

Site Council Minutes

Date: September 18th, 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
- Pam Chido, MMS Parent
- Nikki Whittier, MMS Parent
- Anna Harris, MMS Parent
- Lise Grato, MMS Parent
- Ken Gilbert, MMS Principal
- Amanda Gilbert, MMS Vice Principal

Site Council & PTC Role

We usually have a decent showing of parents at PTC and Site Council meetings at the beginning of the school year; the numbers tend to drop off as the year continues. We have been combining the two meetings so that we can get more people involved with our school. We find that this is helpful in bringing in more parents and teachers as well as limiting the number of meetings people need to attend, since we know that parents are busy. We hope to enlist more parents to attend the meetings this year, including some who attended last year but were not able to be present today.

The PTC deals mostly in school fundraising and communicating with other parents who are unable to come to our meetings. The role of Site Council deals with programs, scheduling, grading, school climate, and other more school-based items.

For parent communication, we are going to start having periodic open evening sessions for parents to come in and ask questions to our administrators. The first meeting is on Thursday, October 2nd at 6:30pm. If people are interested, we will continue these sessions throughout the year. Since our Pinnacle grading system not up until October 15th, parents might not have questions ready. We will see how many parents attend and what kinds of questions we get from them.

The PTC Spaghetti Feed is scheduled for October 23rd. We have some non-perishable supplies left over from last year such as plates and napkins that we can use this year. We can also solicit donations from Safeway and other local companies. Last year, we received several donations of cash and supplies from local businesses and citizens. The Spaghetti Feed is our biggest fundraiser of the school year; money raised from this event goes towards taking students in need Christmas shopping, paying for Teacher Appreciation Week, and funding teacher requests such as books for OBOB and a new spotlight for our drama club. We also share some of the proceeds from this fundraiser with our school band, which provide entertainment at the event. We took in over \$1400 in ticket sales and donations last year and over \$500 from our bake sale. The Spaghetti Feed was our only fundraiser last year, so our current PTC account balance is around \$390.

We have sixteen parents who expressed interest in helping with the Spaghetti Feed during registration. Our history has been that many people are willing to help out with the event, but it is more difficult to find someone who is willing to organize everything. We need to consider whether we want to do the Spaghetti Feed this year or if we would prefer to try a different fundraiser. There are many other fundraising possibilities we could consider, but we need to be cognizant of how many fundraisers we do throughout the school year so that we don't hit parents with too many. We also need to avoid conflict with other fundraisers in the school. In addition to whole school fundraisers, we also have band fundraisers and 8th grade students who raise money for the 8th grade DC trip. We may consider adding another

fundraiser later in the school year, but since we have had success in the past with the Spaghetti Feed in the past we will continue this year. One of our parents is willing to take on the organization role. We might also add an auction to the bake sale to raise additional money. Other organizations have raised large sums of money by auctioning off donated cakes. We could also sell sodas for 50 cents to raise more money. We could also have door prizes and post photos of them on Facebook to encourage people to come. Our leadership students can also come to the fundraiser to help out with stocking, cleaning tables, etc.

We have some notes from last year about how to improve for this year. We have notes on how much food was served and whether we ran out or had extra. We also noted what local businesses or organizations helped us with donations.

One new state regulation requires that all food fundraisers have a district employee with a kitchen certification. We would need to recruit someone from one of our school cafeterias to help, either as a volunteer, or if necessary, as a paid employee. We will look in to finding someone who can help.

We have pre-sold tickets in the past and had little success, but there may be people who are interested in donating money but can't make it to the actual event. Selling tickets in advance would allow people to purchase them as donations without having to be physically present that evening. We can also accept direct donations to the PTC. There is some question as to whether these donations will be tax-deductible; we believe they could be. We will have to look into this so that we can provide parents with the correct information.

Our parent coordinator will work out a time and place for a meeting so that we can get started on this fundraiser. One piece we need to get going early is donations; we should have a letter from last year that we can update and take to local businesses to get information out and request donations of supplies, foods, and money.

The magazine sale fundraiser, which students participate in during September and October, raises money for the student activities account.

Our Leadership students are doing a Burgerville Fundraiser from 5-8pm on September 30th. We may want to do additional fundraisers throughout the year through Burgerville and/or McDonalds.

One of our parent members asked if there was a way to find out specific classroom wish lists for donations. Most of our teachers do not have them, so parents could contact them directly and ask if there is something they need. We would also love to have donations to purchase items at the student store.

Standards-Based Grading

Grading this year is going to be very different. In Pinnacle, you should be seeing numbers from 1-4 to represent whether the student is meeting, exceeding, or not meeting. This might look different in different classes. For example, math classes might have standards that they cover at the beginning of the school year and then move on from. Other classes have year-long standards that will be assessed frequently throughout the school year. This is a new system and will represent a change for everyone. Some of our teachers use Schoology, which may not be 100% compatible with our standards-based system. We will need to work this year to ensure that grading information is communicated in a clear and consistent way. When Pinnacle is up, it will only show the scores based on the four point system, not percentages or A, B, C, D, F grades.

We are hoping to get out some information about what standards-based grading is and how it works to parents in the near future. We might receive this information from the school district, or our administrators might provide it.

Standards-based grading consists of several parts: choosing the standards you want to assess, teaching those standards, assessing those standards, and reporting progress to students and parents. It is possible to have standards-based grading without standards-based instruction, but our district is using standards-based grading. Pinnacle is our tool for reporting this information, and it isn't perfect but we will do our best. The most important factor in student learning is teacher quality; the second most important is feedback. Simply getting an A, B, etc. at the top of a paper doesn't give students meaningful feedback; standards-based grading is a good way to give that meaningful feedback that will help students improve.

School Improvement Goals

Typically, SIP goals are a major topic at our first Site Council meeting. This year, we have a new curriculum director and new Common Core Standards, a new Smarter Balanced Assessment, and new standards-based grading. We are waiting to get direction from the school district as to what they would like our goals to look like before we start working on creating them.

Our goals will most likely be similar in format as last year, but centered on things such as standards-based grading and engagement. We can't have an improvement goal around our state testing since we are going to a completely new test this year and have no basis for comparison.

Building Improvements

The school district is at the very beginning stages of looking into a bond measure to improve our buildings. Our major needs right now are lockers, our PE locker rooms, and our Home Ec. room.

We have also been working on improving the technology in our classrooms. A substantial portion of our budget goes to this every year as technology is very expensive and hard to keep up-to-date. We received new student computers this year for our computer labs and library from the district.

We have also had to purchase some new furniture, specifically tables and chairs for two classrooms and some new whiteboards for math classrooms. We have received donations in the past of lightly used furniture from area businesses and even technology such as projectors donated from HP. We might be able to look into more donations for this school year of technology, furniture, etc.