

# Site Council Minutes

**Date:** October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## **Attendees:**

- Suzanne Smith, Site Council Chair & MMS Teacher
- Kerrie O'Brien, Site Council Secretary & MMS Teacher
- Michelle Meekins, MMS Teacher
- Amber Prucha, MMS Parent
- Nikki Whittier, MMS Parent
- Melissa King, MMS Parent
- Ken Gilbert, MMS Principal

## **Spaghetti Feed Update**

The Leadership students have been making posters to honor the people and companies that have donated to our fundraiser to thank them for their support. The will be displayed at the event. There are also event posters up in the hallways to advertise to our students. There will be information about soda and bake sale donations going out in our newsletter and in the announcements. The leadership students have also made posters for the event to inform people where to go (for example, a sign for the cash line, a sign for the check line, etc.). There will be at least six leadership students at the event; more may sign up, but many of them have conflicts with sports and other activities.

We currently have seven cash donors and more food donors who are supporting our event. Greg Roe will be taking the Thank You signs our leadership students made to get framed after the event. He will take them to the businesses as an additional acknowledgement.

We are looking for more student volunteers to help at the event. We will be feeding the kids before the doors open. That will get them done and the tables clear in time for the event to start, and it will also allow us to test our system before the large crowd arrives. We will have leadership students helping as well as band kids, and then we are looking for more helpers, possibly the drama club and OBOB.

We will only have cash and check lines; no credit cards will be accepted. People who write checks will have the option to purchase tickets for sodas and bake sale good while they are in line so that they will not have to write another check.

Students who bring donations will get a raffle ticket and be entered to win Smencils (smelly pencils) and chocolate goody bags to thank them for supporting our cause.

Bake sale items will sell for one dollar minimum (although some will be packaged, such as three cookies for one dollar) up to about three dollars. We are also going to have a silent auction with more specialty and larger items that we hope will bring in additional revenue.

We need to contact PepsiCo in Corvallis; they are often willing to donate cans of soda that are getting close to their expiration dates.

The event will be held next Thursday evening, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 6-8pm. Tickets will cost \$5 per person or \$20 for a family of up to five people. This is a lower price than last year, when tickets sold for \$10 per adult and \$7 for students. We hope that the lower price will attract more people, who will then purchase sodas or bake sale items to help us raise more money. (Correction on last year's prices: \$20/family of up to 6, \$20/family (up to 6), \$7/adult, \$4/child)

## **District Bond**

Our district is in the process of coming up with a bond to put out in the next couple of years to improve the facilities in our buildings. The district hired an architectural firm to do an assessment of our facilities to see what our general deficiencies are. They were looking primarily at crime prevention and safety issues. They provided the district with a report of issues that they found.

The general report cover issues that were happening throughout many buildings. One issue they found was uninsulated window glazing; this is resulting in significant heat loss. Another was hardware on doors; knobs are more difficult to open for many people. We also have stages that are not accessible to people who are disabled. Our restrooms could use aesthetic improvements with improved wall panels and seals. There are also restrooms in each building that are accessible to disabled people; while each school has at least one, it would be nice if they all were accessible. Most buildings do not have security vestibules to control the flow of people into the buildings. Access to our modular buildings is also lacking in security and covering. Some of our elementary schools have bird problems in the playground areas. Many of our roofs also need repair.

We also received a report of issues in our specific building. The locker rooms attached to our gyms are really bad; they have not been replaced or remodeled since the building was built. The asbestos flooring that is still left in our building is a significant problem as well; the floors are starting to crack in places, which is an exposure risk for students and staff. The carpets in our modular buildings are also in desperate need of replacement. The firm recommended checking the seismic capacity of our building. We have had some repairs done in our building within the last ten years because of the tunnels underneath part of our building, but whether they are up to seismic codes is questionable.

There will be a Facilities Advisory Committee forming in the next few months to address these building concerns. Applications are available to parents and staff who are interested in helping. The biggest concern is deciding which jobs have priority and which ones can wait. The committee will be a sizeable time commitment with meetings at least once a month for the next year or two; the meetings could run 2-3 hours each.

