report – John Hood

- Mr. Hood introduced Dr. Beard to DPC. He's so glad she's here. She came from Lansing schools.
- Mascot
 - New items swap out will take a year to complete, Director Fargo is working on many pieces of the switch. Athletic Director Brown is ordering new uniforms.
 - Hood will be working to bring the elementary schools into the wolfpack by meeting with the staff to talk about having little dens
 - It's important to have a shared identity to help with bonding, etc. That way branding can occur as well.
 - Gabe, the graphic designer will meet with the PTOs
 - It is trademarked so we can keep tight watch over where it is used, Fabricated Customs is the exclusive place making the school items and FC is doing the design for free
- Hiring
 - 10-15 retirees
 - Will be hiring Cornell and OHS Principals soon
 - Mrs. Cironi was hired as the new assistant principal at OHS
- Bond
 - 2022 survey will be going out soon
- Equity plan
 - Looking for individuals for sub-committees
 - A social justice plan is being put together
- Hiring solutions are being looked into
 - Surveying people after turnover has occurred to learn and to keep a happy and healthy school district for the employees
- Budget season for the Board
 - Deficit spending, this year looks better
 - Budgeting for a loss of 13 students
 - We've lost 100+ in the last school year
- Contract with transportation
 - Bus wages were way out of line
 - Working on negotiations with teachers
 - Doing bus group first, they are very happy, and now doing other wages
- Covid

- Mitigations have been nice for students to take off their masks
- Difficulty contacting Directors – contact Liz Lentz as she is their boss.

Principal's Report – Dr. Nicole Beard – Hiawatha

- Dr. Beard appreciates the positive warm welcome she's received from the school district; she understands the district has its unique challenges
- Training has been occurring with Meridian Township
- \$2000 grant for the social worker
 - Identifying some more needs
 - Sensory hallway to deescalate with hopscotch and tactile items
- New washer and dryer
- Chess won and doing great
- Dr. Slee is helping with Hiawatha
- School improvement Team
- Volunteers are coming back, it's so nice to see the parents!
- Need 2-3 lunch supervisors and emergency basis would be great too
- MSTEP and FastBridge are coming up but we don't do both at the same time
- Dr. Beard wanted to come in and learn about the climate and to establish relationships
 - If we expect kids to problem solve we have to do that as adults too
- Carline procedures are being updated soon

Question was raised regarding school building volunteers: What are the volunteers that are in your school doing? She said they are helping not in the classrooms but copying etc. Her school is ok to go on field trips now, she says to check in with your principal. Parents aren't going on field trips but the paraprofessionals are. A comment was made that Bennett Woods said after break parents allowed back in more than likely. Comment that Cornell doesn't have parents in yet.

Board of Education Report – Dean Bolton

- Mascot presentation – Great unveiling, feedback positive. Many thanks to the students and the committee; earlier drafts symmetrical, and students didn't want it to look perfect, so it was adjusted. 2022 is in there on the right.
- Bond and Budget
 - 2006 our bond was our first technology bond with smartboards and projectors. He's excited for what we will be able to do since our facilities need a lot of attention. Facilities assessment: very detailed, should be in the board packet.
 - The budget is looking pretty good. The governors presentation was pretty good, the per pupil doesn't seem that will be a problem. We will know the per pupil numbers to work with soon.
 - 2022-2023- budget due June 30, Liz Lentz presented on this at the meeting.
 - HS pool – letters sent regarding the need for improvements, this will be looked at as part of the bond.
 - No meeting tonight due to spring break and not enough new.

- Involved in litigation against Jewel vaping manufacturer for marketing to students. School districts can take part – no cost. Funds can be used for vaping monitors and education.
- School Calendar be available for next year? Negotiated item, first thing with the unions that is decided, to be released in the next 6 weeks.
- Board self-assessment workshop in February. Focus on advocacy, state, and national level, Jamie Taylor and Katie Cavanaugh will be on the advocacy committee. Parent Council could get involved.
- Recommend watching the Feb 28th meeting presentation from Asst Supervisor Stacy Bailey on the mid year update on assessment data identifying issue Okemos has social and emotional as well as proficiency and roadmap.

