

District Parent Council  
January 14, 2019  
Cornell Elementary

**Attendance-** John Hood, Tara Fry, Lynne Thatcher, Sarah Finley, Katie Cavanaugh, Melissa Cochran, Sarah Allen, Amy Suhrheinrich, Johnathon Pickett, Karen Shapiro, Sibylle Thornton, Nicki Robinson, Kristin Arnett, Liz Luyendyk, Carly Patel

**Welcome and Introductions** - Lynne Thatcher

### **Superintendent's Report** - John Hood

- District committees created to support possible bond passage. Bond monies will relieve general fund from purchasing learning devices, replacement and adding of buses, air conditioning, adding space to Bennett Woods, capital outlay for furniture, to name a few. Citizens bond committee will provide more detail. Public school employees cannot take political action but may provide facts as they are paid with public funds. Election date is May 2, 2019. Committees have been formed.
  - Citizens Bond Committee, Chaired by Amy Crites and Martha Hentz. They will do formal presentations to explain the needs and that 24.9 million would be borrowed. Roughly 7 mills are currently levied in Okemos. Predictability is important so they are hoping to extend the term 5 years rather than increase. It is considered an extension of funds.
  - Flexible Seating Committee
  - Technology committee. Looking at what new devices should be purchased and determine the rollout process. A question was asked about fourth grade as many use Think Central at home. Currently, fourth grade students do not bring home devices as they remain at school.
  - Question talked about single family homes versus apartments to determine amount of funds and students.
- Public Relation Update - Niche K-12, an independent website that analyzes school districts. Site is popular with realtors sharing information with clients. Ranks over 100,000 schools across the country. Of 538 districts, this year Okemos was ranked number two in Michigan, last year we were ranked fifth. See [niche.com](http://niche.com) for more details.
- Hiring two administrators-
  - Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, process starts in February and will go through March. Explained current roles. Asia Wilcox is supporting administration this year until a new hire is in place. Spring is a natural hiring time and should offer a better pool of candidates.
  - Director of Community Education position will be posted as Lynda Kerns is retiring. Community Education does contribute funds to general fund although they are self-supporting.

## **Principal's Report -Tara Fry**

- Cornell is continuing to grow in enrollment which is great but does present challenges in building space. 12 years ago there were 340 students and now 470 students. There are twenty instructional spaces appropriate for classrooms in the building and all are now being used. Music and Resource classrooms have been moved into smaller spaces. Library has been condensed and collection decreased so they now have a space for students at risk. Carline is a challenge and they are looking at studies for improvement. Student assemblies are no longer possible with the entire student body. There is a struggle for space for screenings and testings to take place. Storage rooms have turned into work spaces. All students still fit in the lunch but it takes longer to serve and there are bottlenecks in the hallways.
- Administration and Board supported increasing social worker and counselor time. A big improvement for students and the consistency is important. Provides availability and consistency with students and works with lunch bunch groups.
- Added an exploratory this year (Hiawatha and Bennett Woods also offer). It is a fourth special which helps with the added number of students. This year K-1 grade and focuses on social skills. There are movement breaks.
- After school programs are successful even with crowded conditions.
  - OWL- world language program supported through community education
  - Chieftain Champs - high school students paired with 1st-4th grade students, currently 15-18 students
  - Tech Club funded by PTO
  - OSI - science enrichment program focusing on Scientific Method with 2nd-4th grade students. A teacher supervises and OHS students organize and run program, roughly 30 elementary students and 25 OHS students. Students are identified by teachers and a coordinator.
  - Chess Club supported through community education

## **Board of Education Report - Katie Cavanaugh**

- Meeting is this evening. Tonight newest member will be sworn in and officers will be selected. Work session led by Michigan School Board Representative will be tomorrow.

## **DPC Business**

### **MI Model for Health Modules – John Hood**

- Established in 1982 by Gov James Blanchard
- Implemented in 39 states
- In Okemos - Pre-K through Grade 12 and we do a hybrid model and supplement with coursework. PE teachers teach a lot of the modules
- 5 arms- Personal Health and Wellness, Social and Emotional Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity, Safety, Alcohol and Tobacco and other Drugs ([mmhclearinghouse.org](http://mmhclearinghouse.org) has a chart)
- Alignments to current trends and relevant topics in Health education

- Peer aggression and Prevention, Internet Safety, Safety around ....dangerous objects including Weapons, Social Emotional Health, Conflict Resolution
- Evidence of Effectiveness
- Recognized by Registries which supports its worth

#### Okemos Implementation

- Winter training for all K-4- classroom teachers, social workers, and counselors to implement model next school year. Will be an upward rollout, next Kinawa, Chippewa, and high school.
  - socio emotional health, personal safety, conflict resolution, stress, healthy relationships, self-concept, working to identify core lessons, expand to other modules

#### School Reports (provided by representatives)

##### OHS – Suzi Yunker, Lynne Thatcher and Niki Robinson

- Mental Health Counseling Groups: It is not uncommon for teenagers to deal with depression or anxiety on a weekly, and for some, daily basis. Knowing how to identify and deal with triggers in a positive way can enhance students' wellbeing and improve school performance. The OHS counselors will be offering groups to address these topics this winter. If you are interested in having your child participate or if you have any questions, please contact your child's counselor.
- Congratulations to OHS state champion diver Hunter Hollenbeck on setting a new school and pool record in diving in December 2018!
- Welcome Mrs. Dyne Jones to OHS: Please welcome Mrs. Dyne (pronounced dine) Jones to the OHS school family. Mrs. Jones has been hired as our main office secretary (Mrs. Brenda Stow retired after 30 years at OHS).
- Final Exams: Final exams are on Wednesday, January 16, Thursday, January 17, and Friday, January 18. Students will be dismissed at 10:55 a.m. each day
- Congratulations to the OHS Debate Teams: The Novice and Varsity State Tournaments took place at the end of December and our teams finished in 1st and 2nd place. Way to go, Chiefs!
- Talent Show on February 9 at 7:00pm with a pancake supper at 5:30 pm.

