



SHAKER HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOLS

Shaker Heights, Ohio

PTO Council Meeting Notes

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Goal 1: The Shaker Experience

IB/MYP Academy and District Health Fair

On November 11th, I attended the IB/MYP academy and district health fair at Shaker Heights Middle School. Our IB coordinators collaborated with the Director of Professional Learning, Dr. Erin Herbruck, to establish the IB/MYP academy. Shaker teachers facilitated the learning sessions and provided professional learning opportunities for their colleagues using best practices in Shaker classrooms. The Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, Steve Wilkins, collaborated with Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. to provide a health fair for all Shaker employees. We had over 350 employees in attendance and provided services ranging from flu shots to healthy food samples.

Early Childhood Expo

Shaker Heights families with children ages 0-5 years are invited to attend “Growing Minds, Growing Bodies, an Early Childhood Expo” presented by the Shaker Heights City School District on Saturday, January 10, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Onaway Elementary School.

The Expo will include activities for youngsters, including story time, crafts, music, and a healthy snack. Local child development experts will lead breakout sessions on four topics: positive parenting, the importance of play, preparing children with special needs, and developing a sense of independence.

Breakout sessions will be offered from 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. and from 11 - 11:30 a.m. Parents will be able to choose from two of the four topics offered. Child care will be provided upon request. Online registration is available.

Calendar Changes

The Calendar Committee developed calendars for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. The committee was composed of parent representatives, SHTA and OAPSE representatives, and administrators. We discussed several different scenarios for the calendar. We considered feedback from parents, students and staff. Input from teachers in regard to the structure of our Professional Learning Days was also considered in the creation of the calendars. Efforts were made to maintain full, five-day weeks of school. To assist families with students at multiple grade levels, the proposed calendars consolidate K-6 and 7-12 professional, clerical, and conference days where possible.

Professional Learning Days were increased in order to decrease the need for teachers to attend Professional Learning during the school day causing our students to be taught by substitute teachers. Conversation occurred about a desire to decrease days at the end of the year as well as the need for a District structure, which provides parents the opportunity to have parent conferences in the evenings. The committee, which included two representatives from SHTA, realized the parent conference schedule was not a decision it could make. While we had a lot of discussion about testing, we did not make any major changes to the calendar based solely on testing.

A few major points:

- Professional Learning Days were increased.
- Teachers begin work five days before students.
- Student attendance patterns have been changed to provide greater consistency for parents. Attendance and non-attendance days for only elementary or secondary have been eliminated.
- All students, including entering kindergartners, start school on the same day, a Monday.
- Time for orientation for all new students and those changing levels will occur before school starts on a day when staff is present.
- Students have a week off for Thanksgiving.
- Students have at least one week for Spring Recess
- Winter Break remains as it has in the past.

Global Citizen Scholarship

I extended an invitation for juniors on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee to apply for the Global Citizen Scholarship offered by EF Tours. The scholarship will provide an opportunity to travel abroad with EF Tours to participate in the Global Student Leaders Conference in Paris, London, and Davos, Switzerland. Six students submitted their video interviews to the EF Tours organization. The EF Tours selection committee will select one student to receive the scholarship for travel in June 2015.

Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee

We had over 60 students apply for the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee. The current members of the Committee interviewed 20 students for 12 slots on the committee. The following students were selected to be a part of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee:

Ose Arheghan
Kyle Boyle
Nya Hardaway
Brian Johnson
Mica Jordan
Layla Joseph

Rakhsha Khatri
Mikala Mahoney
Denzel Merritt
David Peck
Ella Shlonsky
Andrew Schultheiss

Goal 2: Continuous Improvement

OSBA Capital Conference

I attended the Capital Conference, along with board members, the Treasurer, and the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations. At the conference, I attended the following professional learning opportunities: Modernizing Education for Students, STEM education, a finance presentation, which included our Treasurer and a board member, and the OSBA Black Caucus.

Goal 4: Human Resources and Facilities

US Department of Education Advisory Opportunity

I was extended an invitation from the US Department of Education to participate in a think tank group for minority educational leaders from across the nation. The purpose of this convening is to encourage organizations to attract, place, develop, retain, and advance educational leaders of color, who are committed to closing the achievement gaps for K-12 students, for senior level positions. The meeting will take place January 29-30 in Washington, DC.

Meeting with Mayor Leiken

On November 17th, I met with Mayor Leiken to discuss the Facilities Planning Process that is underway. The draft of the Facilities Planning Process that was presented to the Board of Education in October 2014 was also shared with the Mayor at the meeting.

Goal 5: Communications

University of Virginia and Cleveland State University – Guest Speaker

I had the honor to be a guest lecturer for graduate classes at the University of Virginia (UVA) and Cleveland State University (CSU). Both speaking engagements were focused on our work related to narrowing the achievement gap with African American and White students in Shaker Heights City Schools. Specifically, we discussed the research findings from Dr. Ron Ferguson with Harvard University and the late Dr. John Ogbu, University of California – Berkeley, and its impact on education in Shaker Heights City Schools.

State of the Schools

Please join us on February 10 at 6pm in the high school auditorium for our annual State of the Schools Address. We will share our progress with attaining the six goals in our strategic plan and discuss our next steps. It will be an honor to have you in attendance.

Family Wellness Workshop

The Family Wellness Workshop on January 8th at Shaker Heights High School is the second event in the Family Engagement Series, a collaboration between the Shaker Heights City School District and PTO Council.

A keynote address at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by your choice from among three interactive breakout sessions. Topics include healthy eating, sleep issues, and eating disorders. Child care will be available for K-4 aged children; registration will be required. Watch for details in PTO bulletins and on the District website.

The Family Engagement Series is an outgrowth of the Innovative Center for Personalized Learning and Family Engagement (The IC), which opened in August at the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Community Building.

Goal 6: Finance

Finance and Audit Committee

I attended the Finance and Audit Committee meeting to engage in an overview of the software, Tyler Munis. The software is a fully integrated web-based system, which streamlines approvals, notifications, everyday tasks and reports enhancements and self-service options for employees. Also, the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, Steve Wilkins, provided our monthly district savings report on my behalf to the Finance and Audit Committee.

Shaker Foundation

I met with the Shaker Foundation's Board of Trustees President, Steve Goldfarb, to discuss the possibility of a business council with the Shaker Foundation to increase efforts for non-tax revenue to support strategic plan initiatives. I also met with the Executive Director of the Shaker Foundation, Christine Auginas, to discuss the proposed organizational structure for the business council component.