Q&A:

- COVID funds use/disbursement?
 - Used in a lot of different ways – Liz Lentz presentations shows where it's been used, he will find dates, and he can resend to us
- Acreage on Powell – 25 acres, Cornell is 10 acres. Small development is being done and school property is to the south. Near the golf course/driving range off of Grand River
 - Technology – website lax in updating the website. Correct Principals and elementary schools are updating the sites. Eg. Old principals, admin assistants, etc. Dean Bolton will address this and hadn't heard of this issue before.
 - Dr Beard got feedback from Hiawatha families on this and got a tutorial – Hiawatha shown how to do basic updates.
- Vaping lawsuit – Mention of HS students have to hold their breath to go into the bathroom - so glad we are part of the class action.
- Zoom licenses: if we have renewed them for next year? Pre-purchase for this year? When kids drop off their computers, will zoom remain. Dr Beard will get the answers. No email received from Media/Tech Director from multiple people.

Presentation – Jean Lee – Orchestra/Music programs

- Thanks for the invite.
- No COVID impact on 5th grade
- 6th grade retention fell but still higher than other districts, posture issues, tone issues remain because of zoom, students who stuck with it understand impact on their lives. Space an issue for spreading out, and for future growth, Kinawa issue. Not enough room for storage.
- Chippewa 15% usual drop in enrollment, this year 30% drop in enrollment middle school. (7-8 Chippewa), because they only had a short time to start with the instrument. Never played with a conductor. Posture an issue. Behind on vibrato.
 - Celebrations, 7 orchestra and 1 in band all state, at the MI Music Conference
- OHS - no impact on retention, continue to grow, live stream concerts.
 - Celebrations: musicians for life, 12 all state students at the MI music festival
- MI Music Festival - perform for panel, letter grades.

- HAWAII trip – band, orchestra, and choir went to Hawaii. 2 am Thursday, planned on renting cello and base from Hawaii, now talking to airline regarding purchasing extra seats to take 11 instruments, donor helping and booster help because the renting of instruments in Hawaii fell through.

Needs and Concerns:

- Outgrowing facilities (esp Kinawa) Chippewa space suboptimal, equitable staffing amongst band, orchestra, and choir, operating costs (OMP virtual spaghetti dinner pays for music, need 25K a year to operate- they don't have a budget at Kinawa or Chippewa, OHS no budget? Either, link, need 10K more and need help), Claire Bellamy is the only choir teaching 7-12. Teacher morale is low in music department, esp Claire as she has no team teacher. We would like support to retain individuals in the choir program.

Q&A

- Can a child restart an instrument? Never said no to restarting, but a years worth of learning to catch up on. Private lessons needed. Can they read music? Fluency is a big issue.
- In the 90's budget \$9000, as policy changed, money removed from education.
- Last year no spaghetti dinner so lost 30K and had to dip into savings.
- Could this be incorporated into the bond?
 - Dean Bolton - Bonds and millages can buy instruments but it can't include salaries. Storage needs can be addressed.
 - OPM- fundraiser, parent groups, this is how we do this?
- Comment: wanted to make sure that the facilities needs were being included with the bond
- Community Ed Suzuki - Chippewa used after school Partnership, helps the excellence of their program
- The fundraiser needs to be shared with the Elementary schools to help them understand why they need to help with the fundraiser because it'll affect their kids when they get to Kinawa and beyond.
 - It's all in the Okemos Music Patrons Website – all month of March the fundraiser continues, links to be sent for posting on FB pages or in the school newsletters.
- Comment - Collage concert was amazing

Jean Lee shared that she'd like us to understand that celebrations and many items are outside of their teaching contract and so these teachers are spending a lot of their own time supporting their students when they aren't contractually obligated or paid.

Sarah Allen – What can DPC do to encourage teacher staffing? Write to the superintendent?

- Jean says classroom number caps are an impediment. Choir not allowed a team teacher because two choirs at Chippewa 25 and 35 students each vs 50. It's not a traditional classroom but that doesn't change the amount of work the teacher has to put in and it's getting to be too much.
- Student teachers from MSU - Claire Bellamy uses MSU students but there is a lot of mentoring involved so it's not the same as having a second team teacher.

- Music teachers are a big deal with leading across the state and country.

Jean will email it to Karen Morgan her slides and information so we can distribute it to the FB groups.

