District Council Meeting, November 11, 2013 at Worcester Elementary School

Attendees:
Michelle Bauer, Jennifer Cancro, Sheila Kavit, Renee Petersohn, Nicole Drake, Sunny Noh, Donna Andorn, Angela Linch, Janeen Marzewski, Karen Kleger, Karen Kilgour, Manisha Baman, Jenny Anderson, Bob Harney, Allyson Lorenti, Susan Wozniak, Joanna Ruzzi, Ronda Neider, Linda Fisher, Dana Reddington, Mary Wust, Jason Sorgini, Laura Winslow, Sue Gabriel, Cathy Stratoti, Joyce Petrauskas, Judy Landis, Melissa Gorla, Lu Page, Aaron Roberts, John Smink, Peggy Bonder, Tara Ricci, Zanthia Reddish, Jennifer Brucker, Lisa Coupe, Cindy Rhoads, Christine Steere, Genny Geis, Kit Markle, Herb Rothe, Cathleen Barone, Carla Tuhacek, Linda Valle, Kathleen Schlenker, Pete Schlenker, Christine Capece, Darlene Massar, Sophia Sprayberry, Amanda Jacobs, Carol Davidson, Sherry Polidore, Genie Dickey, Shawna Rondeau, Dana Leahan, Meg Cunnane, Kim Beam, Dr. David Zerbe

Welcome and Introductions:
The meeting began at 7pm. Sue Gabriel welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. Special thanks to Worcester H&S for hosting. She reported that the Vendor Resource Guide, which was discussed at the District Council Presidents meeting, is being worked on and would be available in the future.

District Home and School Council Updates:
- Joyce Petrauskas, School Board President, reported on the Legislative Advocacy Program. She said the program was set up by the Pennsylvania School Board Association to assist in having the public know what bills pertaining to education are coming up in the PA Legislature. You enter your zip code and that gives you access to letters that you can customize and send to your representatives if you would like them to vote either way on a bill. Joyce asked for the Home and Schools to help spread the word on this program.
- Karen Kilgour, Dana Reddington, and Kim Beam gave a report on Post Prom. They stated that the Krispy Kreme doughnut fundraiser was a success and the next fundraiser will be on 11/21, Premier Jewelry. The annual adult fundraiser will be held on 2/8/14 at St. Helena's Church in Blue Bell. For the post prom itself, they are asking for Volunteers especially for Cleanup/teardown. There is currently a logo contest for the prom that students may participate in.

Administration Updates
- Bob Harney, Assistant to the Superintendent for Personnel, reported that the district is interviewing for a new Director of Curriculum this week. They will then be interviewing for a new director of Pupil Services to replace Dr. Fay who is retiring.
- Janeen Marzewski, Coordinator of District Services gave a report about new safety initiatives. There will now be a standard response protocol and more specific language regarding types of emergency drills and how they are to be handled. More information can be found on the district website. She reported that there will be a Limerick Power Plant safety drill on 11/19 and FEMA and PEMA will be coming out to evaluate. In other initiatives, there is a new wellness program for students and faculty. Regarding the Education Foundation - there was a 5K warrior run last month and 125 people participated. Arcola Intermediate School got a prize for having the most participants. On 12/8, there will be a Holiday House Tour with 5 participating houses and people will also be caroling.
- Angela Linch, Coordinator of School & Community Information presented that the new Methacton Mobile App has been well received and is being widely used. She also reported that the Methacton Newsletter is now an electronic document. They did a survey and found that people liked getting it electronically and read it more often. Angela is still working on ways to keep people informed

who do not have internet access. One thing that is being posted soon is a Data Portfolio which will contain demographics and other district information. Finally the rollout of the new School Messenger system went well.

- Peggy Bonder, Acting Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Coordinator, gave a report that the district is working on aligning curriculum to PA course standards. PA rolled out an effectiveness model so many in-service teacher days have been spent learning about them. Also, NCLB waiver was approved so AYP is no longer being used. Instead there is a School Report Card for a school performance profile.

