

District Parent Council Agenda
February 26, 2024 12:00 – 2:30pm, OPM - Central Elementary

Attendees: Karen Shapiro, John Hood, Kelly Sundeen, Ken Hintze, Katie Cavanaugh, Mike Callahan, Tamara Marshall, Jessica Savage, Jane Manfredi, Kristin Hundt, Sarah Allen
Via Zoom: Liz Luyendyk, Pam Jones, Candice Bouknight

Welcome and Introductions - *Karen Shapiro*

Superintendent's Report - *John Hood*

- We continue to partner with John Russell on **security**. We were invited to the National Conference in Nashville to present on school security, and culture and prevention. We advocate for coordinated county response, the more similar surrounding district plans are, the better. We had a lot of learning after last year's swatting incident.
- Hiawatha visit - cultural/global night.
- Talking to all departments and schools regarding start times.
- Ken met with recreation fields/outreach to coaches. Plan during new Chippewa construction for long-term community fields use.
- One of John's personal superintendent goals is to deliver exceptional services to students every day - through all departments - meeting everyone's personal goals. Remove barriers; master planning.
- Covid funding is going away, so how to keep funded supports? Set-asides will help with some.
- Brian Lieber - new Operations director.
- Wardcliff upkeep our responsibility. Will eventually demolish the building but at the end of the bond cycle.
- High School future goals to communicate for counselors with students.
- Question (Candice) - Plan for fencing around schools/playgrounds for security? A - need to keep open for the community.

Principal's Report - *Kelly Sundeen*

- It's National Montessori Education Week - talking about it at OPM all week
- Talk about peace - made peace sign with all students
- March 1-15 enrollment. Application for lottery closes 3/15. This year every student is returning so only room for kindergarteners and the only School of Choice will be siblings.
- Tours began in January and this year worked with Mikayla (new communications dir) to create a digital tour. Some DPC reps thought it might be good to create digital tours for other schools as well.
- Ingham doing environmental testing at Central due to health and safety issues.
- MTSS process.
- Almost done with construction. Secure vestibule complete, new furniture, new bathrooms, new student sick room.

Speaker - *Ken Hintze, Director of Athletics*

- Ken started in July.
- A lot of playoffs going on now.
- March 11 spring sports - newsletter for tryout information.
- Stadium improvements
- Participated in National Signing Day (US) - 4 athletes. Senior awards and will add another signing day for late deciders.
- Athletic boosters
- New weight room project at OHS. Will be coach-supervised. Currently, a coach opens for you, but you need to first contact a coach. More free weights.
- There are 650/700 total student athletes. 29 non-varsity(?) sports. Hoping to add bowling.
- Question - Liz- Boosters: \$250K goal by the end of May. Other business partnerships?
- Question - Any Kinawa sports available? A: Cross country is the only one. Chippewa has a list on their website.
- Talked about start times with our and other coaches. Freshman soccer - boys and girls, basketball - boys and girls, baseball.

Board of Education Report - *Katie Cavanaugh*

- MTSS information - Stacy Bailey presentation. We should all go back and watch it online. High school showed promising results. New assessments as well.

School Reports -

OHS – Sarah Allen, Karen Shapiro
Chippewa –Tere Blanca, Carly Patel, Dawn Crandell
Kinawa – Liz Luyendyk, Leah Kwapis, Amanda Brush
Cornell – Corinne Dyksen
OPM – Sage Hales-Ho and Mike Callahan
Bennett Woods – Jane Manfredi
Hiawatha–Jessica Savage, Stacey Smith

Action Items

Transportation/Bussing Issues

Other questions/Comments?

Adjourn

Next Meeting: March 18, 2024, 12-2:30pm, Hiawatha Elementary

Email: Districtcouncil48864@gmail.com

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

Building Reports

OHS:

- Dr. Kemsley expressed his praise for how he feels the students are being so kind to one another. He is pleased with how they are interacting with one another.
- Diversity Assembly - March 6, 2024
- Parent Group meeting - March 15, 2024, 9am, Counseling office
- Post Prom Planning Committee - Events room at CADL-Okemos library - 3/18, 4/15, and 5/6
- Prom is May 18, 11pm-2am
- Cap & Gown donation to main office
- Senior Decision can be shared on the 2024 Instagram page
- Senior Yard Signs can be ordered
- Haven House Donation Drive items to be placed in boxes around the school
- NHS applications due by March 1
- Okemos Key Club Children's Book Drive - 2/12 through 3/19 supporting Friends of CADL
- 2024 MSUFCU Student Art Show - 10 students were selected
- Okemos Music Patrons Spaghetti Dinner - March 8, 2024, 4:30-7:30pm
- Music festival March 19th

Chippewa 7-8

- We started organizing the Fun Walk- this is the only fundraiser for the school.
- Conferences are coming in March; registration opens on February 28 at 5:30 and closes on March 7 at 8:00
March 12: 4:00-7:00
March 13: 4:00-7:00
March 14: 12:00-3:00
March 18: 4:00-7:00
- Parent group approved some financial help for the Montessori Trip to Washington.
- 8th graders have gone tubing at Hawk Island Park.
- We are still looking for some volunteers/chairperson for science night.

