

## PRC Minutes

Friday, April 25, 2025

Attendees: MPS: Dr. Cooke, Gail Dahling-Hench; Jeffrey Elementary: Laura Francis, Amy Sutherland; Ryerson Elementary: Kylie O'Brien Bender; Brown Intermediate: Sarah DeBenedictis, Maureen Burke; Polson Middle: Liz Tucker-Plasky; DHHS: Nicole Wiles

1. Welcome / Introductions – Sarah Drought
2. Gail Dahling-Hench, Assistant Superintendent's Curriculum Update

Gail shared the MPS curriculum webpage. Visited by many, including a variety of international visitors.

Explanation of review process. Cycles based on general refresh and changes to state standards. Not everything is reviewed every year. For MPS, materials don't drive curriculum (i.e., they don't buy a book, then follow it). Instead, standards drive the process. Also, driven by a review of data (test scores / rankings). Every teacher is invited to participate in the process. There are outside teachers who review the work of the curriculum committees and provide feedback. Gale reviews results, then there is a BOE presentation and vote.

Example – current review of Social Studies and Science going on. For Social Studies, there is expansion / more specificity of materials to cover, more detail on sequencing, plus adding geography components. For Science, adding Lego robotics (K), and emphasis on play based learning (K-2).

Other examples: Reviewing Digital Literacy lessons, K-5. MPS uses Common Sense Media as a resource – and the State just adopted the same as its standard this past Feb.

Science of Reading Deep dive by diverse team using the 5 pillars of early literacy. The first two are covered by Foundations. For Fluency the choice is between Geodes and Decodable texts which MPS had been using. Teachers loved the Geodes so MPS is switching. For Vocab and comprehension, the State Standard choices are Wit & Wisdom and Bookworms. After a review process the decision was to stick with the current approach vs. either of these options. Current approach works well based on high performance and the State alternatives require more time spent than any district could reasonable allocate (so they are making their own instruction decisions on how to apply).

3. Peggy Lyons, First Selectwoman

In attendance to encourage PTOs to remind their communities to vote on May 6 (Town budget, School budget, Academy). There is currently a pre-vote quiet period so she could not advocate for any position, just provide information. In particular, she wanted to direct everyone to the town website FAQs and public information session videos. There is some concern that the strong positions on Academy may spill over to the budgets, which are important to approve.

Questions re Academy... other options / locations for a community center, new vs. old construction, what happens if project goes over budget again. In all cases, there would have to be a new referendum. This vote is for the current project as voted on previously and using the grants / donations towards the increased price.

4. Dr. Cooke passed out a flyer for a 5k to support Night in Hand, sponsored by Madison Chamber of Commerce and happening on Saturday, May 17, 8 am – 9:30 am.

### Individual School PTO reports:

#### **Ryerson Elementary School**

- Hosted the annual Variety Show on 3/21 at the High School. The event was a great success, 45 students ranging all ages performed for the Ryerson community
- Finalizing all aspects of our biggest fundraiser of the year, Give to Grow, which is a parents night out held at the Surf Club on the evening of May 3
- Celebrated administrative assistants day
- Organized and preparing for a great week celebrating our teachers and staff (Teachers Appreciation Week)
- Funded Science week assembly
- Ordered Field Day tees for all students and staff and have begun recruiting volunteers for upcoming event on May 29
- Spring afterschool Enrichment classes running through May 19
- Funded field trips taken this past week for Kindergarten and Second grade

#### **Upcoming Fundraisers and Happenings:**

- Continuing to sell Yearbooks through 5/3
- Partnered with Jeffrey and Tyco to sell third grade graduation signs
- Selling tickets to Ryerson families for the Yardgoats game on 6/2 for Family Fun Day
- Planning end of year – Ryerson celebration
- Planning end of year – Third grade celebration
- Continuing Recruitment for next year’s PTO board

#### **Jeffrey Elementary School**

- Pizza Works Too Fundraiser
- Earth Week
  - Earth Day 1 Day Workshop – today!
  - Earth Week Toy (going to Re:Joy Project) and Shoe Collection (Funds2orgs)
  - Flower Power Spring Fundraiser
  - Composting – Earth Day Every Day at Jeffrey!
- SquareOne Art is underway
- School Supply Fundraiser
- Neck River Spiritwear
- The Neck River Wish List
  - Open to Jeffrey Families- they have pledged over \$11,000 so far for items for Neck River (with the family name on a plaque) – specific items: picnic tables, buddy benches, cello racks, communication board – and also a general pledge to have name displayed on plaque at school entry according to sponsor level: \$250 Cub Level Sponsor - \$500 Tiger Level Sponsor - \$1000 Pride Level Sponsor
  - Will be opening remaining spots to the general community/local businesses
- Board sign-ups for next year
  - We met with Mrs. Frost to discuss PTO Board structure next year- we will be increasing to Tri-Presidents – each President will have a focus: 1) Communication 2) Upper Grade Levels 3) Lower Grade Levels – there will be Tri-Vice-Presidents that will also be tied to the same 3 focus points so there is a President/VP pair for each
  - We are doing a Q&A with snacks at Comomango on Wed. May 7<sup>th</sup> for anyone interested in signing up for the board
- Yearbook
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Shoutouts
  - Free yearbook for all 3<sup>rd</sup> graders