As staff and parents, we need to decide which of the deficiencies are most important to us. They all need to be facilities-related; nothing for staffing, curriculum, or other areas. The funds can't be used to purchase new technology, though installing pole vault systems so that computers can be hooked into the walls would come under the bond.

One suggestion for a priority is the roof; we still have several leaks that return in the rainy season. Another priority is the Home Ec. Room, which has many of the same appliances and structures from when the school was built in the 60's. Security cameras are another concern. Our building is not up to seismic codes, which would be a huge issue to address; the state is going to be funding an infrastructure update in the next several years. The school district might be able to get seismic retrofits as part of this program since many public schools are used as shelters in the event of an emergency. The modular building is another concern for many reasons; the temperature in the buildings is an issue, the plumbing in the restrooms doesn't work for numerous people, and the carpets are old. It would also be nice to have some sort of fencing to keep our areas a little more secure, but that would look nice and not look like we are in a prison. Our locker rooms are also an issue for numerous reasons, including supervision and safety. The locker banks are currently too high for the teachers to see over them; it is difficult to even tell if there is anyone in the locker room. It would also be really good for our kids to have upgraded equipment in the fitness room. There is also a lack of supervision

in the fitness center; students can access that area from the locker rooms and the gyms, but there isn't usually an adult in the room unless the gym classes are using the room.

This list is a place for us to start. We will have many opportunities to add to this list, and the committee has a lot of work ahead of it. There will be emails sent out and questionnaires available on the website.

### **State Report Card Data**

We recently received our report card from the state of Oregon for the 2013-2014 school year. The first section of the report contains demographic information about our building. We have high percentages of economically disadvantaged students and of students with disabilities, at 52% and 18% respectively. There are six different languages spoken in our school, primarily English and Spanish. Our official enrollment for the year was 554, though there was some movement in and out. The newest metric the state is using for attendance is having 90% of the students attend 90% of the time; we had 88.6% of our students attend 90%, which fell a little short but is on the right track. There is a huge attendance push statewide since coming to school is crucial for student learning. This is an issue where the school needs to work closely with families to improve attendance.

Our overall state rating this year is Level Three. The district is happy with this level, though we were a Level Four last year and would like to get back up to this. The overall rating compares us to all schools. A better metric for comparison is looking at school with similar demographics; we are right in the middle of the average zone for similar schools.

Our overall state rating is based on three things: Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Subgroup Growth. Academic Achievement is a straight measure of how many students do not meet, meet, and exceed. We are at a Level Three for this category. Academic Growth is how much students learn with us; we can't control what the students know when they come to us, so this category clearly shows what we are teaching them. This is the statistic that we feel is most important. In this category, we are at a Level Four. The final category, Subgroup Growth, is based on growth of students with disabilities, ELL students, and certain demographics. We scored at a Level Three for this category. Overall, we got a score of 68.8%, which put us at the high end of Level Three overall. (The cutoff for Level Four is 70% or above.)

The report also contains breakdowns of the categories. For achievement, both reading and math were at Level Three. For growth, both reading and math were at Level Four. For subgroup growth, we were at levels 3-4 for reading and levels 1-2 for math for Economically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities, and Underserved Races/Ethnicities.

There is also a page of achievement data for each group for reading and math for both the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.

The report shows our subgroup growth with a further breakdown. For reading, we have good subgroup growth with all of our groups at a Level Four, except for Students with Disabilities, which is at Level Three. Our math subgroup growth is of more concern. Most of our groups are at Level Two, with our Students with Disabilities at a Level One. One way we are working on this is with Math 180, which we just started this year. We have been using Read 180 for the past six years, and we have seen success. It is a program for students who are reading at least one grade level below their peers; it gives those students more intensive instruction to help them hone their skills, and it allows the regular classrooms to move more quickly. The company just developed a similar program for math. We have been working to start the program and

have just gotten it up and running this week; so far, the students seem to be doing well with the program. There are about 96 students throughout the grade levels in Read 180 this year; we will have 36 in math this year.

For participation, we are above the target rate of 94.5%.

