

General PTO Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, November 19th, 7:00 p.m.

Time/Place: LMC in Willowbrook

Note Takers: Laurie Glaser and Erin Sommer

DISTRICT #30 CAUCUS REPORT:

Members present: Charlotte Tryfonopoulos, Jeff Zuercher and Christine Perakis.

The District #30 caucus is trying to get the word out to volunteers in our school district to run for the District #30 Board, as four seats are being vacated this school year. (Of the seven board members, three will be retiring, leaving four seats available.) The main job for the caucus members is to interview the candidates and to endorse those candidates that they feel would best support our district.

The District #30 Caucus has 14 volunteers within the District #30 and general community. The current School Board works very well together and is a very impressive and powerful group.

The caucus would like at least five candidates. The caucus does the screening/interview process; and then they endorse the candidates they feel will be a good fit. Anyone can run, with or without the caucus' endorsement. Interviewing the candidates start in early December. In mid-December they will have a list of the candidates who they will endorse.

December 15th is the official date to submit paperwork through Cook County for anyone wanting to run for the School Board openings. Voting is done in April 2015.

Examples of the kind of questions asked is similar to a job interview. The candidates fill out a form listing their strengths and weaknesses. The caucus members look at the backgrounds of the candidate and try make sure that there is a representation of the general community. District concerns are discussed among the caucus members.

The caucus encourages candidates to talk to current board members and to Dr. Tivador (if interested in running) and to attend the District #30 Board Meetings. The current Board's information/email is on the District website.

Encourage others to come forward, ask questions if they are interested in running. Don't have to commit until the end. Only 20% of the community uses District #30.

How does the voting process work? During the April 7th general election, names will be on the ballot. If there are only four names, then it is uncontested and everyone will be elected. If there is a contested election, members of the caucus put in their own money to help advertise for the slated candidates.

Caucus members serve two terms. If you are interested you can also join the caucus, as there may be some openings in 2015 for serving on the Caucus.

PRINCIPAL'S PRESENTATION/REPORT:

The last district ISAT test was last year. It was a state and mandated test. (Mandated from the "No Child Left Behind" act.) Each year schools needed to meet standards in order for school to stay in good standings. This past year, the bar was 100%. State was able to get a waiver because of NCLB.

There's a race to the top money that helps education reforms. It's changing the way the principals and educators are evaluated. They're now looking at the individual way to measure progress, which is the individual growth of students. District #30 did great again this year.

ISAT 2013- 2014 performance results:

Hard to look at data longitudinally. Our drop was not a very big drop compared to everyone else. We are the envy of the Northfield Township. All three District #30 schools fall within the top 25 in the area. Mathematics - All stable. Maple math scores are fantastic. District #30 students are coming in well-prepared. We were 100%-aligned in Common Core Standards.

Reading scores were the strong scores. Science was done for 4th grade only. The students did great. There will maybe a science component in the future but probably not this spring. The ISAT Tests are expensive; and the State of Illinois is broke.

There are five goals for our School Improvement Plan:

- Nurture a school culture that teaches and demonstrates and recognizes good character.
 - Social and emotional learning
 - Second Step Program
 - Kindness Connection
 - Character Counts awards
 - Our school-wide theme this year is "Choose Kindness."
- Increase the rigor of our math curriculum and provide instruction that aligns with Common Core Standards.
 - Approaching math how we approach reading -- guided practice by working through skill and level and coming back together as a group.
 - Tier 2 interventions to see which ones are having trouble.
 - Teachers learn these new standards from half-day improvement days; and by outside consultants and coaches.
- Grow the reading workshop model and provide instruction that aligns more with the Common Core State standards.
 - Ellin Oliver Keene is coaching us in early December on how to use conferencing with students.
 - Chicago Literacy Group have consultants coming in on those half-day improvement days for group trainings and professional readings.
- Increase student engagement through the integration of technology and research skills.
 - One-to-one iPad
 - Three district technology support assistants who help advance curriculum and use technology integration.
 - Looking to possibly push the one-to-one iPad program to lower grades (Grades 2-3). (This will be one of the big decisions the school board needs to make for the younger grades.)
- Have 70% or more of the students meet their individual growth targets on the NWEA Measures of Progress (MAP) assessments.
 - Less than 70 percent of schools meet these standards.

PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers)

There are two consortiums -- Smart Balance and PARCC. About half of the United States has joined one of these consortiums to fund the creation of these assessments. It's an ambitious project. There will be two tests given next year in the spring time for 3rd through 5th grades:

Performance-based Assessment:

- Late March
- Six hours of ELA (reading and writing) and Math
- Intended to measure growth

End of Year Assessment:

- Early May
- Four hours ELA & Math
- May look like a MAP test and might have writing components.

Purposes of PARCC:

- To determine if students are on track to be college and career ready.
- Asses the Common Core Standards.
- Measure the full range of students performance, including the high and low performing students.
- Provide data during the academic year to inform instruction, intervention.

The tests are expensive. There are some practice tests online and it's very rigorous. We don't know what it will look like until it comes. We know that our kids are prepared. We trust that we are doing the right thing already by the kids. The school will probably not have results until late September/early October 2015.

We will have accommodations for those with IEPs and special education and for those who need the extra accommodations.

There will be time constraints. Districts who piloted it said it did not go well. Many technical problems. We, as a district, cannot opt-out of this program. We hope that our kids continue to do well. We will be communicating with parents once we receive more information.

Dr. Hirsch is very involved in attending any training or informational sessions that are available. We believe our district will be able to handle the technology side of the test. Our student service department are meeting for a half day in January to talk about how to accommodate those with special needs/IEPs. They give a two- or three-week testing period. It's going to take a lot of time to get this done.

Common core vs. Assessments. Different states approach it differently. The real question is how do we measure this growth? What is the best way to measure student growth? These are the type of questions the makers of the test are trying to answer.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), is being given to the 3rd and 5th grade students. It's a 60-minute test on Tuesday through Thursday, with make-up on Friday. (CogAT measures general and specific cognitive abilities; a student's ability to reason and problem solve.)

On December 3rd - 4th, Ellin Oliver Keene is coming back to Willowbrook where she'll be coaching us on how to use conferencing with the students.

The Kindness Connection visits us on Wednesday, December 10th for our one-day services learning assembly. (The Kindness Connection (TKC) is a non-profit services group that helps schools meet service learning objectives. TKC service projects are aligned with the Illinois State Learning Standards in social and emotional learning.) The service project that the 5th Grade Spirit Committee has decided upon is the "Kids to Seniors" project.

Friday, December 12th is a half-day professional development day. A math workshop and follow-up on reading will be given.

Friday, December 19th is the Maple Sing-a-long in the morning; and the Willowbrook sing-a-long in the afternoon. Classroom parties also will be held in the afternoon.

Save the date: Lew Blond Run is May 9th, 2015. There is a planning committee and they are looking for sponsorships. Proceeds go to the ALS research and scholarships at GBS/GBN.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Tivador's dad passed away. All three schools sent over a "gorgeous" flower arrangement to the funeral home. Dr. Tivador was deeply moved and very appreciative.

Environment Action Committee: Grace Zuercher is sitting on the committee.

Food Services Advisory Committee: Becky Fliegel is sitting on the committee.

Special Lunch: We will be looking at other vendors, quite possibly, for the next year. Will be putting out feelers.

The Father/Son event is at the Accelerated Center in March.

Jr. Great Books: There's been a decline in interest. Thinking of only offering it to the current 4th and 5th graders and then phase it out completely. An email went out this morning. The 5th graders have shown an interest and already have a parent volunteer to lead the discussions.

Parent Social: Save the date - the Parent Social will be held on Saturday, February 21st at a local establishment. There was discussion about bringing back the classroom projects. They would need volunteers, too. (Dianne Larsen presented)

Bulletin Board (Beth Shabelman presented): If you would like anything advertised on the bulletin board, please print out the fliers and give to Beth. Can also do a "Save the Date" for the Parent Social.

Maple PTO Rep: Maple Dine-Out Date is December 4th at Buffalo Wild Wings. 15% of profits benefit Maple.

Spiritwear Breakfast: 70 students have signed up already. 8:15 a.m. start time. A SignUp Genius will be created for late sign-ups.

A concerned District #30 parent sent an email to Becky Fliegel and other District #30 PTO Presidents/community members about the Senate Bill 16 (SB16) hearing. Advocacy of funding. Majority of funding comes from local property taxes. 95% or more comes from those taxes. There are many theories of how to allocate money for school funding. If this is passed, we will lose significant funding because of the change of allocations. This has come up for a vote many many times. Not appropriate for the principal to take a

stance on it. Decisions made in Springfield will affect us. This is a School Board issue and they are on top of this. The School Board does advocate for our schools.

TREASURER REPORT (Lisa Buchanan presented):
126 coupon books sold.

FUNDRAISING (Georgia Aralis presented)

Fundraising is done for 2014. Yankee Candle just occurred. Movie Night #2 will be held on February 6th, 2015. They are thinking of combining the Six Flags' Reading program with an online read-a-thon, having the proceeds from the online program go to the PTO. The online read-a-thon will be voluntary. If you have any ideas for us, please let Georgia Aralis or Arlene Dashnaw know.

SECRETARY REPORT (Laurie Glaser and Erin Sommer presented):

The librarians are concerned that they do not have enough volunteers after the upcoming week. Danielle Pollack has put an announcement in the Friday flier last week; and the information has been added to our web site. Danielle suggested that maybe due to the holidays people are short on time.

The **School Store** is up and running successfully. Fourteen 5th graders are participating in running the school store (two students each week are assigned). The kids are having blast, and are excited to feel entrepreneurial and contribute to raising money for the PTO. They are preparing for the holiday season by buying lots of fun "supplies" for the kids to sell. The school store is open every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Store coupons or money can be used to purchase the goods. Headphones can be purchased at the school store, too.

Next General Meeting: February 20th, 2015 at 9:15 a.m.