

District Parent Council Minutes
January 27, 2025 12:00 – 2:30pm
Okemos High School

Attendees: Dan Kemsley, Karen Shapiro, Corinne Dyksen, Leeni Shrestha, Amanda Thornburg, Sarah Allen, Candice Pizzo, Tamara Marshall, Tere Blanca, Carly Patel, Liz Luyendyk, Shannon Beczkiewicz, Lara Slee, John Hood

Via Zoom: Katie Cavanaugh, Giselle Claux Elia, Kristin Hundt, Leah Kwapis, Mary Verhanovitz, Pamela Jones, Stacey Smith

Welcome and Introductions - *Karen Shapiro*

Principal's Report - *Dr. Dan Kemsley, Principal OHS*

- MTSS - New - Academic growth day (failing 2 or more classes). Helps student focus.
- Algebra - data/strategies
- Repurposing class - elective for executive functioning.
- Universal accommodations: low number of classes failed.
- February 8th - winter dance
- APs - expanding access. Students will just fill out one form to apply. Students will know what prerequisites are needed.
- Students will be selecting purses soon.
- Question: Any thoughts on shortening period hours to add another so there would be more room for electives, arts, etc.? No.
- Michigan Virtual is another option

Superintendent's Report - *John Hood, Superintendent*

- Reacting to the new Federal Administration - ex. ICE enforcement. Examining pertinent laws and policies. Trune helping navigate. Never barred ICE from coming into our schools, just follow current regulations. Need to follow the law/need warrant. Vetting different types of warrants.
- We do not ask citizenship status
- Board of Education meeting tonight. Talk about potential changes to childcare/Community Education.
- BOE - Strategic Plan update by the end of May.
- New high school bathrooms opening
- 2019 Bond: this summer - gym and auditorium bathrooms. Also redoing music areas anyway (enlarging areas and storage).
- Plus redoing pool HVAC (part of plan).
- Need to fix heat and cooling controls at the High School.
- Elementary to 8th new furniture soon.
- Working on Behavioral Risk Assessment (especially on suicide risk assessment).
- Evaluating after-school spaces (car line, etc.) Motion sensors, etc.
- Figuring out Cornell bussing to Chippewa - additional 4 or 5 busses. They will be moving everything over the summer. Planning for playground areas. Cornell kids will have access to the big gym.
- Bennett Woods gas leak - contractor was on roof fixing another issue and moved gas to air vents/valve which explains the smell.
- Snow days: 4 so far - PLUS Cornell power outage due to squirrel, Kinawa sewer backup (½ day), High School pipe burst. Average 1 per month.
- Going through huge (growing) list of federal executive orders - Students right are #1 (under the law).

- \$900,000 for Kinawa remediations
- \$1.1 million hit to us for Special Education grants going away
- DEI is moving to curriculum and the position may be renamed as it is geared towards the success of all kids.

Board of Education Report - *Leeni Shrestha*

- January 6th - 1st meeting - 3 new board members: Jason, Jillian Winn and Leeni. 7 total. Tom Buffett is now President.
- Passed package for Chippewa and work for Kinawa
- Had an organizational meeting
- Newest revisions to policies (law changes, typos)

Presentation - *Dr. Lara Slee - Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*

- Emailed group handout (attached)
- MTSS (Multi-tiered Systems of Support) - matching kids up to what they need; removing barriers for kids
- Trend in Okemos - increase in ESL. Syap/google translate. 6 trained teachers - help with strategies for teachers, students.
- K-4+: Social and Emotional Learning. New: "Everyday Speech" curriculum. Then showcasing our teachers. Fits into the school day. This is a more formal model (used by social workers) to replace less formal models.
- New process for incident reporting. Starting at Chippewa. Looking at biases; language being used.
- We have ad hoc mental health support - Social emotional screener (grades 3-12), BASC, how to better communicate with parents.
- Just changed Truene Law policies on book choices for libraries. Need to work on regulations.
- Need to improve district-wide policies on communication to parents - hate speech incidents.

School Reports

OHS – Liz Luyendyk, Sarah Allen, Tere Blanca, Karen Shapiro

Chippewa – Leah Kwapis, Amanda Brush, Giselle Claux Elia

Kinawa – Liz Luyendyk

Cornell – Corinne Dyksen and Kristin Hundt

OPM – Sage Hales-Ho and Mary Verhanovitz

Bennett Woods – Jane Manfredi, Tamara Marshall, Vanessa Grant

Hiawatha – Stacey Smith and Pam Jones

Adjourn

Next Meeting: Monday, February 24th, 12-2:30, OPM/Central Elementary

Email: Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com

Website: www.okemosk12.net – Families – District Parent Council

OPS Building Reports

January 27, 2025

Okemos High School

- Theater department presents “The 24hr Plays.” The performance is on February 22nd
- January 31st is the deadline for yearbook orders.
- Post-prom committee has begun organizing the event. Prom takes place on May 17th.

Chippewa 7-8

- We had a general meeting last week that was great with a virtual tour from Principal Noble of the new CMS!
- Upcoming dining fundraiser at Qdoba 2/11 4-8p.m!
- 7th grade camp! Excited for the students.

Kinawa 5-6

- Kinawa and Chippewa’s joint Science Night will be on Thursday February 13 from 6:00-8:00 pm held at Kinawa. There will be lots of exhibitors, activities, raffle baskets, students’ projects displayed, staff pies in the face, and more!!!
- Students just started their new six week elective rotation for this marking period.
- Classroom mold remediation continues throughout the building.
- In early January, there was a plumbing issue under the building forcing an early dismissal. The problem was remediated and school resumed the next day.
- Schuler Books will be our next Book Fair sponsor. More details TBD.
- Entrepreneur Night is Friday May 2–A chairperson is needed.
- Next KPG meeting will be on February 18.

Cornell Elementary

- Restaurant night coming up February 3 at Culver’s by Walmart
- We are prepping for science night on February 28
- Gearing up for mileage club, conferences potluck

OPM

Upcoming PTO Events:

- Thurs, Feb 6, 6pm to 8pm - Science Night
- Okemos High School Action Kids will appear twice.
- Bricks and Minifigs has generously volunteered to be a free exhibitor. They have offered to create a Lego Okemos Wolf at cost. The small version measures 3x3 and costs \$125, while the large version measures 5x5 and costs \$475. The school will get to keep whichever model is chosen. This offer is available for all Okemos Public Schools.
- Thurs, Feb 27, time TBD - Impression 5
- Past PTO Fundraisers
- December: Buff City, raised \$153.00
- January: Launch, raised \$TBD (PTO meeting held before fundraiser)
- Call for Volunteers for 2025-26
- Social media poster
- Flyer creator (templates available for future use)
- Newsletter (templates available for future use)

Bennett Woods

- Parking lot safety is a concern- how can we get some permanent do not enter signs to prevent people going in the wrong way?
- We are gearing up for Science Night Feb 26 from 6-8 pm with so far over 25 groups attending.
- We are excited OEF is sponsoring a OKEMOS wolves Lego that will be put together on science night.
- Mr Jim came to all classrooms to talk about the animals to build up to science night along with the traveling planetarium.
- We are excited to see the virtual report cards once we heard PowerSchool was safe to sign up for.
- We are doing great displays in the halls for school spirit.
- We are looking to do a grant for safe travel to school.

Hiawatha

- The PTO is facilitating a \$6,000 donation from the Kibble Foundation. It will be used in the library.
- Feb/March/April will be busy with Global Gathering, STEAM (with the bookfair held in conjunction) and then moving into Mileage Club—no Playmakers this year.
- Lots of other fundraisers also—bringing back a cookbook, Launch, Buddy's and a formal dinner at Red Haven.
- Vestibule construction is completely finished.
- Still struggling with a calendar that can capture district AND school level events. Hoping for direction from the new online media specialist—waiting on Mr. Corr for more information.
- The holiday season included a HUGE lift for the gift drive—we had 20 families ask for assistance