

Minutes from the Parent Forum  
Thursday, February 25, 2010

**Communication:**

1. Parents felt very positively about Alert Now – A question was asked about what number is called: For most messages the primary number is called – the primary number is the first number listed on the information form filled out by students at the beginning of the school year. For critical emergencies ALL phone numbers listed are called.

Suggestion – Could Text Messages be sent? *This will be looked into – there would be additional cost*

2. Questions:

Can newsletters be sent electronically? *Great suggestion – will be explored*

The High School newsletter was received after one of the meetings advertised in it – *We must be careful of the timeliness of the newsletters and the information in them – district needs to be mindful of due dates*

3. Should Pinnacle (online grading and report system) be pursued for K-5 grades?

Most parents said Yes to this.

4. Concerns and Issues about MS/HS Pinnacle:

Parents would like more consistency among teachers with the timeliness and methods of putting grades into Pinnacle: parents would like teachers to enter when tests and quizzes are going to occur so that parents have a heads up (for instance, if there is a test on Friday, if teachers could put that assignment into Pinnacle on Monday then parents would know about the test and could remind their students about the test).

Parents would like a “recommended window of time” for grades to be entered into Pinnacle. Grades are sometimes not reported until weeks after the assignment was due. – *Principals are working on this issue with teachers*

A parent asked if there was any way to track if students are more diligent at turning in assignments because of Pinnacle – *Teachers need to be surveyed on this to see if they have noticed any difference over the past few years*

Parent asked about changing the Password of Pinnacle – there is a “Change password option” or if parents have continual problems they should contact Gary Bush, Technology Coordinator

5. Emails

Parents really like being able to email teachers. Some parents have emailed teachers and have NOT been answered – *Principals will be made aware of this – there needs to be building level discussions about expectations for checking emails*

6. Teacher Blogs would be appreciated – if teachers would blog what is coming up in their classrooms that would be helpful to parents

7. Morning Announcements

HS announcements are posted every day

Parents would like MS announcements posted EVERY DAY

Generally parents would like the website to be up-to-date – there are some pages with inaccurate information – *Will discuss with the responsible parties to check the website*

8. Would it be possible for teachers to post course outline and expectations online? *Will discuss this with building principals*

9. There needs to be a better transition between 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade in terms of communication with parents concerning tests, expectations etc because in the elementary grades parents are used to communication coming via the assignment book and then at the middle school it is totally different!!

## Curriculum

1. A parent praised the EXCELLENT, TOP NOTCH foreign language department at the HS – both French and Spanish!!!

2. *Parents would like to see foreign language offered much earlier – administration will take this into consideration in future planning*

3. Question was asked about French 3/4 and Spanish 3/4 - *is the curriculum repeated or different? Mrs. Williams will check with teachers*

4. Is it possible to offer Mandarin?

5. Parent stated that a college representative told her that the dual credit courses would NOT be accepted for college credit – *A parent who works at The University of Akron responded to this that from the college level it takes time to do the paper work and get the approval in line with the Dual Credit “TAG” Courses – TAG stands for Transfer Assurance Guide – this is a listing of courses that are accepted at state colleges/universities in Ohio. Dual Credit courses are on this TAG list so that they WILL be accepted at area colleges and universities. Dual Credit is still so new that it will take some time to have everyone on the same page.*

6. Parents encouraged the district to pursue as many opportunities as possible for students to get college credit while in high school!

7. Parents would like a Dual Credit English class – *So would we!*

8. If we are to prepare our students for future, unknown careers, it was suggested that a course like “Entrepreneurship” in which the ability to begin new businesses would be a good choice to teach our students

9. Lack of math textbooks at the elementary level is STILL a problem – textbooks are important!

10. Financial Literacy is very important for ALL students – *this curriculum is required for all students beginning with the upcoming freshmen class. Financial Literacy is taught in both our Economics class and in the area of Family and Consumer Science as an entire course*

11. A parent wondered if there is a specific curriculum for kindergarten and first grade because his perception was it was not very rigorous – *there is actually a very rigorous curriculum for both*

- kindergarten and first grade and our classes are absolutely aligned to that curriculum; perhaps math is weaker than reading/language arts
12. Question – Is there ACT prep for students? Teachers are receiving the College Readiness Standards that are now being required by the state of Ohio and will be asked to align their classes to these standards. We are also receiving from Stark State a specific online resource to prepare students for the ACT – Mr. Murphy at the HS will provide information about this and students will be informed.
  13. Can students take the PSAT as sophomores? Yes - Counselors have to order the PSAT tests in the spring before the fall in which it is taken; counselors will order extra tests this Spring so that there will be tests for sophomores who want to take this test
  14. Parent asked how we compare to other districts in terms of Technology? This is difficult to measure – but this year we spent MUCH more on Technology due to the goals of the Strategic Plan
  15. Is the work for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Accelerated Science class mandated and with consequences if it is not done? Mrs. Williams will check with the teacher

### **Future Suggestions:**

1. Parent Forums should be held in different buildings each time
2. Forums should be separated by the grades – in other words a forum for elementary parents and one for MS/HS parents
3. Another forum should be held this year

*Many thanks to all the parents who attended this Parent Forum and offered their opinions and suggestions! If you have further concerns, feel free to contact:*

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