

Minutes of the Menlo Park City School District Council
November 6, 2020 via Zoom

In attendance

Katie Rottier, Julia Molise, Christine Goudey, May Matsui, Azadeh Rasmussen, Katherine Bicer, Kathryn Brottem, Vidya Kagan, Erik Burmeister, Sharon Burns, Willy Haug, Kristin Gracia, Linda Creighton, Parke Treadway, Sherwin Chen, Paige Arata, Sarah Thayer, Alison Matthews, Tricia Mulcahy, Krista Rosa, Cassandra Lopez, Victoria Dorward, Athena Howard, Casey Wilke, Theresa Fox, Katherine Strach

8:45

Welcome - Katie Rottier

Katie welcomes the group.

8:52

Approval of [Sept minutes](#) Julia Molise

Julia moves for approval, Katie Seconds and the minutes are approved by vote.

8:53

Treasurer Report - Christine Goudey

Christine walks the group through her report. She proposes that it might be cleaner for the Foundation to directly manage the funds for the OCC. She confirms that there are no expenses for the speaker series.

8:57

Speaker Series - Vidya Kagan

Vidya reports a very successful start to the year. [Here](#) is the link to the lineup of events.

- The series began with Julie Lythcott Haims in September.
- In October, Dr. Marc Brackett discussed “Permission to Feel.”
- In November, in partnership with the CHC, we will present Mental Health and Learning.
- January’s offering will include “Race, Prejudice and Policy” a three-part conversation of the history of race issues around Menlo Park. There will be a discussion of the book “The Color of Law,” a “gallery walk” with Dr. Mary Montel Bacon about the inequities in the MPCSD. The final part will be a discussion of the future of education in the south peninsula --

- January - Race, Prejudice and Policy-- 3 part conversation. 3 of the events will 9:01 - ½ will be a joint presentation -- essentially a gallery walk about redlining - This historical practice really created the vast discrepancy between school districts on either side of Hwy 101. Talk about the book The Color of Law and its applications in Menlo Park.
- February will bring the “Health Connected” -- talking to your child about sexual health.
- March will a showing of the film “Like”
- April, in conjunction with Earth Day will be a showing of the film, “The History of Plastic.”

9:07

School Board Update - Sherwin Chen

Sherwin reports that the board is very pleased about the success of returning to the hybrid model. In fact, the more he hears about how other districts are faring, the prouder he is. They continue to want to support the Virtual Academy. The hope is to get regular COVID testing up and running. At some point we will need to talk about the timing of the parcel tax.

9:11

One Community Campaign Update

Azadeh Rasmussen and Katherine Bicer

The team reports that they had a very successful campaign. Betsy and Krista were excellent stewards. The OCC exceeded its goal of 60% participation. Each organization, if pledges are fulfilled, will exceed its fundraising goal. They have debriefed and gone through all the aspects of the campaign. Takeaways include that we need a more structured approach to teacher donations and that we need a video.

Next steps will be to find co-chairs for next year -- **Julia Molise** reports that the Nominating Committee has been regularly meeting and hoping to find co-chair nominees soon but we may need to vote remotely on them if we are unable to find two nominees by the January meeting.

9:18

MPAEF Report

Paige Arata and Sarah Thayer

The team reports a very smooth campaign. It truly felt “joint” and seamless. Betsy and Krista brought excellent energy. The first set of dine-out initiatives were successful. Ward Bullard’s team has been fabulous. They are starting to think of other fundraising events -- including the Auction and the Run-- and how they can create fun, safe and successful community events.

9:21

Superintendent Update

Erik Burmeister

The theme of this meeting is the area of Curriculum and Instruction.

- Education Services is led by Jammie Beherant. We had done a new adoption of materials for social studies and science. She is always assessing how teaching and learning is going -- we are using data and assessment to determine where the kids are.
- Erik introduces Katherine Strach who joins us from Redwood City as a teacher coach. Katherine is coordinator of data assessment and English language development and Jammie’s right hand.
- She oversees curriculum and materials, intervention services.
- Tami Gerske oversees world languages.
- Theresa Fox, in addition to role with the Virtual Academy is the part time coordinator of technology.
- Instructional coaches include Johnna Becker at Hillview, Michelle Betencourt and Laurie Sullivan at Encinal.
- The Family Engagement Coordinator is Flor Espinal -- she is truly the glue for the college bound families

The Ed Services team had to pivot to meet the needs of all students and met with each of the site leaders to determine specific needs. The team created a curriculum guide aligning the curriculum with priority standards in math, reading and writing. We also implemented new technology See Saw, altitude and schoology.

9:30

Principal Updates

Sharon Burns - Encinal School

Sharon reports that they have aligned the schedules so students can work with the literary specialists. They have created flex periods so that kids from home can zoom in to work with the literary specialists on campus.

Linda Creighton - Laurel School

Linda reports that one of the great advantages is how connected all of the elementary schools have become.

At Laurel, they are particularly focused on math and concerned about how to keep the focus going when students are only on campus ½ the time.

Linda reports that the COVID protocols are working and that there have been a handful of cases but that it has not spread within the school.

Kristen Gracia - Oak Knoll School

Kristen agrees that one of the silver linings is that the group has been that the elementary school sites have been able to work so closely together.

She is proud of how innovative and creative her teachers have been -- using technology, working outside.

They have been committed to discussing racism. Her site is also focused on emotional vocabulary and increasing proficiency and confidence in math.

Theresa Fox - Virtual Academy

Theresa reports that they have had 25 students transfer into the academy as well as other students transfer out of it.

They have had to really work on building relationships. One of the biggest challenges is building relationships and figuring out how to support students who are experiencing learning differences.

Teachers are working and strategizing about the best way to create engagement.

Willy Haug - Hillview Middle School

Willy echoes the gratitude of the rest of the group.

The kids are so excited to be back on campus and they are settling into their stable cohorts. This is the first week back on campus for the 7th and 8th graders.

Willy is proud to report that they get synchronous learning in their at-home week.

Johnna Becker has done a great job building priority standards.

9:51

Erik closes by sharing how proud he is of this district, stating that we are so far ahead of everyone that it almost seems unfair.

He also mentions that going out for the Parcel Tax needs to be a big agenda item.

November 2021 will likely be when we do so.

Katie thanks everyone and adjourns the meeting.

9:56**Adjourn**