

District Parent Council Minutes

March 17, 2025 11:30 – 2:30pm

Hiawatha School Library

Strategic Planning Attendees: Sarah Allen, Tere Blanca, Kristin Hundt, Karen Shapiro, Pam Jones, Stacey Smith, Corinne Dyksen (Via Zoom: Liz Luyendyk)

Additional Attendees for regular DPC meeting: Joseph Corr, Andy Phelps, John Hood, Shannon Beczkiewicz, Sabrina Potterpin, Jane Manfredi, Mary Ann Migaldi

Welcome and Introductions - *Karen Shapiro*

Strategic Planning Zoom (11:30-12:30) for DPC Representatives - Kimberly May and Debbie Stair

- Face to face sessions, online survey, online
- Met with DEI
- Community sessions: day and night
- Virtual sessions
- Then compile results 4/26
- Implementation planning will follow
- Goals: Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-based
- What do we celebrate, most proud of
- Opportunities/What needs our attention
 - Volunteerism
 - Feedback mechanisms
 - Class sizes
 - HS: cc parents for big decisions/class choices, etc.
- Barriers:
 - Defensiveness from teachers/management.
 - Class sizes
 - Competing not only in MI, but across the US
 - Teach to minimum requirements
 - Resistance to changing status quo
- Vision/Wish: rise in national ranking
 - Prioritize staffing
 - Increasing partnerships with MSU
 - Innovative
 - Proactive vs. reactive
 - Attention to girls' sports
 - Communication improvement – systematic so we all know what's going on district-wide

Presentation - Chief Grillo and Lt. Besonen, Expert on building security and active violence response - Meridian Township Police

- Meridian Township has 39 officers (3 still in training); Issues with staffing full team
- Last yr caught up a bit on hiring
- DARE disbanded in MI, but taught here in Township to 5th graders
- TEAM (similar to DARE) – making safe decisions
- Provide security for big events, particularly big sporting events
- Crossing guards – most challenging /hard time recruiting
- Working on Bennett Woods traffic circle. Much better now.
- Safety meeting at middle schools last fall
- Make sure officers know school layouts/maps at their fingertips – ipads for all officers with maps uploaded.
- Make sure doors are secure day and night
- Smooth evacuation response (BW)
- Education:
 - Do lots of training , certified emergency manager
 - Stop the bleed kits (he's certified instructor) – pressure, wound packing, tourniquets
 - Prevent to Protect (grant funded program) – behavioral threat analysis. Program with MSU. Have their own counselors. (Required) parents are involved. Most involved program.
- Question: How do we train subs/temps on these emergency kits/procedures?
A: walkie talkies, emergency bags in all classrooms/rooms in the district. Will all be fully trained in August. Operational by the time school starts.
- Who gets involved? Response team from schools (teachers, counselors, etc.) decide what the need is; talk to parents. Process to follow to figure out what level they are at.
- 911 for immediate danger.
- Police do home visits if needed.
- Can require counselling for parents/families.
- Staff continue to train. Many drills
- Police help provide gun locks.
- DARE: last year talked about sextortion. Is it part of our programs? DARE is just 5th graders and very prescribed.) TEAM program (teaching, educating and mentoring) would be more for this.
- Regular health curriculum talks about safety online and such.
- What they learned from SWATTING incidents. It was Michigan's learning incident. Have had trainings since then.
- Officer Short: in schools; not scheduled, as needed and random checks. Plus Katie Diehl, our security director.

Principal's Report - Joseph Corr, Hiawatha Principal

- Just had conferences with nearly 100% cooperation
- Secret staff spirit week (see if the kids notice)
- 100 second talent show. Assembly in gym
- After break – Book Bingo. Joe is the DJ. All kids will have a bingo card. Goal that everyone goes home with a book.
- Global gathering was a success. Food was amazing
- Met with parents for coffee at Taste Coffee down Okemos Road. Left topics open.

- Red Haven dinner special with parents. Raised \$600. 30 people. Can do up to 40. \$50/pp plus 25 as donations so \$75pp total.

Superintendent's Report - John Hood, Superintendent

- Mascot (wolf costume) – showcased in May. HS students writing a jingle. Costume flexible, so no size requirements.
- 3 yrs ago we joined a lawsuit against Juul. Now we will install vape detection in bathrooms with the money. Will tell kids. Serves as prevention.
- Meta: Need to be adults. Part of lawsuit.
- Also signed onto insulin price gouging (for employee insurance).
- **Budget:** \$1.3+ million deficit this year. Special Ed funding mechanism from ISD went down (reimbursement). Substitute budget up. \$2.5 m deficit. Last year the largest graduating class left, this year was the smallest Kindergarten coming in. (We are funded by per person funding)
- We have small endowment, but not enough (OEF).
- ISD changed the formula on how they are funding special education.
- We don't take more school of choice than filling classrooms.

