Menlo Park District Council Meeting Minutes
Friday, November 2, 2018
Approved January 12, 2019

In attendance:
Janelle McCombs, Erik Burmeister, Stephanie Sheridan, Ellen Kraska, Ken Wang, Kathy Orciuoli, Christa West, Carrie Chen, Sharon Burns, Karen Dobbyn, Liliana Perazich, Carolyn Kryger, Sarah Sobel, David Ackerman, Jenny Buddin, Kristen Gracia, Willy Haug, Caroline Bowers, Terry Thygesen, Eunice Cardenas

The meeting was called to order at 8:50 am by Janelle McCombs, District Council President.

Approval of September 7, 2018 Meeting Minutes
Eunice Cardenas motioned to approve the September 7, 2018 minutes. Kathy Orciuoli seconded the motion.
All voted in favor. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report — Karen Dobbyn, District Council Treasurer

- Two checks were cut in the last two months.
- Reimbursements were made for Speaker series flyers and banners. The banners were billed to the Joint Campaign, while the flyers were billed to District Council.
- Treasurer is still awaiting District Council dues from some member schools.
- The audit needs to be completed for the past 6 months (Feb 2018 - July 2018)
- Each PTO must submit form RRF1 by December 15, 2018 if they are due this year. RRF1 forms are due every other year.

ADDED BY DISTRICT COUNCIL SECRETARY/PARLIAMENTARIAN, CAROLINE BOWERS
Following the November 2, 2018 District Council meeting, Karen Dobbyn resigned as Treasurer in light of her family move back to Australia. Sharon Schick was nominated to fill the position of District Council Treasurer for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year term. A vote was conducted over email of the DIstrict Council voting membership from December 10-19, 2018 and she was unanimously voted in. Welcome Sharon!

Speaker Series Update — Christa West Parent Ed Programming Coordinator

Monday, September 17, 2018 -- Restorative Parenting with Karen Junker was canceled. Working to reschedule her.

Wednesday, October 3, 2018 -- Promoting Math Mindsets with Jo Boaler was fantastic.

Wednesday, November 7, 2018 -- Angst Documentary Screening and Panel, Anxiety in our Children. Erik Burmeister will moderate a panel featuring the MPCSD Health & Wellness team. Laurel is the host school for this event.
Mr. Burmeister clarified that the film focuses on teens, but the panel will discuss preventative measures so it is also relevant for parents of younger children.

Superintendent Update & Q&A: Erik Burmeister, MPCSD Superintendent

Mr. Burmeister discussed the upcoming Community Campaign Launch meeting on 11/7/18 @ 8:45am - 10:15am

- A team is being assembled to develop volunteer support and messaging
- All District Council members are welcome to be a part of it. If you come to the meeting, we hope you will be part of the team
- Work subgroups will be formed to divide up the work to be done
- The team will meet 1x per month. Work groups will coordinate their specific meeting times
- Leads have already been identified for each subgroup.

Today's Topic is 'The Whole Child' and how we talk about the non-cognitive skills of our kids.

Mr. Burmeister let everyone know that with campaign season over, we are very close to our fundraising goal for this year. Carrie Chen is following up with those who have donated before, but have not yet done so this year. Carrie is also reaching out to non-donors to learn why they choose not to donate.

The revamped Community Campaign is a pilot effort.

- Implemented a shorter annual parent campaign season isolated to the Fall season. Campaign is over on or around October 5th.
- Member school PTOs and the MPAEF work closely together to meet fundraising goals.
- In preparation for next year, the team is focusing efforts to clarify District messaging and make fundraising easier and volunteering more fun!
- From a school funding perspective, the big difference for PTOs is that District pays for field trips, but PTOs still work with Principals to select the field trips.
- This model ensures that PTOs have the money they need.
- We still raise the same money from same people.
- The goal is NOT to merge the PTOs and MPAEF. They will remain separate organizations.
- If this new model doesn't work, we will go back to the way things were done before.
- All of the School Principals are on board
- Sharon Burns added that the individual schools are in alignment so that no other site fundraising happens at the same time.

Mr. Burmeiseter introduced the organization, TurnAround, which brings together the best research on whole child topics to identify what all kids need to survive. Turnaround Vice President, (name ??), children attend MPCSD schools. TurnAround has identified whole child building blocks for learning. MPCSD school site leadership is working to figure out how we can use this information to identify where we can improve student experience. Stephanie Sheridan will discuss the changing legislation around children identified as dyslexic and those known as twice exceptional (learning difference + gifted).

Student Services Update: Stephanie Sheridan, Director of Student Services

Dyslexia in education has become a big topic because of legislation in California. An Assembly Bill passed in 2015 which required the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and complete program guidelines for dyslexia. California Dyslexia Guidelines were released in August of 2017. This is a general education initiative, not a special education initiative.

Included in the Guidelines are:

- Historical Context

- Neuroscience
- Framework as a Language Learning Disability
- Characteristics
- Socioemotional Factors
- Impacts for English Learners
- Appropriate Teacher Training
- Screening and Assessment
- Relationship to Special Ed and 504
- Approaches for Intervention
- Information for Parents
- Assistive Technology
- FAQs

Dyslexia is defined as a language-based learning disability and is neurobiological. It impacts the phonological component of language and is not a cognitive issue. It is the most common learning difference, accounting for 15-20% of the US population. There is evidence that it runs in families. Early screening and interventions are critical and can make a huge difference in progress. Dyslexia occurs in all intellectual abilities. Student IQ should correlate with academic performance. The goal is to identify dyslexia early. Experts believe it can be recognized by age 3 or 4.