- Planning Teacher & Staff Appreciation Week
  - Ocean/River theme- “A School of fish travels together” – all students are made into fish (with yearbook photo) – all staff are ocean animals – displayed in hallway
  - Cards going home to all students to write notes of why they love their teacher (will be hung in hallways)
  - Map for the week: M: Coffee & Treats, T: yogurt bar, W: Charcuterie Sea, Th: Pizza truck, Fr: treat cart; Teacher raffles for gift cards all week; Starfish keychain & I Love Jeffrey take-away items
- Planning Carnival & End of Jeffrey Celebration on 5/30
  - Inflatables, dunk tank, sno-cone/cotton candy/popcorn, games, musical cakes, facepaint and more
  - Ceremony at 7pm in the JES Circle – Mrs. Frost will give a speech – Jeffrey school song – Glow wands
  - Selling ornaments and pennants
- Planning 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Celebration on 6/5
  - BYO or order ahead from Hornet’s nest picnic
  - PTO paying for ice cream truck for kids
  - Signs/Student awards
- Field Day shirts
  - All students and teachers are drawing themselves – so every student will get a t-shirt with their 2025 class drawn / Field Day team name
  - Mrs. Englehardt drew Jeffrey building- so staff will get a shirt with Team Jeffrey and that drawing
  - We will utilize these drawings to make a banner of all the students/school “Jeffrey Closing Crew” for the End of Jeffrey celebration – people can sign it
  - PTO will provide DJ for field day, volunteers, and water station
- Surf Club Accessibility - Inclusion Committee (JES, Ryerson, and Brown PTO)
  - Working with Austin Hall (head of beach and rec) to get accessible mats from walkway through playground, to showers, snack shack, down to ramp and onto the beach from the bottom of the ramp so all students regardless of physical disability can access the beach and connect with other students/families all year long.
  - We have secured a \$15k (\$18,500 total) donor for the project and are hopeful we can get it complete prior to the summer to have a big summer meet up at the surf club with all Elementary students and be inclusive to all students and families!

### **Brown Intermediate School**

- Variety Show 4/5 was a huge success. 53 students participated.
- Spring Workshops started the week of 4/7
- Japanese drumming assembly (one for each grade level)
- April staff appreciation – stocked kcups in the breakroom
- Administrative Professionals Day – flowers, chocolates and gift cards for Judy and Kara
- Author Peter Larangis to visit Brown on 4/28

### Looking Ahead

- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip to Madison Cinemas
- May Teacher & Staff Appreciation
- Annual Meeting/Final General meeting 5/21
- June Year End Celebrations (Camp Hazen, Schoolwide Cookout, Yearbook signing)

## **Polson Middle School**

- Spring sports, baseball and softball, are open for tryouts
- Celebrated Paraeducator Day and Administrative Professionals Day
- PTO EB is still doing outreach for 2025-26 Board Members and will reach out to Brown for 5th grade recruitment
- May 5-9 Teacher Appreciation Week planning is in progress
- Our PTO President, Megan Sesma, discussed Madison Music Supporters to promote and enhance musical opportunities for students in grades K-8 in Madison, CT. More info to follow.

Upcoming events include:

- 8th grade dance Friday June 6th
  - Pep rally June 6th
  - Friday June 6th 7-9 pm
- Promotion-Friday June 9th
- Promotion Rain date: June 10th
- June 9th half day
- June 10th last day for students
- June 11th Teacher last day

We'll begin planning for Bus Driver Appreciation this week and will share the splits by email. Looking to increase contribution over the \$90 per school of previous years. Thinking about shirts or hats. Nicole putting Liz in touch with a student looking for silk screening projects.

## **Daniel Hand High School**

April

Hand PTO celebrated administrative assistants and assistant principals with personalized glasses and \$20 Dunkin gift cards.

Performing Arts Update:

- Theatre: Spring musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, performances to take place April 24 – April 26 at 7 pm with an additional performance on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm.
- VIBE: VIBE Night fundraiser at Comomango on April 30<sup>th</sup>. An end of season concert and VIBE alumni show will take place on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm.

Candidates for the position of vice president and secretary of the PTO board have been secured and will be presented to the general membership at the May meeting. Nominees for the position of treasurer have yet to be identified.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Burke

Treasurer, Brown Intermediate