Teacher's Report

- Genny Geis and Kit Markle reported that the new Volunteer Clearances are still being processed so they wanted to thank the people who helped extra in schools and for activities where there may have been a shortfall of volunteers. There is an initiative of a pilot program with iPads to be used in the classroom as part of an iPad cart which is coming in November. The iPads are used to integrate reading, writing, and speaking. There are about 40 teachers who are being trained on them and there will eventually be a blog where parents can follow the progress.

School Reports (Prompt – Impact of Updated Volunteer policy on Volunteerism and current enrollment)

- Eagleville – Number of volunteers with clearances initially went down but is slowly increasing. Enrollment: 370
- MHS – Hitch with parents having to drive to Harrisburg to get clearances at last minute to host Spain Exchange students but fine otherwise. It may be a future problem if Senior Citizens are to be utilized for Volunteers with regard to cost and logistics. Enrollment: 1701
- Skyview – Volunteer numbers are good and all activities have been staffed. Getting ready to fine approved Volunteers for Outdoor Education program. Enrollment: 770
- Woodland – No problem staffing programs with approved volunteers. Enrollment: 291
- Worcester – All events are covered. Enrollment: 420
- Arcola – Enough volunteers for everything so far. A comment was made that National Honor Society Students are also good for volunteers as they get service hourse. Enrollment: 810
- Arrowhead – They have enough volunteers. They sent home a sheet in June and again in September with the proper forms to apply for clearances to facilitate the process and that worked well. Enrollment: 306
- Audubon – Slowly increasing volunteer numbers. Initial problem in the lunchroom but that has been worked out. Enrollment: 401

Comment that the TB test is currently still required since it is required for District Employees but if people don't have it, they can still volunteer until they get it. They just won't get the official gold lanyard until the TB test is completed.

District Council Meeting Minutes

After the minutes from the April, 2013 meeting were circulated, Sue Gabriel made a motion to approve them. Laura Winslow approved the motion and Nicole Drake seconded.

Dr. Zerbe, Superintendent

Dr. Zerbe began by thanking the Home and School Organizations for their efforts in the schools. He appreciates the work that is done and is sure the kids are grateful too. Commented that without our H&S, we would probably not be among the top 10% of the schools in the state.

However, with the recent conflicts in the Home and School and District Council that he has learned

about via phone, e-mail, meetings, etc. with parents, officers, and principals, he feels that the group needs to refocus our efforts back to the kids and he is looking to help.

His fundamental concerns are:

- No documented conflict resolution process. This has impacted trust among the members of the organizations and among friends.
- There is a loose organizational structure which perpetuated appearance of concern and accountability.
- There are not always audits being performed on the books and that best practices aren't being followed.

Moving forward, he is putting into place a structure where the DC will oversee all 8 schools.

In the future, we will reassert what is best for the students. This will be accomplished with new Bylaws, training for officers as they transition between schools, and much more structure.

The H&S DC will have Bylaws, a code of conduct, accounting practices, training, a method of conflict resolution and will also be insured by the district for liability.

Dr. Zerbe will be asking for money from the School Board to cover the costs of insurance and auditing of the books. He will also help the organization become and official 501-3C group.

Recommendations:

- For now, the Home and School Associations will remain Status-quo
- The current District Council will be dissolved so that the mission can be changed and redefined and then will be reformed.
- He is holding a meeting on 11/18 with all the Home and School Presidents plus the district solicitor to determine a timeline and list of tasks, set a structure for the reorganization of the council, and then will report back to the DC Membership on the status, hopefully by mid-December.

There was no old business.

It was announced that the next DC meeting will take place on 2/10 at Arcola and the next (November) Up Close and Personal will be from Eagleville. There are no Up Close & Personals scheduled for the December School Board Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.