

Minutes of the Oakley Park General Membership Meeting

Held Wednesday January 8, 2020

A meeting of the Oakley Park PTA General Membership was duly held at Oakley Park Elementary School.

The following individuals were present:

Sarah Garrison – President
Melanie Chandler – VP of Programming
Debbie O’Rourke – VP of Family Events
Jessica Maurer – VP of Communications
Diane Yanalunas – VP of Membership
Valerie Novaes – Secretary
Kristin Froning – Principal
Scott Nolan – School Psychologist
Laura Tubbs – Teacher
Grant German
Nora German
Melissa Tapper
Jen Mathis
Lindsey Lasota
Kristin Rypkowski
Jessica Waxman
Emily Crank
Jackie Graham
Theenda O’Flynn
Deepti Dhariwal

Sarah Garrison convened the meeting at 7pm to discuss the various items of old and new business. A brief introduction of board members was made. Valerie Novaes recorded the minutes.

Presidents Report – Sarah Garrison

- Book fair held in December was a huge success. Thanks to all the efforts of the volunteers, and school staff! The school sold over \$8k in books which allowed us to provide Gail over \$2k for the media center.
- Adopt a family 2019 was record setting! We were able to give four families through the head start program a Christmas. The requests were a lot of the basic necessities so a sincere thank you to anyone who donated/helped/participated to make this happen. Special thanks to Bobbie Sue who organized the event and Valerie, Debbie and Sarah for helping sort all the donations.
- Sarah distributed draft minutes from the October 2, 2019 general member meeting for review and approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Laura Tubbs and seconded by Debbie O’Rourke. All present approved minutes, zero rejected and zero abstained. Minutes approved.

Principal’s Report – Kristin Froning

Building Renovations

- Thank you to everyone that voted for the District-wide Infrastructure Bond on election day.

- Oakley Park Elementary is slated for the third tier of renovations (our project will launch three summers from now)
- Renovations scheduled for OPE include:
 - o Classroom “wet” areas will be torn out
 - o Classroom cabinets will be torn out and replaced
 - o All lockers will be torn out and replaced
 - o A new gymnasium
 - o Transformation of existing gym and cafeteria into a “cafetorium”
 - o Safety/security will have tweaks/fine tuning (including connection of every building’s “panic button” into the Oakland County Sherriff Departments system)
 - o The schools existing 46 security cameras will all be directly connected to the Sherriff Departments system
- School administration has already started selection of furniture, which will replace furniture throughout every classroom (regardless of the age of existing furniture). This is to ensure that the district achieves continuity of furniture throughout every school.
- Furniture that has not exceeded its useful life will be recycled and used as applicable.
- The formal design process will start one year from now

Lockdown Protocol

- Dr. Delgado introduced a protocol known as ALICE for lockdown procedure
- The current procedure has been: hunker down and hide. However, research says that hunker down and hide is not ALWAYS the best choice, rather the choice is very situation specific
- The OPE crisis team has been through the ALICE training and will work with staff to introduce ALICE to the children. The procedure will never be introduced as big, bad or scary. If children are coming home being scared with the information/communication, reach out and let the school administration know.
- ALICE reminds us the importance of doing something (rather than hunkering and hiding). That might include checking out our environment and understanding if there is something more that I can do
- Children will not hear anything about ALICE until sometime around April. Introduction to the students will include a book written by Julia Cook titled, “I’m not scared, I’m prepared” that will have companion workbook activities.
- The benefits of ALICE are having “options” and an increased level of communication
- Each classroom has emergency bags with contact information for each student along with key items to use in a situation, like a rope)
- Kristin is very pleased with the relationship with Oakland County
- Kristin Froning was present when Novi executed a drill – and the kids were rock solid. It was presented as a “Scary situation in the yellow wing”. During the post drill debrief, there was confidence and no fear out of the students.
- The goal is to create confidence in the kids and the community in dealing with the situation.
- Parents can help empower kids by talking about what could happen if, for example, we were in “Applebees” and a scary situation occurred, what would you do?
- A parent in attendance indicated that after attending the ALICE informational meeting, they felt very comfortable with the process and suggested the school hold another information session.
- Q: A question was presented asking how parents would be notified in the case of a “situation”?

- A: When possible, the existing notification system would issue an alert to parents. Then there is two different parts of “how do I get my kid back” and depends on the situation (e.g. evacuation and reunification).

iReady Diagnostics

- iReady diagnostic – Diagnostics open soon and go through the first week of February. This is a check in on growth from the fall diagnostic.
- There is a cut score for K-3 grade where anything below the cut score would need an intervention plan
- Kristin asked parents to remind and encourage students that iReady is adaptive (questions that are really really easy and really really hard) and to not be discouraged
- Q: Does assessment get updated every testing score?
- A: The diagnostic is not looking at mastery but rather growth between each diagnostic
- Q: My Kindergartener didn’t take the fall diagnostic so how will you evaluate change? For Kindergarten, yes this is their first time taking it so it will be the baseline and then they will take the assessment again in May.