The last page of the report breaks down the did not meet, met, and exceeded categories for each subject and subgroup and lets us compare it to like schools and the overall Oregon average. For reading, we are a little lower than the state average and the like-school average. For math, we are significantly lower than the state average and like-school average. Science is our best area; we are a bit higher than the state average in that subject area, though we are still a bit below the like-school average.

### **School Improvement Goals**

This year, our academic focus will be largely on Math due to our test scores and new things being developed by the district. We are starting to use a program called Math Studio, which is focused on mathematical practices such as habits of the mind and communication with peers. There has been a lot of professional development in our middle schools trying to get at best practices for math. They get training and they get to observe model lessons, and they will be observed throughout the year so that they can get constructive feedback on their teaching. All of our math teachers as well as both of our administrators are currently getting the training. We have a program called Connected Math, which is made of thematic units. For example, if they are working on proportions, there is reading and writing connected to it, and problem-solving that is meant to lead to a deeper understanding of math and the ability to apply their math skills to solve real-world problems. This year is a pilot year for Connected Math in 6<sup>th</sup> grade; the district will decide whether to adopt it or not next year. The Connected Math curriculum is very challenging. It may affect how our math program looks next year and whether or not we want to have Advanced Math classes; in some ways, the Connected Math curriculum is actually more challenging than our current advanced curriculum. The program is set up in such a way that students can take it at their level and answer more simple questions or more complex questions.

One concern for math is making sure we prepare the kids for high school. We want to make sure that they are leaning and that we are doing what's best for them as middle school students, but we also want to have our program be similar to what students do in high school so that the transition will be seamless.

Math is going to be the big focus for school improvement, since Reading and Science are currently going well and we don't feel the need to change the way we are doing things. The general education students will be getting the new Connected Math and Math Studio curriculum, and the students who have been struggling will get the new Math 180 program.

Math 180 gives the students an intake assessment, which provides them with an SMI (Scholastic Math Index) score. They take this test several times throughout the year so that we can track their progress. We will be giving the SMI test to some of the students in our regular classes as well as some in Resource Math so that we can compare and see how successful the program is.

Our behavior focus will continue to be decreasing major and minor referrals. This will become more difficult as we have been doing well on this goal over the past four years, and we have already seen a significant decrease due to our PBIS program and classroom behavior interventions. They are getting to be so low at this point that it will be unreasonable to expect it to drop any more. We will specifically focus on tardies, which continue to be an ongoing problem (though we have seen improvement in this regard as well).

The final school goal continues to be increased community involvement. We have gotten better at this over the past few years as well. We have had two parent nights this year so far: one for a question/answer session with our administrators, and one for social media safety. We have had community members involved with our garden, and we have had three field trips so far this year to local farms. We plan to do more parent nights, such as another social media night in the spring. We will also have more parent nights for question/answer sessions, though we will wait for Pinnacle to be up and running so that we will be able to talk about grading at the next session.

### **Schoology**

At our last meeting, we discussed that Schoology wasn't working well with the standards-based grading system. That feedback was taken to staff, and they were able to resolve the issue so that the 1-4 scores are no longer showing up as percentages or letter grades.

### **Parent Question Night Feedback**

One thing that was requested at the most recent meeting was rubrics or another tool for feedback so that parents and students can see the criteria that they are being assessed on. The 1-4 number system isn't necessarily clear for academic, effort, and citizenship. It's also sometimes unclear to parents and students whether there was a possibility to exceed; there are students and parents who aren't happy unless they are getting the score possible, and it would be helpful to them to know whether they are there or not. The idea of progression might be new for parents, too. Our standards are designed to be met by the end of the year, so it is possible for students to be doing well with twos; they are on the right track to meet it by June.

As a staff, there are many things that we need to follow up on. This grading system is new to us, too; we need to come back to meeting versus exceeding for academic, effort, and citizenship grades.

### **Bear Dens**

From the school perspective, Bear Dens have been going well. We wanted to get the parent perspective. For many students, Bear Den is the ideal time for organization so that they can get ready to do their work at home. It is also an opportunity for them to get started on their work; some of them are even able to get everything done so they can focus on sports and other activities at home.