Kinawa 5-6

- Planning a potluck for teachers for conferences
- Planning science night with Chippewa
- February 28: PTO General Meeting 6:30pm - 7:30pm over zoom.
- March 8: ½ Day of School for Students
- March 8: OMP Spaghetti Dinner

- March 13: Spring Parent Teacher Conferences 4:30pm - 7:30pm - more information will be shared in the next couple of weeks
- March 14: Spring Parent Teacher Conferences 1:00pm - 4pm and 5pm - 8pm
- Our Archery club students have qualified for the State of Michigan State meet on March 8-10
- We have four classrooms who are continuing to pilot Flexible Furniture we will be looking to purchase with the new building
- We have multiple field trips on the horizon: 6th grade students will go to Michigan Adventure, 5th grade students will be going to Celebration Theatre to see KungFu Panda 4 and will be going to the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village. Additionally, we have an optional field trip for students to go to Imagination Science Station in Toledo to see the Total Eclipse.
- 4th Grade Move Up Day for 4th graders to visit Kinawa for the day will be held on May 21
- Our NWEA data shows that our students are continuing to make growth in the areas of Math and Reading.
- Spring Testing will be occurring shortly after Spring Break. All students will participate in both the M-Step assessment as well as the NWEA assessment. These are state required assessments.
- We are currently in the process of planning for next school year.

Cornell Elementary

- Working on new vestibule routines for staff, students, and visitors
- First semester report cards went home
- Restaurant night at Culver's was great and we have a fundraiser at Launch coming up on March 8th (half day)
- Need more lunch support and trying to have a deeper list of parents we can ask in a pinch to help out
- Upcoming- potluck lunch for teachers during conferences, science night, mileage club

Hiawatha Elementary

- Global gathering (formerly multicultural night) on Feb 9 was a huge success with many students and families participating
- Launch fundraiser coming up on February 29th
- Just wrapped up a fabricated customs apparel sale
- STEAM night coming in April 12th

Bennett Woods Elementary

- Science night was a success with 709 attendees, 33 exhibitors, 70 posters from 78 students. Many thanks to our sponsors Abrams planetarium, tasty twist, potter park zoo, launch, meridian township/harris nature center and tinkerlab. Many thanks to Principal Schefke who donated a "pie the principal on pi day" for those who got projects in on time.

- Multicultural night was also a success with a cafeteria filled with 50 BW family presentations, 18 community groups and a fun filled night of 14 performances including a Chinese dragon dance. BW students also were able to perform the dragon dance at Hiawatha multicultural night.
- Staff are undergoing training on how to respond to bias
- Grants included books, educational puzzles and virtual field trips to Mackinac
- Literacy days will include finger flashlights to read under the stars and hello my name is filled in with their favorite character
- We are looking forward to mileage club and bike to school day. Girls on the run is starting.
- Book bingo is happening in March- all kids will take home a book.
- Field day 5/31
- Block party 5/19
- 3/14 next meeting 6/30 in the library

Food & Nutrition Answers: Emily Swirsky (from last month)

- **Explanation of nutrition standards at breakfast and lunch**

I'm guessing what is meant by this are the meal components and what students are required to take for their meal to qualify for a reimbursable (free) meal. A *reimbursable meal* is one that satisfies the nutritional components determined by the USDA. Quantities vary by age/grade group, but components remain constant and necessary for all student meals claimed for reimbursement. For your student to receive a free meal, the items they select **MUST** satisfy the nutritional requirements.

The BREAKFAST meal pattern consists of 3 food components:

- 1) Fruit/Vegetable
- 2) Grains (Meat/Meat Alternates may be substituted when minimum daily grain is met)
- 3) Fluid Milk (1% or fat-free white or fat-free flavored)

For BREAKFAST, the student must select at least 3 components, one of which **MUST** be a fruit, vegetable, or juice. For example, if your child only selects a cereal bowl and a milk, this breakfast is not reimbursable because it is missing fruit or juice. In this case, your child's account would be charged the cost of the cereal bowl and the milk because their selections do not satisfy all of the nutritional requirements. If your child adds a fruit cup or juicebox, the breakfast is now reimbursable, and your child's account would not be charged. Milk alone is not a reimbursable meal and is not free, it has to be charged as ala carte if a full meal is not taken.

