

**Minutes**  
Parents' Representative Council Meeting  
Friday, November 20, 2015  
Central Office Hammonasset Room  
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

**Facilitators:** Beth Skudder & Maureen Lewis, Co-Chairs

**Attendees:** Beth Skudder, Co-Chair, Maureen Lewis, Co-Chair, Katy Wallace (DHHS), Jen Thompson (Polson), Carolyn O'Connell (Brown), Paula Steere (Polson), Tina Phelan (Jeffrey), Keiler Snow (Brown), Linda Paine (Island), Carol Ahlijanian (Ryerson), Claudia Dunsmore (DHHS), Diane Infantine-Vyce (Ryerson), Samantha Pullaro (Island), Katie Bonito (Island)

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**Welcome**

Maureen Lewis called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

**1. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Scarice was unable to attend the November meeting.

**2. Approval of minutes**

**Motion to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2015 meeting with changes noted by Beth Skudder, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Maureen Lewis. Approved. Unanimous.**

**3. PRC Business**

Maureen Lewis reviewed the candidates' forum expenses and asked that the "Vote" signs be collected and stored at each school. The next public forum will be held on Tuesday, December 8 at Ryerson Elementary School. Beth Skudder encouraged attendance. Beth also discussed the Edible Arrangements fundraiser and referenced her email on that subject.

**4. Guest Speakers**

a. Dana Hilmer, Student Stress Management Task Force Coordinator. Ms. Hilmer spoke to the Race To Nowhere movie shown in Madison on two occasions to help raise awareness regarding student stress. As a result of that, a stress management taskforce began which identified areas where students are stressed. Stress factors for students in Madison include: homework, sports, overscheduling, applying to colleges. The following key areas were identified:

- Educating parents, kids, educators about stress
- Coping techniques (puppies brought in this week)
- Policy changes (homework policy a first step)
- Later start times
- No break from sports during vacations

Ms. Hilmer provided handouts and asked for volunteers. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2015 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Madison Youth & Family.

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- b. Chris McSweeney, Fresh Air Fund Volunteer Host Family Coordinator. Ms. McSweeney provided background information regarding the Fresh Air Fund. The organization, based out of New York City, places inner city kids (ages 6-12) in Madison for one week in the summer. Two weeks are specified for placement in Madison – usually July 4<sup>th</sup> week and the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August. Kids arrive in Madison by bus from the Port Authority. Alternate dates are available, but pick up would need to be arranged.
- c. Keiler Snow, Madison A Better Chance Host Parent and Board Member. The ABC program is a national program that provides opportunities to children from disadvantaged social and academic backgrounds. Kids are screened as applications are received and extensive interviews are conducted. Host families typically have a child who attends Daniel Hand. The program is a residential program; 6 boys (2 seniors, 2 juniors, 1 sophomore, 1 freshman this year) live in the Roby House on Durham Road for 4 years, with a monthly weekend visit with their Madison host family. The program is 45% funded through the Act II Thrift Shop, the remainder of which is funded through private donations. There is no federal, state, or town funding.

ABC will be presenting its holiday concert on Sunday, December 6 at 5:30 at the Congregational Church after the tree lighting ceremony on the Madison Town Green. Encore, Voices and Chorale will be performing, along with the organist who is from DHHS.

## 5. Subcommittee Reports

- a. **Box Tops** (Carolyn O’Connell) – first submission on November 3, 2015; email sent beforehand.
- b. **Custodian** (Carolyn O’Connell) – nothing to report.
- c. **Art Show** – nothing to report.
- d. **Transportation Council** (Katy Wallace) – Met on October 22<sup>nd</sup>; very few attendees. A discussion ensued regarding the Brown student who had an allergic reaction after eating food from home while on the bus. Magda and Art Sickle stated protocol was followed. Beth Skudder provided feedback, reiterating food was brought from home, which the child had eaten before. Beth stated a more appropriate emergency response is needed.
- e. **Food Services Council** (Michele Menard) – will be attending next week’s meeting.
- f. **M.A.D.E.** (Jen Thompson) – sent optional survey by eNotify and letter to Hand students to promote stress management.
- g. **Madison Youth & Family Services** (Paula Steere) – Dave Melillo retiring; Scott Cochran taking his place. In the future, a PRC representative will attend the monthly MY&FS meetings. Marj Adler, who is overseeing a tweens program, has reached out to Brown in an attempt to put something together for January. Marj is also retiring, in January.
- h. **Political Action** (Tina Phelan) – nothing to report.

## 6. Roundtable

### DHHS

Homecoming dance last weekend – no issues. Drama group at Hand performing MASH. Tickets can be bought at the high school office and R. J. Julia. DHHS offered \$5,000 by PTO, TBD re how it will

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be spent, TJ and PTO will confirm. Low turnout at last month's PTO meeting – more administrators than parents. Next meeting – December 1; Executive Board meeting with TJ on Monday.

### **Polson**

Twenty seven people attended the first general PTO meeting, which was held on October 26. Grade coordinators of each department were available for questions/answers. Homework and books were the topics of conversation. Veterans Day celebrated on 11/11 – great turnout.

### **Brown**

Election Day bake sale raised \$1,400, and an additional \$920 in donations was collected. Movie night has been moved from November to January and March.

### **Island Avenue**

Pumpkin Fair held on October 24; movie night last Friday. Junior Achievement met November 18.

### **Ryerson**

Halloween celebrated; no parade but students were allowed to dress up. Coffee hour held to welcome 7 new families. Cultural arts on November 10 performed Gulliver's Travels. Veterans Day celebrated on November 9. Kids Stuff book fundraiser just went out last week. Cost is \$25 of which we keep ½.

### **Jeffrey**

Veterans Day celebrated on November 10. Book fair coming up; theme is the Monsters. All grade leaders will be making monsters together and decorating the hallways. First round of Cool-ology has ended. Justin Maz came on October 23<sup>rd</sup>; \$1,000 was raised. Movie night will be scheduled as a family event.

### **TCLC**

No report.

## **Things To Share**

- DRA Public Forum
- ABC Concert, and ABC program information
- Stress Management committee and meeting
- Fresh Air Fund program information
- Contact Linda Paine at Island for more information about Junior Achievement if interested.

**Motion to adjourn by Beth Skudder, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Maureen Lewis, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.**

BS/ML/wb

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