We will add this as an agenda item to discuss with Mr Hood next meeting.

Building updates

OHS – Niki Robinson and Sarah Allen

- Upcoming Parent Group Meeting
Wednesday, April 20 at 8:45 a.m. via Zoom
<http://aamco.zoom.us/j/88325713352?pwd=MjJyQldvemZPT09HYjd0UTk4bEd3dz09>
Meeting ID: 883 2571 3352
Password: 376916
- Post Prom:
Parent Group is still looking for parents to help with post prom. We need help planning this event. Specifically, we need a parent to chair the food (food will be handled differently than in previous years) and someone to chair ticket sales, which will be overseen by our Treasurer. If you are able to help, contact Michelle Renfrew at ohsparentgroup20@gmail.com. Post Prom planning meeting will be March 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Buddies in Okemos. In an effort to give everyone information ahead of time (for planning) a link for donations and to volunteers to staff post prom will be sent out after spring break.
- Important OHS Dates
 - April 13 –PSAT 9 for 9th grade & SAT for 11th grade (no school for 10th and 12th grades)
 - April 14- PSAT 10 for 10th grade & WorkKeys/MStep for 11th grade (no school for 9th and 12th grades)

Chippewa – Karen Shapiro and Kristin Arnett

- CPG held its last meeting on Friday, 3/11.
- Winter days for 7th and 8th graders was a success. This was a replacement for the pre-Covid 7th grade winter camp usually a 3-day overnight trip up north.
- Chippewa is working on spring activities such as the walk/run which would take place after testing.
- 7th graders will be taking the MSTEP math April 11, 12 and 14 and MSTEP ELA April 20-22.
- 8th graders will be taking the PSAT for math and ELA April 13, MSTEP Social Studies 4/21 &
- 4/22, MSTEP Science 4/28 & 4/29.
- A 7th grader at Chippewa is collecting old eye glasses for people in need. Used glasses can be placed in a bin in the office and she will donate to the Lions Club.
- The next Chippewa Parent Group meeting will be held on Friday, April 8th, 8:30 am.

Kinawa – Sarah Allen and Niki Robinson

- Upcoming Dates

- April 12 - 5th Grade M-Step (ELA)
- April 14 - 5th Grade M-Step (Math)
- April 19 - 5th Grade M-Step (Science)
- April 20 - Early Release Date
- April 21 5th Grade M-Step (Social Studies)
- Okemos Archery has opened up again
- Change of clothes – each student has been asked to bring a change of clothes due to the mud and melting snow.
- Organic Community Garden – currently accepting applications for 2022. Plots for new gardeners are assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Cornell – Liz Luyendyk and Corinne Dyksen

- PTO not given the approval to be in the building
- Finishing the Wild Robot one book one school
 - All school read at the same time and discussed, robot building contests,
- Car line dismissal improving, teachers helping, neon green safety vests, busses priority
- No science fair for them. Will do market day economics unit.
- PTO dates for family fun night. May 20th Finish mileage laps and baskets as small fundraiser.

OPM – Katie Cavanaugh and Niki Robinson

- No report

Bennett Woods – Jane Manfredi

- We have a TV in the tower lobby area that each week displays a different class's work. This is sometimes informational slides, jokes, "about me"s or fun facts. It has been really fun to watch students learn from each other in that way.
- Kindergarten information for next year will be posted after spring break on the website. It will be done as it has been in the past 2 years as a virtual presentation and video. Registration is open now for anyone who has an incoming kindergartener.
- Parent Teacher Virtual Conferences Went Well
- Our Square1Art is displayed in the building and the fundraiser is ongoing
- International Night is happening Thursday.
- Science Night planning is underway and it is happening April 21
- Mileage Club is gearing up to much excitement.
- Planning is starting for family fun night (games and food trucks) and Field Day both in June.

Hiawatha – Carly Patel and Joy Magyar

- Mileage Club is starting April 11th
- Spring Scholastic book fair is May 2-6
- Hiawatha Happening planning has begun with the event happening in May.
- We are in immediate need of lunch/recess supervisors.

- Next PTO meeting is April 14th at 7pm on zoom.

New Business / Follow up information gathered

Adjourn

Next Meeting: April 18, 2022 – Kinawa 5/6 (online)

Email: Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com

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