

# PRC Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 20, 2024 9:30 AM

Attendees: Liz Tucker-Plasky - stand-in chair for Sarah Drought

MPS: Dr. Cooke, Superintendent of Schools; Zoe Roos, Communications Coordinator

Schools: Jeffrey Elementary: Laura Francis, Amy Sutherland; Ryerson Elementary: Kylie O'Brien Bender, Amy Brown; Brown Intermediate: Sarah DeBenedictis, Maureen Burke; Polson Middle: Julia Phillips (Madison Youth Unplugged) Andrea Finnegan; DHHS: Tina Phelan

## Superintendent's Report:

Smooth start to the year, though some bus routes needed smoothing out. Email going out about country-wide threats to schools, including non-credible ones to CT schools (nothing Madison specific). MPS is working with the Madison PD to increase police presence at schools, just in case.

Elementary School principals talking about start / end time for next year. Decision should be made by Thanksgiving.

Construction updates: lots of work done on Brown over the summer to make it brighter / more Younger-grade friendly; Polson – some minor work done, such as bathrooms; DHHS scheduled for HVAC improvements to improve efficiency, make inner temps more uniform;

Ongoing discussion about what to do with Ryerson and Jeffrey buildings. They'll probably be turned back to the town... Ryerson probably torn down, Jeffrey undecided.

School Budget: In March, PTO's will get to review the proposed budget. Liz asked for more background information on budget as well as info sources for PTOs as they are asked to disseminate budget to their parent communities. Zoe explained that two weeks before the vote the town can't discuss budget details so the PTOs need to be the primary sources of info during that time. Dr. Cooke gave an example of DHHS lower student body population and how MPS has responded in terms of staffing (trying to reduce as much as possible through retirement) as an issue that the public often has questions about. Sarah asked how PTOs, parents, etc. can voice issues, concerns ahead of time – before the budget proposal is set. Dr. Cooke said January is when the budget is finalized for presentation to the school board, best time to talk to your principal is before 12/1 so they can incorporate your input into their presentations to the Board.

Presentation of Testing Results: Big success story in terms of increasing participation, in some cases to 100%. While AP class enrollment has decreased, the number taking and passing tests has increased. Dr. Cooke presented slides on SAT and SBA test results. MPS ranks high and other districts look to MPS as a model in math. Laura highlighted the year over year improvement as meaningful – since these compare the same cohorts of students.

Cell Phones in schools: Polson and DHHS announcing and enforcing no cell phones in classrooms policy. The Board of Ed will be announcing a public input session on Oct 8, 6:30 to 7:30. The community can join in person or online to provide input on policies, Liz – will there be any background information on cell phone / social media etc. impact on students to support

policies? Laura asked about efforts to talk to other districts / superintendents about their efforts and experiences. Dr. Cooke said he is expecting to talk to some (New Canaan?) but as far as he knows no local districts are using YONDR pouches etc.

**Zoe Roos presented draft By-laws for the PRC.** Not required as the PRC is not an “official” committee but could be helpful to assign roles / establish procedures.

Laura asked for assurance that Accessibility will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Zoe said yes, it will be on the agenda. There was further discussion about what Accessibility issues were appropriate for the PRC setting. Zoe said issues like the elementary school playgrounds would be better addressed by the principals of those schools, and maybe the committee working with the building architects. The PRC is a better setting for educating on the issues so individual PTOs can consider how to incorporate them in their own planning.

This led to a general discussion of who should attend PRC meetings, what kinds of issues should be presented. Sarah DeBenedictis brought up examples... political issues that the PRC didn't feel like it should weigh in on (e.g., affordable housing) vs. listening to a presentation from the Library on their programs to give input (this seems like it should be under the PRC's purview). MYU's activities would be an appropriate presentation in this context.

### **School PTO reports:**

#### **JEFFREY**

##### August

1. Teacher Luncheon
2. Popsicles at reading dates and beam signing
3. Orientation- on the spot printing

##### September

- Ice Cream Social: sold spirit wear and canned waters-provided ice cream bar from Kit Kat truck to all Jeffrey students
- Composting:
  - Saving 50% of lunch trash as compost- goes to energy plant in Southington to produce energy in addition to compost
  - Going very well: had presentations, volunteers during lunch, got books for library, offered to purchase bins for snack time for classrooms
- Back to school night (comomango after)
- Committees
  - For all of our events/activities- anyone in school community can volunteer
  - New to this year: Inclusion committee, “end of Jeffrey” celebrations
- Membership dues
- Workshops (begin 9/30) 4 sessions
- Fundraisers: Variety to provide opportunities for everyone - don't have to participate in all - End of an era Tie dye party! Taylor swift workshop, Karen Alquist photo fundraiser, Mabel's labels, Flower power, Minted code, tea code, Shoe fundraiser, Lyman Pie fundraiser, School supply fundraiser
- Chamber of Commerce Arts, Artisan, & Antique fair 9/28

##### October

- Beach Clean up 10/5: with Ryerson Jeffrey and Brown
- Author visits from RJ Julia

- Met with RJ Julia for book fair possibility but will stick with Scholastic due to amount of books and online platform
  - Will do winter night with a smaller book fair with them
  - Fall Halloween Night
- \*\*Polson and Hand Volunteers for family nights: will send out a google form

## **BROWN**

### **September**

- All positions on board filled with enthusiastic parents! Several chairpersons leading individual efforts such as school store, workshops, variety show, etc.
- Welcome back staff lunch – Aloha to the New School Year Sandwiches/Wraps/Salads from Donahue's
- Shared WELCOME BACK Card My Yard with Ryerson for first day of school
- Membership numbers – 120 YTD
- 9/3 Back to School Ice Cream Social and TYCO was on site to print spirit wear
- New board meeting time allows for teacher liaisons to provide input/ask for support
- Open house we had a table to promote spirit wear and solicit membership and volunteers
- First spirit day 9/27 Hats for Hope along with the other schools in the district
- Fall Fundraiser starts 9/30 – Catalog sales of holiday gifts/wrapping paper etc/

### **Looking forward**

- Supporting 5<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Madison Cinemas on 10/4 to view new film The Wild Robot
- 10/5 Beach Cleanup with Jeffrey and Ryerson
- School store returns on the first Friday of the month
- First general meeting on October 9 at 9:00 AM – Math & LA Specialists will discuss curriculum
- Brown Movie Day at Madison Cinemas scheduled for the school holiday on October 14
- Halloween activities being planned for 10/31

## **POLSON**

- Discussed the cell phone policy, how and why it's being enforced
- Discussed damage to locker shelves and reminding students of locker organization/cleanliness. Shelves have been repaired over the summer
- Reviewed positive learning environment expectations
- Reinforced Safe Schools Climate and how to report various concerns
- Fall sports and clubs are open
  - No cuts this year, trying a different approach to sports
  - Robotics club is starting and leaving open to all students
- PTO dues/donation are open
- Start of year teacher luncheon; 6th grade orientation went well
- Discussing Infinite Campus Set Up and new attendance policy
- Discussed past SEPTO committee
- Spirit shop with TYCO is open; discussed new Madison logo

- 9/26 Using parent's night as a spirit wear opportunity
- 9/27 Hats for Hope
- 10/25 Coffee with the Counselors
  - Executive Functioning
  - See It/Say It
- 12/9-13 Book Fair
- 1/23 Internet Safety partnering with DHHS

Respectfully submitted 9/27/24

Maureen Burke, Brown PTO Treasurer