The LUNCH meal pattern consists of 5 food components:

- 1) Fruits

- 2) Vegetables
- 3) Grains
- 4) Meats/Meat Alternates
- 5) Fluid Milk (1% or fat-free white or fat-free flavored)

o For LUNCH , the student must select at least 3 different and up to 5 components, one of which ***MUST*** be a fruit or vegetable. For example, if your child selects pizza and milk, this lunch is not reimbursable because it is missing a fruit and/or vegetable. In this case, your child's account would be charged the cost of the pizza and milk because their selections do not satisfy all of the nutritional requirements. If your child adds a salad and/or grapes, the lunch is now reimbursable, and your child's account would not be charged. Milk alone is not a reimbursable meal and is not free, it has to be charged as ala carte if a full meal is not taken.

o If you'd like more information on the USDA meal patterns and school nutrition programs you can go to this link:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/menu-planner-school-meals>

· **Plan for increasing the diversity of food choices.**

We have made several improvements to menu offerings this year at all levels. We are continually working to provide more diverse options but are often limited by the lack of staff overall as well as lack of highly trained staff. Recently we hired a chef supervisor who will assist with training staff and making new recipes. This is a slow moving process as many of our staff members have never worked with raw food components or recipes in a professional setting. We have also increased the number of positions per building as well as the hours of several positions to prepare for future endeavors of expanding the menu as well as accommodating the massive increases we've seen in meal participation since the Michigan School Meals program has gone into effect. We are in the process of ordering new equipment to aid in this goal as well. However, we have experienced several major setbacks in our procurement process which has prolonged our ability to get said equipment ordered.

· **Is there a plan for growing our own food? Understanding that it would be a small percentage of our actual need**

Yes! As part of our spend down budget we are working to purchase a greenhouse for OHS that would supply some food items for the district such as fresh vegetables and herbs. I've been working with the director of the Bailey Greenhouse project at MSU as well as the MSU Extension office on planning for this project. We still have the same hurdles with

procurement but hope to have some of those issues resolved soon so we can move forward with this project.

- Ever thinking of partnering with MSU agriculture department?

Absolutely! As stated above, we have been forming a few partnerships within that department already. We also have a grant called the 10 cents a meal grant which we work with the MSU extension office to procure locally sourced fruits and vegetables with a 1 to 1 match in reimbursement from the state of Michigan (up to a predefined amount).

- How much food prep can OPS do? Existing infrastructure vs proposed new building at Chippewa/Kinawa

Currently not much, more because of staffing than space. Again, our ability to prepare scratch food items involves not only the quantity of staff but also each person's abilities. We are working to train more staff on preparation and production techniques. We are also being very thoughtful about the equipment, prep space, and storage space in the new building and making sure that our staff has what they will need to efficiently and effectively create meals from scratch. The space at the kitchen in OHS is highly inadequate for fully prepping from scratch meals. The lack of dishwashers throughout the district also disrupt our abilities to prep from scratch. There are currently no dishwashers in the entire district. We are working to purchase 1 for each kitchen through our spend down plan.

Can you speak to staffing shortages?

We have maintained similar numbers of staff to last year but have more students eating with us and have created more positions needing to be filled due to the increased numbers. Staffing in the food service industry all over has been particularly difficult since the pandemic began and we are not seeing a big recovery rate there. We've had to get creative about ways to bring in new staff including partnering with Employment Group which has been immensely helpful. We have also been working on retention strategies to help keep the staff we do have and making sure they feel valued and appreciated. We recently introduced our "high five" program where anyone can fill out a form and give a "high five" to any staff member.

Do you provide snacks for aftercare and is there a nutritional standard for those?

We provide snacks as "catering" for after school tutoring I believe. I think that's separate from aftercare but I could be wrong! Our district doesn't qualify afterschool snack programs funded through our food service program. Because of that, there are no nutritional standards and we supply whatever the school has requested. We have tried

encouraging some healthier options for those snacks but got a lot of pushback from schools saying their participation in the after school programs was decreasing based on students not liking the snacks that were being provided.

- **Lines at lunch, please speak to how the department has dealt with wait times across OPS?**

We've seen significant increases in breakfast and lunch participation and have dealt with space and time issues. Our staff members are committed to ensuring the best possible lunch experience for students. There have been improvements across all schools in getting students through faster. It has helped immensely that we now have less students who don't know their lunch number. We timed lunch service at Kinawa and found that it only takes about 8 seconds per student to get through the lunch line. To give some perspective, last year (Aug-Dec) we were serving an average of 23,217 lunches per month. This year (Aug-Dec), we've been serving an average of 38,053 lunches per month. That's an increase of 162% (on average). In the month of December we saw a 207% increase over last year! There's only so much we can do without longer lunch periods, which we are strongly in favor of.

- **Can you explain the district's recycling and food waste policies?**

Food service doesn't handle recycling for the district, that would be facilities/maintenance. Currently we are able to recycle cardboard. We also do not have a food waste policy for the district. As far as collecting pre-consumer waste in our kitchens; very few items are made from scratch meaning we have very little food waste that could be collected and composted. As we make the slow transition towards preparing more from scratch we are looking to incorporate on-site composting which would be utilized in the proposed greenhouse. We are also looking at incorporating worm farms which consume food waste and produce valuable worm castings for fertilizing the greenhouse.

- **Do all schools have a "no thank you bin"?**

We call this a share bin but yes, all schools are set up with these bins. We have a bin for ambient items as well as a bin that comes from the freezer for cold items such as milk.