Menlo Park District Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 13, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 8:55am by Kate Kennedy, District Council President.

Approval of December 2016 Meeting Minutes — Kate Kennedy motioned to approve the December minutes. Jody Buckley seconded motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report — Gina Skinner, District Council Treasurer

Total funds available as of Jan. 13, 2017: $6,575.94.

District Council expenses for December included payments for the MPCSD Speaker Series (UNsilence). Additional activities included review of non-employee compensation paid by the DC, and obtaining required W-9s from such entities for preparation of Forms 1099-MISC.

Measure X Resolution Vote Results — Kate Kennedy, District Council President

In accordance with District Council bylaws regarding action taken without a meeting, District Council President Kate Kennedy made a motion, via email, to vote by email on a resolution for the District Council to endorse Measure X. The motion was seconded by District Council Secretary/Parliamentarian Janell Sanford, and approved by the voting members of the District Council. Members of the District Council subsequently voted and approved the endorsement of Measure X as a group.

Superintendent Update – Dr. Maurice Ghysels, MPCSD Superintendent

Dr. Ghysels reiterated that 11 meetings had been held to discuss the structural deficit and solicit community input. Regardless of the outcome of the March vote on Measure X, $2.2MM in budget cuts will have to be made for the 2017-18 school year. There was a lengthy discussion at the most recent School Board meeting about how to handle staff reductions, and the Board requested that staff present a recommendation for personnel reductions at the February meeting. Reductions will change the District, but every effort will be made to ensure the changes impact students as little as possible. As a locally-funded district, MPCSD will always have to be in the mindset of fundraising, whether through the MPAEF or via parcel taxes.

School Board Update — Stacey Jones, School Board President

Stacey reported that next year's calendar has been approved. The first day of school will be August 24, 2017. Please refer to next year's calendar on the District Website. Holidays and Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring breaks are set, and staff development dates will be published later this year.

MPAEF Update — Jennifer Dahmus/Alka Gupta, MPAEF Co-Presidents

Jennifer Dahmus announced that the Foundation has raised 3.3M to date and is 95% to goal.

- The Spring Auction is coming. New this year is the mini online bidding for summer camps launching next Tuesday, January 17th - 23rd. There will be 22 camp gift certificates auctioned.
- Schoolhouse Rocks 5K coming in Spring. A new run route/race course will flow closer to downtown Menlo Park, ending at Hillview. The course will not have a double loop this year, which will hopefully open up broader interest in the community to 5K racers. We are aiming for a broader community event, closer to downtown businesses, hoping to connect with them even more.
- Alka reported that the MPAEF has voted to endorse Measure X. They are excited to be on board with this endorsement.

School Updates

Hillview — Willy Haug, Principal

- The Panorama school survey is out right now, and reminders will be sent to parents to complete their survey. Hillview is also setting up a survey for student feedback. The site council and principal will review the results, which will provide coaching opportunities for teachers based on student feedback.
- Summit learning platform: Teachers will be working with other schools, talking about how to expand this tool. The Summit learning platform is an online tool that facilitates personalized learning. It's a collaborative team effort producing amazing student outcomes.
- 8th grade teachers have begun to plan for mini courses. Putting together an abbreviated mini course catalog. The model going forward will be for 8th grade-only mini courses.

Oak Knoll — Kristen Gracia, Principal

- Kristen was happy to announce that Leah Kessler, Oak Knoll's vice principal, had her baby!
- Jonathan Coldoff, Tech Specialist and former Oak Knoll teacher, will be filling in as Vice Principal for Leah during her maternity leave.
- After Winter break, Oak Knoll teachers hit the ground running thanks to the staff development day on Monday before school started. During staff development day, various topics were addressed, including a focus on college bound students. Each teacher had to write measurable goals, adding strategies for how to attain these goals with specific students in addition to a classwide reach. The presentations were live streamed from Oak Knoll's KNOL studios to all four school sites.
- Fifth graders are preparing for Outdoor Ed, which will take place Feb. 6-10.
- Panorama survey is out for parent feedback. We are also developing a K-2 survey for kids on paper. Goal is to build a culture to show our students that we want their feedback and that their voice matters, too.
- Staff is preparing for Kindergarten registration and starting to schedule school tours for incoming Kinder parents.

Laurel — Linda Creighton, Principal

- Linda welcomed the District Council members to the new Laurel Campus today. She is excited to take everyone on a tour after the meeting.
- Adding to the topic of the Panorama survey, Linda said that several questions have come up regarding the survey, and Panorama has been incredibly responsive and great to work with. The data and parent feedback are both very important to the Laurel team. Linda asked everyone to encourage friends and parents to complete the survey, which will result in improvements for next year.
- Deep Dive sessions will be starting with 4th and 5th graders, similar to mini courses at Hillview, but will be held every Friday for 45 minutes. The kids will give their input on choices and preference for their sessions, and will have a variety of options from which to choose.

Encinal — No update.

PTO Updates

Hillview - Jody Buckley and Julie Nelson, PTO Co-Presidents

- On Tuesday, Jan. 17, a PTO meeting is being held for the general membership. Principal Willie Haug will speak about the Panorama family survey. The PTO Executive Committee will also discuss the endorsement of Measure X, and will follow up with a vote by the general membership on endorsing the measure.
- Hot lunch is running very smoothly.
- Julie Nelson reported that she has been working with the Safe Routes to School program. Safe Routes volunteers are working hard on getting kids to school safely.

Laurel — Joe La Cava, PTO President

Laurel PTO held their general membership meeting yesterday to discuss and vote for the endorsement of Measure X. Vote for the endorsement passed, and parents seem very involved and are getting geared up for the campaign to support Measure X.

Encinal — Claire Burks, PTO Co-President

- Encinal Engineers event was held on Wed., January 11, for K-2 students. Grades 3-5 will have Encinal Engineers day later this month with Lawrence Hall of Science bringing in engineering activities.
- Third grade debate tournament coming up on February 4th and 5th.
- Cultural Art Days featuring Japan will be held on February 3rd.
- Encinal PTO general membership meeting was held yesterday. Discussion regarding the endorsement of Measure X was held, followed by a unanimous vote to support it.
- Had great feedback from the teacher collaboration/staff development day held on the Monday before school started.

Oak Knoll — Janelle McCombs, PTO President

- Oak Knoll held their general membership meeting yesterday, and had a huge turnout of parents eager to support Measure X. Following discussion, the membership passed a vote to endorse Measure X.
- Lunch Master came to Oak Knoll yesterday to do food tasting for any interested parents and students. The event was held to generate more enthusiasm about the new lunch program, and to recruit and attract more hot lunch volunteers.
- Casting for the school play, Aladdin, has been done. Kids are very excited for the upcoming performance.

Adjournment - Kate Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 10:00 am.

Next District Council meeting — Friday, February 6, 8:45am; TERC A & B

February Snack — Oak Knoll