

Canon-McMillan School District Parent Council

Meeting Minutes – February 18, 2011

The February meeting of the 2010/2011 Parent Council was called to order at 9:31am on Friday, 02/18/11 at South Central Elementary School by Amy Smith – Parent Council Vice President. Jan Lawrence – Parent Council President was not in attendance. There were 34 people in attendance.

Amy Smith (Vice President) thanked South Central for hosting and the 4th grade student volunteers were introduced.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January meeting were unanimously approved as distributed by Cathy Kohlmeyer and seconded by Sue Harcuse.

Featured Speakers:

Dr. Taranto (Canonsburg Middle School) and Mr. Abbondanza (NSIS) – Internet Safety

- Gave presentation on Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship 101. Handout booklet was given out. Discussed how technology is used in the schools.
- Question-Concerning percentage of students that do not have access to computers at home. Answer – There is a very small percentage and provisions are made for students to complete work in school computer labs if needed.
- Question-Regarding appropriate websites to use for school research. Answer – Websites are listed on each school library link.

Reports:

Dr. Helen McCracken (Superintendent)-

- Discussion around Central Office about if you give a marginal teacher technology then you will get a marginal teacher with technology. But if you give a great teacher technology you get a great teacher with technology. In the hiring process and observation of teachers, the goal is to put the best human being possible in front of your child.
- Regarding embracing internet technology in school, Dr. McCracken is very conservative and will go slowly. Her answer is not, “no” but her answer will be, “not yet”.
- Dr. McCracken spoke about the newspaper article regarding the Canonsburg Middle School. The information in the newspaper was false. The rules were reviewed and appropriately followed by the middle school administration.
- Blue Sheet Question – Regarding can a Parent Organization hold a Pledge Drive as a fundraiser. Answer- Yes as long as the proper procedures are followed per the Parent Council fundraising guidelines.
- Question-Concerning tax increases and the preliminary planning of the Parent Organization budgets. Answer-The worst case scenario is that the district may be asked to build their budget as if the numbers were from the 2006/2007 year. Joe Zupancic (School Board Member) indicated that he was the only Board member to

attend the publicly scheduled budget discussion meeting. There are one billion dollars less available which translates to a \$300,000,000 cut in state monies. Therefore all school districts will face budget cuts.

- Question-Regarding the ending balances left in the Parent Organization accounts. Answer-The goal is to spend the monies for the students currently in the school. The students that raised the fundraising monies should benefit.

Mrs. Grace Lani (Director of Curriculum and Instruction)-

- Discussed the new layout and design of the district website. It is all menu-driven. The tech team is in the process of shifting all the schools over to the new design.

School Board Representatives-Nothing more to add.

School Reports:

Mrs. Tomicek (South Central) –

- Thanked the PTA for their help and support.
- The PTA is shifting from entire school programs to individual grade level appropriate programs. The PTA is working with the teachers.
- Battle of the Books is in process.
- The 2nd grade hosted a Super Bowl Tailgate canned food drive.
- Regarding the Kindergarten Registration, they are working with Early Intervention in identifying children.

Mr. Theodore (Muse and Hills-Hendersonville) –

- Pet supplies were collected for the Humane Society.
- Students are working on a Presidential project.
- Wellness days continue.
- Talent show rehearsals are underway.
- 4th grade Battle of the Books continues.

Dr. Taranto (Canonsburg Middle School) –

- On March 6th, the Middle School received the Middle Schools to Watch award. They are 1 in 21 schools in the state and 1 in 250 schools in the country to be recognized.
- Business leaders from Washington County visited to see what kind of technology is being used in the classrooms.
- There is a tremendous amount of time put into standardized testing.

High School –

- No one present because they are hosting the County Band and Chorus program.
- Question-Regarding update on hiring the Assistant Principal. Answer-The majority of the Board voted, NO. The position will not be filled until at least next year.

Mr. Abbondanza (North Strabane Intermediate) –

- Participated in the Sarris Public Library fundraiser. On February 25th, NSIS will be presented with an honor.

- Benchmark testing going on.

Mr. Chambers (Cecil Intermediate)–

- Mr. Chambers is out of state at a conference.

Mr. Kleinhans (First Street and Cecil Elementaries) –

- Spirit Week taking place.
- There is a parent day to participate in PSSA prep lessons.
- Book Fair and Battle of the Books program taking place.
- At First Street Elementary, they received a Title 1 Distinguished Student Award. They are 1 of 3 schools in the state picked to have the selected student present at the annual Pennsylvania Association-Federal Programs Coordinators (PAFPC) conference at Seven Springs.

Mrs. Unitas (Borland Manor and Wylandville) –

- Battle of the Books continue and Read Across America to take place.
- At Borland Manor, a parent who works for Gateway to the Arts, donated money to the PFO in effort to bring in a local dance company.
- The 3rd grade participated in an online webcast with the NASA astronauts.

Mr. Daniels (Assistant to the Superintendent) –

- Passed out flyer for the Special Families Network. This is an opportunity for parents to come together and network and get information concerning their special needs students.

Old Business

- The Parent Council directory was passed out. Amy Smith encouraged all to review and give any updated information.

PTA News

- Natalie Popielarczyk- President of South Central PTA gave updates.
- At NSIS, Jim Jones presented an excellent basketball program that talked about character education.

New Business

- None

Adjournment – Sue Harouse and Marie Trossmann motioned meeting adjourned at 11:11am

The next general meeting will be held on March 11, 2011 at 9:30am at Muse Elementary

Minutes submitted by: Maureen Corwin