MSTEP

- MSTEP will happen beginning in April in reading and Math for 3rd grade and above

School Psychologist Report – Scott Nolan

- Scott posed a question asking how many people knew there was a psychologist in each building? A good amount of those in attendance did know this to be true.
- There are 8 psychologists that cover the Walled Lake District. Scott covers OPE, WL Central, St. Williams and St. Matthews).
- His roles has changed a lot over the last 26 years. Early on, we operated like testing machines, observing students to make a decision on a disability diagnosis and subsequent plan. It was a very reactive approach.
- As time has gone on, education has become much more proactive. He now focuses his time using PBS (Positive Behavior Support).
- This method rolled out at Pleasant Lake, through a program called, “Leader in Me” that is based off of the 7 habits of highly successful people (coined by Steven Covey).
- The Leader In Me program was very expensive to implement so the other schools adopted iterations of the program (OPE Owl’s nest is an iteration of this).
- Scott created “work groups” of students that have volunteered to participate and it is a diverse cross section of students that we can all learn from rather than targeting groups of students that, for example, experienced divorce.
- He works with these groups (currently of 2nd and 5th graders), on a weekly basis to teach them how to advocate for themselves, how to be good listeners, and how to set goals for themselves.
- Parents and kids often wonder “why is my child in this group”. So, he goes into the classrooms and asks if anyone wants to participate.
- A handout of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People was distributed and Scott walked through each habit and provided examples of activities that teach these habits to students.
 1. Be Proactive – you have control of your body and focus on the things you have control over (play a game called the “freeze game”) – find nooks and crannies in the building and you have

to freeze and the last person standing wins. Then brings out some sort of tangible reward in second round; and puts it in front of them. This time the person that wins is the one who gets the prize. Kids will freeze for an entire lunch period for the candy bar that they wouldn't do in the first round. What was the difference between the first and the second? The candy bar made me do it. Did it really make you do it?

2. Begin with the end in mind – focusing on creating goals and a discussion of goals (where do you want to go, what do you want to do in life). Starting that conversation and not judging. What is a realistic goal? Everyday class: learning target (beginning with the end in mind). Talk about short term goals, and long term goals.
 3. Put first things first – He asks the students to describe the process for making chocolate chip cookies. How do you make good chocolate chip cookies (and they keep going off on tangents)? Tell all the ingredients, all the tools, put them in the oven, but don't specify a period of time. Discussion proceeds with why you can't walk away for four hours you have to stay focused on a goal.
 4. Think Win-Win – If I am playing in a game of chess and there is a "loser", that doesn't mean only one person won. Win-win is a state of mind and you want both ppl to gain something out of that.
 5. Seek first to understand – How do we become active listeners and honing our listening skills and be better listeners.
 6. Synergize – fancy word for working together and how when one person works by themselves and then three ppl work together, it is greater than the sum of the three parts. How can I work with my neighbor to create something better.
 7. Sharpen the Saw – Talk about having a balanced life. If there are sections of the saw blade that is not sharp, you can't be sharp. Break our lives – physical, mental, social and spiritual. If we are unbalanced (in the gym all day and not working on social or mental edge – I am dull). We want to be sharp in all areas so we are sharp.
- Q: Are you only doing this with 2nd and 5th graders?
 - A: Yes right now. But, this concept is being adopted in a lot of different areas, like Owl's nest.
 - OPE also has a "Leadership Group" that meets 8 times (first is a meet and greet and then each week after that they go through the seven habits)
 - Q: Are there any trends that you see in the school culture that are worth noting for parents?
 - A: There is a disturbing trend with the seeming control that screens have over kids – they feel like they can't give it up. As an adult, if I don't have a television in my house, we wonder what people are going to think of us? Phones have that same kind of peer pressure over kids.
 - Phones reduce their ability to think through "what would I do" in a difficult or new situation and results in them not being good problem solvers. Kids are actually afraid to try their own problems solving.
 - Scott has seen a level of anxiety at the high school level that is out of control. He equates this in part, due to social media and not being able to get away from it (seemingly slaves to it).
 - Screens result in a lack of resiliency in kids (not wanting to solve the problem) – just want to tell my mom
 - At OPE, the buildings problem solving team meets once a month to communicate student situations, talk about what is going on and work on solutions to the situation. This problem solving

team includes a teacher consultant, speech pathologist, behavioralist, OT, PT, principal, and the school psychologist.

- The key take home message this group tries to convey is that you are never alone when it comes to your child's educational experience. Start first by bringing any issues or situations with your student to the teacher; and then you can reach out to the problem solving team.

Other Reminders

- Bingo Night is **February 7th** at Walnut Creek. Be on the lookout for a flyer being sent home soon to your student for more information.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jessica Maurer, seconded by Scott Nolan. All those present approved, zero rejected and zero abstained.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.