

MINUTES of PTA/PAC

Meeting Date: September 21, 2015

Call to order: A monthly membership meeting of the Madison PTA/PAC was held at Madison Elementary School on Monday, September 21, 2015 in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The meeting convened at 6:06 pm. Miranda Gilbert, PTA Chairperson presiding, and Marcus Paden, Secretary

Members in attendance

Miranda G, Miranda P, Amanda J, Lissa S, Lisa S, Alicia C, Matt C, Maren O, Heidi U, Amy G, Tara L, Billi R, Sonia R, Karen K, Kirsten W, Julie C, Kate G, Marcus P, April P, Dan S, Travis O, Carol P, BriAnne H, Annette H, Willie J

Housekeeping items

Lawn signs for the Vote Yes! Referendum are available from Lissa Staples. If you would like one, contact her at staplesperry@charter.net. She will deliver the sign to your home if necessary.

PTA/PAC t-shirts are available for \$14.00. Contact Miranda Gilbert at madisonptapac@gmail.com if you would like to purchase them.

The teachers of Madison Elementary sent a thank you card for all of the food and drinks provided during the goal-setting conferences August 31st – September 1st.

Leadership Team Vacancies

Adam Philippi has resigned his position as PTA/PAC Treasurer. Miranda Philippi has resigned her positions as PTA/PAC main bulletin board, Labels for Education, Labels for Learning, and ECartridges. Per the PTA/PAC bylaws, if a vacancy occurs on the Leadership Team, the Chair shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy, for the remainder of the term. If you are interested in any of the open positions, contact Miranda Gilbert, PTA chairperson @ madisonptapac@gmail.com.

Special Guests

Willie Jett, St. Cloud Area Schools Superintendent
Carol Potter, Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services

Happenings in the district:

- The superintendent traveled to China this past summer with the SCSU Confucius Institute. The trip provided new perspective on the goals for the ISD 742 Chinese immersion program
- Construction started on a number of buildings in the district. Some schools still have on-going projects.
- The superintendent and other district executives spend Tuesdays and Thursdays in the schools with administrators, teachers, and students. The goal is to see what's going on and how the district and offer more support.
- The district is focused on the Vote Yes! Referendum during the next six weeks. The referendum is about access and opportunity. Each student deserves access and opportunity to safe schools, technology, and new and different programs.

- With the referendum, 75% of Apollo High School will be renovated, a new Tech High School will be built, and all other buildings will receive security and technology updates. The district can provide information but cannot ask people to vote yes.

Questions for the Superintendent

The superintendent answers the questions unless otherwise noted.

Will money from the referendum be used for funding salaries?

No. The referendum is strictly for buildings, technology, and security. When I arrived three years ago, a plan was in place to ask for a levy to fund various things but we decided to cancel it.

What has been the reaction to the district's new website?

The reaction has been 80%-85% positive. It is still a work in progress and it continues to be revised. If you notice anything missing or have any suggestions for the website, contact Tami DeLand, Director of Community Engagement and Communications at communications@isd742.org or a school administrator.

Will goal-setting days happen again?

Feedback was good and people were generally in favor of it. [Parent comment] There is a concern about having childcare during the goal-setting times. Kidstop was available but the notice about that option was too short. Coordination between the special education teacher and homeroom teacher would be helpful so everyone can meet at the same time. Maybe the goal-setting meetings can be two weeks before school starts. [Principal Okerlund's response] That was the original plan but we did not have all of our staff in place to do that.

Any updates on Roosevelt?

Construction is still on going but the Boys and Girls Club will open at the beginning of the year. Three new wings are being added. The City Life program, elem. level 4, and the In Step program will be housed there. [More information about these programs can be found at <http://isd742.org/domain/531>] A new building will be built where Clark Field currently resides. This building will house district offices, Community Education, Welcome center, ABE, and early childhood. The district offices are currently at Apollo High School and early childhood is in various schools.

What does Carol Potter do in the district?

[Carol Potter] I oversee all of special education and 501 plans not involved with special education.

Will there be more emphasis placed on case managers staying with special education students instead of new managers every year?

[Carol Potter] Current there is no district protocol. Each school handles it differently. It depends on the number of teachers, number of students, school layout, etc. There is change this year because of the staff turnover at Madison. Case managers decide how long to stay with students. For example, if a case manager is co-teaching in a 2nd grade class, they will want to be the case managers for that class. Next year, they may get the case manager for 3rd grade.

There have been a number of violent outbursts in class. What is the district doing to support Madison?

Behavior was a focus for the district last school year and into this year. The district hired additional special education supervisors. [Carol Potter] The supervisor at Madison provides instruction and coaching for special education teachers. If a student is having outbursts, the supervisor works with the case manager to decide what to do, if the student needs a program change or if Madison is the best place for them.

What are kids or parents supposed to do while planning happens for the troubled student? What is the time frame?

[Carol Potter] As soon as the team meets, and if necessary, moves can be made after meeting with the troubled student's parents and arranging transportation. Case managers and teachers should be training students on what to do when an outburst happens. If a move is necessary, it should happen quickly, and teachers get back on track.

[Travis Okerlund] If it's one student, the plan for the student needs to change. If it's multiple students, the teacher needs to change their strategy. [BriAnne Hern] We also meet with teachers to see if changes are necessary and what changes need to happen. We also try to figure out how to support the teacher and students in the class, while preserving the dignity of the troubled child. It's not a punitive meeting to scold the teacher.

Why are troubled students allowed back in the classroom?

[Travis Okerlund] There are legal restrictions that allows for the removal for the incident and long-term removal. We have to work within the boundaries.

Why did the start time change?

[Travis Okerlund] Some people like it, some don't, and most are accepting the change. Most of the elementary schools are early start times so we are aligned with them. I used to come to school an hour before the teachers now that's too early. BriAnne and I have been spending more time after school.

Why did recess change?

[Travis and BriAnne] Outdoor activities is a program to actively supervise and engage students. Recess is important and has been doubled in time. A lot of students were standing around doing nothing and not engaged. Students are providing feedback as to what they should do during recess. They've had dancing, jump rope, walking club, kickball, and football. Its been a slow roll out so students can learn rules, how to behave outside, be more active. All staff has been hired and training is continuing. We started with high structure and are slowly backing it off. We could have done a better job communicating the change. Some PTA parents came in to talk about the change and presented ideas so we were thankful for that.

When is the library available?

[Travis Okerlund] The goal is to have it open this week. We have a new media specialist and paraprofessional. The media center gets closed because assessments now take place in there since the computer labs are there. PAKRAT assessments will take place soon and students will be assigned their reading level.

Do we have sufficient staff for the number of students?

[Willie Jet and Travis] Madison has more staff per student than any other school because of size, title 1, etc. We have a full time counselor, social worker, assistant principal, and other schools do not.

When will the construction be done at Madison?

[Travis Okerlund] October 19th, after MEA break. The yellow wall in the cafeteria will be gone, the room extended, and we'll have more space and natural lighting.

What happens if the referendum fails?

If it fails, everything will stay as it is. Basic maintenance costs for Tech and Apollo will be \$130 million over ten years to maintain the buildings at their current status.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm.