Menlo Park City School District Council
Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2025

Location: MPCSD TERC, 181 Encinal Ave.

Attendees: Jen Baskin, Laura Wiggs, Andrew Fong, Sarah Sobel, Lennard Hachmann, Eleanor deJong, Meredith Nonnenberg, Jessica Endlich, Kristen Gracia, Jammie Behrendt, Parke Treadway, Sharon Burns, Linda Creighton, Alicia Henegan, Danielle O'Brien, Carrie Chen, Sally Lovero, Laura Low Ah Kee, Lindsey Sikes, Francesca Baraggioli, Melitta Stevens, Michelle Fong, Meredith Bergin Bailey, Francie Maletis, Janet Light, Jed Scolnick

8:45 to 9:10 — District Council Business

Call to Order: Jen called the meeting to order at 8:50 am and moved to introductions whereby each person introduced themselves and recommended a "Best Of…" for the group. Click here for that list.

Approval of June 6 Meeting Minutes - we amended the prior minutes to include a Board Resolution that adds Andrew Fong and Jen Baskin to the bank account at Comerica. Melitta and Laura Low Ah Kee made first and second motions to approve; minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Update - Andrew Fong gave an update. No new expenses so far.

Speaker Series Update - Jessica Winkler gave an update to include that the District will again focus on building resilience and independence for our children in this year's Series. The first event, on October 29, will include a panel of District experts rather than an external speaker. The second event in January will be a book author presentation via Zoom, and the spring event is TBD.

9:10 to 10:10 — Updates

Superintendent Update and Q&A - Kristen Gracia introduced her Cabinet members and they introduced themselves.

School Board Update - Board Member Jed Scolnick updated the members on highlights from the recent School Board Meeting. Measure U quickstart projects are in the works, or have been completed at all sites: CAT6 wiring on all campuses, new trees at Encinal, Upper Laurel has a newly-paved playground; Oak Knoll has a new security system. Lower Laurel will get a big remodel; and HVAC upgrades are in the design phase. He also noted that Superintendent Gracia is engaging in two fiscal responsibility initiatives for the community.

One Community Campaign Update - Lennard noted that we are halfway through the campaign and have reached 50% of our target of 3.75M. We are ahead this year on participation & dollar amount raised compared to last year, and he reminded the group that we won't be at our target goal amount raised until the end of the school year when matching gifts and pledges are realized. He suggested that we connect OCC dollars and the Speaker Series Events.

Sarah noted a successful launch at each schools' Back to School Nights, and the double match weekends raised almost a million dollars. She thanked principals and ambassadors for their hard work. Eleanor noted that Julie and Allison are currently hosting office hours for all OCC ambassadors and noted the great energy and school pride at all sites.

MPAEF Update - Laura Low Ah Kee shared that the MPAEF gave a $4.1M check to MPCSD in June. She noted that Jeannie Ritchie grant applications are due October 3; the Dine Out is coming up over the October conference week; and that the Wine Walk is coming up November 15th, which brought the MPAEF $15K last year.

Principals & PTO President Reports

The topic on everyone's mind was the new fingerprinting and TB risk assessment protocol. Kristen noted that this is an enormous undertaking for the District, that these requirements are standing CA law, MPCSD Board Policy and are designed for student safety. MPCSD doesn't want fingerprinting costs to be a burden for volunteers so has offered two free clinics for fingerprinting with over 800 people signing up. She also noted that this is a shift in culture and systems for our school staff and families and that we will get through it together. Further discussion ensued.

Kristen introduced Cathy Peterson, HR office manager, who is handling lots of this process for MPCSD. Cathy talked about the new visitor/volunteering badges and fingerprinting confidentiality. They continue to add to the Fingerprinting FAQ.

MPCSD also added coaching fingerprinting requirements into the messaging to the community. It is now part of MPCSD volunteering protocol for PTOs to ensure that all of its coaches are fingerprinted before any coaching. Further discussion ensued.

Adjournment - Meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Wiggs, Secretary of the meeting