

CMS PTO Meeting

Friday, November 17, 2017

Meeting Notes

Call to Order - 12:05 pm

Board Members in Attendance:

Vice President – Katie Cole, Treasurer – Kathleen Cooper, Secretary – Leslie Fuller, Volunteer Coordinator – Karin Sissel, Fundraising Chair – Amy Strezo

CMS and District Staff in Attendance:

Principal – Nate Swenson, Associate Principal – Rich Larson, Math Dept. – Marcus Moten and Lauren Scherer, District Superintendent – Dr. Josh Swanson

Dr. Swanson Presentation

The year is off to a great start in all buildings.

Results of a survey about what parents think about EP schools: Quality Teacher Performance 99%, Overall Quality Education 98%; Good Job Involving Parents 95%, Trust EP To Do What's Right for Kids 96%, Quality Communication 95% and Satisfied With Decision Making Process 92%. These scores are a result of the district being mission driven and are a big improvement from parents' opinions of the district five years ago.

In line with the mission, staff talks a lot about inspiring students. The strategic plan includes personalized learning (learning is purposeful, student gaps are identified and addressed, pull in student voice), addressing achievement disparities, employee empowerment (there is a gap elimination plan that includes employee empowerment), digital resources, and measurement.

Designing Pathways Update – This started as a space study and then district stepped back to ask what is overall academic vision. Recommendations made by the former Superintendent May 16 included moving the preschool to the elementary schools and the 6th grade to CMS, implementing online learning and capstone projects (both in planning/implementation stages at the high school), expanding personalized learning and transforming existing spaces to better support personalized learning (both being done to some degree throughout the district). The next step is to ask the overall community if the proposed grade configurations are supported. If approved by the community, it would mean a \$36-48 property tax impact for homeowners. Most of the money is needed for changes at CMS, and the rest is for additional bussing and changes to the elementary schools to accommodate preschoolers. If put on a fast track, 6th graders would be at CMS in 2020.

Parent question regarding the recent article in EP News about the district losing students – Dr. Swanson said that some of the loss stems from Eagle Ridge moving to a new facility, doubling their capacity and going from 280 to 600 students. At CMS, 49 6th graders moved out of the country or the district and the school gained 40 students at the same time. The real loss may stem from people not choosing EP schools before their children start kindergarten. More study is needed to understand causes and solutions.

Marcus Moten and Lauren Sherer Presentation on Bit Ideas Math Curriculum

The new curriculum approaches the teaching process differently but the kids don't know they're learning math in a new way. For example, instead of teaching processes and procedures and then giving students word problems to solve, the students are given a problem first, which they then discuss in small groups and then as a class to. This allows for an in depth look at the hows and whys of math instead of students following a list of steps without really knowing the hows and whys behind the related math. The teaching methods used in K-6 support the Big Ideas curriculum and the high school is moving in this direction, too. As part of the presentation, parents were given some problems to discuss in small groups and then as a whole group so they could see this process in action.

Board Updates

The fundraiser was a success. Total sales went from about \$35K last year to about \$30K this year. We'll keep 60% of total sales for a net of about \$18K.

So far the approved grant expenses include \$250 to fix the popcorn machine which is used extensively throughout the school, \$2902 for the 8th grade English Dept. to create more natural reading spaces, and \$78 for the 7th grade Green Math Dept. for a camera and stand. PTO also purchased staff t-shirts at the beginning of the year. We are about half way through the \$10K budget for grants.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:15 pm.

Notes submitted by Leslie Fuller, CMS PTO Secretary