At MPCSD, the goal is to make sure children with dyslexia are receiving the support they need.

- Training for all teachers
- Universal screening for entire grade level/classrooms
- Guidelines for regular education
- Literacy interventions
- Dyslexia work groups

For those identified as twice exceptional students, another workgroup that has been formed to support those students with learning differences who also have high cognitive ability. Supports will be rolled out to general education teachers.

School Board Update — Terry Thygesen & David Ackerman, MPCSD School Board President

Janelle McCombs thanked Terry Thygesen for her 16 years of Leadership on our School Board.

Erik Burmeister shared that Ms. Thygesen is retiring. There will be two more Board meetings to discuss compensation on Tuesday, 11/6/18 and 11/13/18, and then Terry Thygesen and Joan Lambert are rolling off of the School Board.

Ms. Thygesen asked “What does it look like to be fully funded?”
She discussed the parcel tax that passed years ago which increased MPCSD funding by 20% overnight with no sunset. This started ongoing, long term support to lower teacher student ratios, specialist teachers and teacher training. If you look at STAR test scores during that time, our scores increased at three times the rate of our comparable districts, such as Woodside, Palo Alto and Hillsborough, such that we equalized.
The tagline was: “Helping Good Schools Get Better.” She noted that you can’t provide good education on the cheap.

David Ackerman added that he came to MPCSD in 2000 as Principal at Oak Knoll. Terry led the District by convincing the community to invest in our schools. Congratulations Terry!

Joint Campaign Update — Kathy Orciuoli, Co-Coordinator

- Every school made their numbers, which hasn't happened in some time!
- The team is hopeful that the Community Campaign will run smoothly as a result of all of the collaboration that took place this year.
- Every school had 70+% participation this year.
- Campaign leaders want hesitant people to come to the table to address their issues and concerns and encourage everyone to come on Wednesday, November 7. 2018 to the Community Campaign Launch meeting.
- Erik Burmeister thanked Kathy & Caryn for their leadership on the Campaign.
- Janelle McCombs also commented on the positivity of the Campaign this year.

MPAEF Update - Carrie Chen, MPAEF

The Annual Parent Campaign reached the same fundraising amount in 4 weeks less time. Overall so far for the year, MPAEF is at:

- 95% of APC goal
- 63% participation

The MPAEF office is still reaching out for pledges, corporate matches and to non-donors, to maximize fundraising. We really want to make a concerted effort to hear from the large number of families who simply do not donate. We plan to approach audiences in different ways.

Business & Realtor partners:

- If they paid by 10/5/18, they would be included in Palo Alto newspaper advertisement. As a result, majority have paid now.
- We had the first of two Dine Outs. New restaurants were added. Another chance in December, when the second Dine Out will take place.
- Good Eggs: new member sign ups get a discount and a percentage goes back to MPAEF through November.
- MPAEF Auction: Solicitations kick off on Monday, 11/5/18. More to come in January.
- Two events in December
    - Wine Walk on Dec 1
    - Dine Out Dec 5 & 6
- Shopping Portal: can we make it more prominent going into the holidays?

School Principal Updates

Guided Question: Principals asked to discuss the work they are doing to develop the whole child.

Laurel -- Ellen Kraska, Assistant Principal

- Laurel tagline: The Best Place to spend your childhood
- Dia de los Mortos Assembly and Celebration
- Laurel conducts school-wide Character Education and has a Monthly Life Skill Character Program
    - 2x a week announcements are made for two students who have demonstrated the Life Skill of the month. This month is Friendship.
    - 4th graders are piloting 16 Life Skills traits
- Building Blocks: each class has 3 Project Based Learning (PBL) units.
    - How to address needs of Whole Child
    - First graders come up with Recess Clubs (science club, bowling club)
    - Perseverance: continuous improvement in PBL units. Kids need to get used to continually editing their work to make to it better.
    - Curiosity: Deep dive time for 10 weeks- 4th & 5th graders get to choose how to spend their time on Thursday afternoons (knitting, green team, basketball, how does the Internet work,)

Oak Knoll -- Kristen Gracia, Principal

- Work being done to create the environment for SEL and academic skills to thrive academically and build relationships.
    - Oak Knoll is working hard to focus on creating a safe environment where everyone has a sense of belonging.
    - Homework agreement: full consensus among staff. Believe children need time to explore passions and have time with family to create balance in life.
- Relationships: Teachers are striving to understand each student as an individual in their classroom.
    - Restorative circles at least once per week in classrooms
    - Want children to feel they belong, are heard and that they matter

Encinal — Sharon Burns, Principal

- SEL Team comprised of teachers and parents
    - Ask for support at home
    - Launched a new website with downloadable resources
    - Counselor coffees that are well attended
- Student survey will be conducted in February.
- An SEL focused survey will go out to 5-8th graders in November. Hope is that survey results enable intervention. However, it is an opt-out survey.

Hillview — Willy Haug, Principal

- Focus on building relationships and creating a sense of belonging
    - Create spaces where students can belong and feel a sense of attachment
    - Student survey revealed relatively low scores on sense of belonging and connection to adults among Hillview students
    - Teachers ran focus groups at lunch which created transcripts for teachers to analyze
    - Students said they need opportunities to connect with each other.
        - Some teachers created community circles where students can acknowledge one another and ask questions
        - ASB Character trait of month (October was respect, November is Commitment)

Next District Council Meeting: Friday, January 11, 2018, 8:45 a.m., TERC A&B

Thank you to Encinal for providing snacks for this meeting.
January snack -- Hillview
March snack -- Oak Knoll

Janelle McCombs adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.