Board of Education Report - Andy Phelps

- Kinawa remediation (\$1M) also fed into budget deficits.

Bond updates:

- Cornell rendering released. 4 classrooms + flex space as needed. 500 student capacity.
- Goal: reduce carline spillover onto Cornell road. 5 lanes.
- Cornell - bidding coming in about one year
- Chippewa - supposedly on time
- HVAC - \$3 million upgrades; mostly part of control systems
- High School - Kitchen, increased band space, bathroom replacement outside gym (through bond)
- Hiawatha - new carline on hold. Addition on hold. Not as urgent.
- MASB -> State funding. Analyzing federal reduction impacts. Goal is to insulate children. \$300K federal funding to be concerned about (probably mostly food aid).
- Question (Liz): Were our benchmarks hit from previous strategic plans?
- **Annual Reports:** All accomplishments from departments for the Board of Education. Challenges, points of pride, etc. Will be available next year.
- Minimum wage law updates
- Trune (our law firm) sends big policy updates

New Business/Action Items

- How many are impacted in our district? - USDA Cuts School Food Program
<https://www.newsweek.com/usda-food-banks-loan-purchasing-cuts-student-lunch-local-produce-2043140>
- Questions/topics for April presenter: PHASE (Sara Roland) - will follow up with email.
- Secretary position/President position 2025-26 (Corinne Dyksen will be DPC President next year)

School Reports (following)

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

Chippewa – Leah Kwapis, Amanda Brush, Giselle Claux

Kinawa – Liz Luyendyk, Tamara Marshall

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, April 21st, 12-2:30, Kinawa 5-6 School

Email: Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com

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

OPS Building Reports

March 17, 2025

Okemos High School

- BASC-3 behavioral testing
- Senior Yard signs available to order
- Yearbook - senior tribute ads
- Research Symposium April 5, 2025, 10-12pm
- Test Out of Classes schedule available
- Senior Field Trip - April 10
- PSAT & SAT - April 14
- Weekend Food Kit Program through Greater Lansing Food Bank
- “The Drowsy Chaperone” - musical comedy
- March is Reading Month
- The Care Closet is being filled.
- Just had another successful Collage concert

Chippewa 7-8

- Our parent group provided pizza, cookies, snacks, and drinks for parent teacher conferences
- We are planning celebrations for 8th grade and a school wide treat in the spring.
- We are working on planning for upcoming elections.

Kinawa 5-6

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Cornell Elementary

- Science night was well attended and the students did such a wonderful job with their projects
- We have a whole school read for March. Kinder-2nd grade is reading Cornbread and Poppy and 3rd and 4th are reading The Lost Library. All books donated by PTO

- Lots of parent (and teacher) feedback to our PTO members wanting an in-person option for conferences
- Our crossing guard has returned and we are grateful for a consistency at such a busy area
- Mileage club will be up and running right after spring break. Giving kids a 1st mile token this year and also working on water bottles for 20 miles

OPM

- Impressions 5 fundraising family night on 2/27 that was well attended
- Over 500 people attended science night in early February
- Upcoming eat our fundraiser on 3/31 at buddy's
- Building a Lego wolf as a school that was started on science night
- Planning to start mileage club in early April
- Do any other PTOs know if there is a lugnuts game that Okemos schools safeties attend each year? OPM safety coordinator is interested. Please send any info to Sage.hales@gmail.com to pass on to OPM coordinator

Bennett Woods

- Science night had 896 attendees, 43 exhibitors and 102 posters from 106 students. Massive thanks to our many sponsors!
- Book Bingo was a huge success and all kids got a brown bag of books to take home last week.
- Teachers got Savvy Sliders for the last PD day
- Looking forward to a game night coming up
- Next meeting is this Wednesday at 6:30 PM

Hiawatha

- We had our first Coffee with the Principal and it was a huge hit. Held it as Taste to keep the feeling casual. Trying to schedule another one before the end of the year
- Our Global Gathering was in February and it was excellent. About 25 different cultures were represented.
- Our next big PTO event is STEAM. We are holding the Boor Fair in conjunction with the event this year.
- There have started to be a lot of questions asked about next steps for the bond for Hiawatha, since the carline situation was changed. Any information we can pass along?