##### Chippewa – Karen Shapiro and Sibylle Thornton

- The next Chippewa Parent Group meeting is this Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 am.
- Girls' basketball tryouts were last week.
- Two staff members are retiring during the month of January.

Jamie Ianni, physical education teacher, last day at CMS will be January 18. We have hired Ms. Kari Karkkainen as Mrs. Ianni's replacement. Ms. Karkkainen is well known to the CMS family as she has completed her internship with us and is currently in a long term substitute position.

Jocelyn Smith, main office administrative assistant, will be with us through the month of January. We have hired Melissa Schoenl as Mrs. Smith's replacement. She has worked in the main office at Bennett Woods and Hiawatha.

- Informational meeting will be held for parents of 7th and/or 8th grade students, who are registered for the SAT, and may be considering one of the MSU programs such as CHAMP or ISHALL. This meeting will take place at Chippewa in room A102, on January 30th beginning at 6:00 p.m.
- Winter Wonderland party was a success and thank you to volunteers.
- 7th grade camp begins February 5 at Spring Hill

**Kinawa** –Sarah Finley and Niki Robinson

- Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser - The Okemos Spaghetti Dinner presented by Okemos Music Patrons is coming up on March 8, 2019 at the Okemos High School from 4:30-7:30pm.
- From Kinawa Parent Group
  - March 12: Teacher Luncheon
  - March 22: Science Night
  - May 6: Entrepreneur Night at 6pm
  - May 9: Teacher Luncheon
- Kinawa Recycles - Recycling program continues. They are in need of volunteers to pick up bagged foam trays on Friday after 1pm. The building is open until 6 pm so that working parents can easily help with this task. The trays are bagged so that they will not leave residue in your vehicle. Trays can easily be recycled at the Dart Container Recycling Center (Styrofoam only), open 24/7, 2148 Depot Road, Holt, MI 48848. Please click on the Sign Up link to sign up: <http://signup.com/go/wgWdNj>. Call or text for any further information to Julie Lawton-Essa, Okemos Schools Recycling Coordinator, [jlawton@lawtongroup.com](mailto:jlawton@lawtongroup.com) or 517-282-1111.
- Kinawa/Chippewa Mathematical Circle - The Kinawa/Chippewa Math Circle is open to all students in grades 5-8 and it meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m in Room 303 (Mrs. Murembya's room in Kinawa). This year's math circle is being led by Professor Rajesh Kulkarni from MSU. Students don't need to sign up in advance, or even attend every week; they may just show up.

**Cornell** – Sarah Allen and Melissa Cochran

- First graders go to the Wharton center on 1/25

**OPM** – Kristin Arnett and Katie Cavanaugh

- Central's PTO is a part of the Amazon Smiles program. For any purchases made on Amazon the selected school will get a 0.5% contribution to the school's PTO. Central is partnered with Kroger's Community Rewards Program. Kroger will donate a portion of grocery and gas purchases to our school by simply selecting the school as the organization to benefit from the purchase.
- Central hosted an "Eat Out" on Wednesday the 9th at Old Chicago from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. Our last eat out in December 2018 at Noodles and Co. raised \$430!
- Weekly tours/information sessions will be held beginning Jan. 30 for families interested in learning more about the Montessori program. Enrollment period is the first two weeks of March.
- Grandparents' Tea is February 14, 2019. Grandparents (and other family/friends) are invited to a musical program with 'tea and cookies' afterwards. Due to the number of guests we have a morning program for Bgd/PPK and an afternoon program for those in 1st - 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Bennett Woods** – Jayne Lock and Jonathan Pickett

- Next BWFC meeting is January 17, 6:30PM in the school library.
- News In Brief from the December BWFC meeting
- This was a social meeting, so no new business to report.
- BW Family Science Night-January 24, 2019. 6:30PM-8:00PM.
  - All of K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade will again be completing their “Science On A Plate” class projects so that each student will have an age-appropriate project to display on Science Night.
  - All BW students are invited to complete a project and present a poster at Science Night.
  - For the first time we’ll be providing a sensory friendly space during Science Night.
    - In development phase.
    - Students can access this space only when accompanied by an adult.
    - Teacher-supervised area.
    - Include low stimulus activities such as light diffraction explorations, “magic eye” posters, science coloring pages.
    - Provide subdued lighting, headphones, manipulables/fidgets, and laminated cards describing other activities available at science night, including pictures where possible.
  - Upcoming dates:
    - Jan 17: BWFC meeting
    - Jan 24: BW Family Science Night
    - Jan 25: EDRU Skate night
    - March 1: International Cafe and Movie Night
    - March 11-14: Parent Teacher Conferences
    - March 28 - April 5: Spring Break (No School)
    - April 26: Family Fun Fair

### **Hiawatha**

- Entrepreneur night is Jan. 25th
- International night was in December. There are 19 different languages spoken at Hiawatha. We intend to expand this event next year.
- Science Night is March 22
- PTO is replacing all of drinking fountains with fountains that support refillable bottles

### **Business**

- Discussed questions for upcoming Peer to Peer presentation.
- **Next Meeting:** February 11, 2019 at OHS – Peer to Peer Programs – Heather Pricco
- Email: [Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com](mailto:Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com)
- Website: [www.okemosk12.net](http://www.okemosk12.net) – Families – District Parent Council

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Suhrheinrich