

District 181 PTO President Meeting Minutes

Provided by Bridget McGuiggan, Director of Communications

September 5, 2017 • Location: Administration Center (Hosted by HMS PTO)

Call to Order

9:05am

Introductions

PTO Presidents, HMS PTO Executive Board, HMS Principal Ruben Peña, D181 Foundation Executive Director Meg Cooper, Board of Education PTO Liaison Jennifer Burns, Superintendent Dr. Don White, and Director of Communications Bridget McGuiggan; Special Guests: Chinni Mancilla of Language Labs and HMS Project Team Members (Bill Truty, Brian Kronewitter, Kerry Leonard)

Minutes (May 30, 2017)

Approved as presented.

Language Labs

Chinni Mancilla of Language Labs discussed the world language classes that Language Labs provides during lunch, before school, and after school within D181. She said the program has been in D181 schools for over 30 years. She shared a copy of their schedule, noting that most students take Spanish; Mandarin and French are also available. Per a question about what other languages might be of interest, it was noted that German is offered at Hinsdale Central High School. The PTO Presidents were asked to provide contact information for their newsletters and were encouraged to help spread the word about the Language Labs offerings.

HMS Project Update

HMS Construction Owner's Representative Kerry Leonard, Architect Brian Kronewitter, and Construction Manager rep. Bill Truty provided an update on the HMS construction project. Mr. Truty commented on the team's key actions following the end of litigation, noting that the shovels officially went into the ground once enabling work was largely complete, which was essentially the day of the groundbreaking ceremony (August 14, 2017). He shared a listing of upcoming activities and milestone dates. Per a question, he confirmed it is not necessarily typical to do exterior work in the winter but they have done so before. Bulley & Andrews uses heaters and tarps/covers to manage cold temperatures. He also confirmed the schedule 4B (which has students starting in the new building after winter break in 2018-19) does include some flexibility should there be weather concerns or unforeseen delays. He also noted that communication with Mr. Peña and the HMS staff has been very good.

Mr. Kronewitter then highlighted exterior and interior features of the building. They confirmed that Washington Field would be restored to a grass field as soon as the temporary parking lot was no longer needed (once the parking deck is complete). Mr. Truty said the tradesmen are parking off site and being bused to HMS. A PTO President commented that traffic flow around HMS was better than she had expected.

Mr. Truty shared that a webcam is being positioned on the site and will be linked from the HMS Construction page of the D181 website so the community see the progress in action. Mr. Kronewitter described furniture displays/testing happening in three classrooms at HMS. Some PTO Presidents commented on their initial impressions of the furniture. It was noted that an image gallery is on the D181 website, and there is an album with pictures of the new furniture.

The HMS PTO Presidents noted that a more detailed presentation and Q&A would be taking place as part of their September 12, 2017 school PTO meeting. Future HMS families were invited to attend. Mr. Truty also noted that all community members are invited to attend the HMS Neighbor meetings being held once per month at their jobsite trailer. Dates through June 2018 are on the District website.

District Report

- Superintendent Dr. Don White shared that the District is now in Year 2 of Strategic Plan implementation. A report on Year 1 progress was made available to the Board as part of the August 28, 2017 Board meeting. Dr. White said that there have been successes, and there is more work to do.
- He commented on recent staff turnover within the District's Department of Learning but said that curriculum and assessment work is moving forward. He also described the systems in place to support that work, including Subject Area Committees (SACs), the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Advisory Council (CIACC), and the Board's Academic Success Committee (ASC). Director of Communications Bridget McGuiggan pointed out the Board-approved assessment schedule on the D181 website.
- Dr. White noted that Skyward implementation is moving forward. Canvas is as well, but on a multi-year timetable. Per a question, Dr. White and Mrs. McGuiggan provided clarifying information on the purpose of Canvas. PTO Presidents in attendance commented that more communication is needed at the middle school level around how parents can see their child's assignments (and whether any are missing). It was also noted that the Acceptable Use Agreement form was very easy to do from a computer but problematic from a mobile view. A question was asked about a Skyward app; the administration said they would follow-up.
- Dr. White noted that Mohsin Dada is the District's new CFO, and the 2017-18 budget would be presented for Board approval at the September 25, 2017 Business meeting.
- Dr. White noted that the Bond Referendum Review and Accountability Committee (formed as part of the litigation settlement) had met earlier in the summer and would have a next meeting prior to the September 11, 2017 Business meeting. He said a report was being developed as part of that work.
- Mrs. McGuiggan described the role of Publicity Reps, who are parent volunteers in each school (1-2 per building). She encouraged PTO Presidents to work with their PR Rep throughout the year in sharing upcoming event information that can be passed onto media and her office.
- Mrs. McGuiggan provided an update on the District's Safety & Crisis Committee work, including creation of a multi-year strategic plan specifically for safety improvements. She then highlighted three of the major improvements being completed in 2017-18: installation of double buzz systems in main offices, implementation of a visitor/volunteer check-in and check-out system, and installation of new camera-intercom-speakers at main entrances. She noted that PTO Presidents would be asked to review communication related to the visitor system before it is shared with all families.
- A PTO President asked for clarifying information about the open enrollment process and noted that at Madison, they have seen enrollment increases which have resulted in some concerns, including space and class sizes. Dr. White commented on the process, noting that each family has a unique story on the reason for the request. Ms. Burns suggested that the topic needs further review and added that staffing implications are also a concern.

Upcoming Meetings Hosted by District 86

Mrs. McGuiggan shared information on meetings being hosted by High School District 86 around facility and enrollment challenges. The meetings are taking place September 6 and September 7; they are welcoming community input. She also noted that the October PTO President meeting for D181 would include a presentation by D86 Superintendent Dr. Bruce Law.

Foundation-PTO-Board-Admin Partnership

Mrs. McGuiggan commented on work that has been ongoing since approximately April 2017 around strengthening and improving the District's partnerships with the D181 Foundation and PTOs. She highlighted information in a Board Report and draft supplemental report that was provided to the Board for their August 28, 2017 meeting (and forwarded to PTO Presidents). She noted that a meeting of representatives from each of the groups had taken place over the summer and thanked the PTO Presidents who attended that meeting. She also shared information on (1) the administrative recommendation for addressing topics around elementary STEAM Labs, (2) an initial list of other major initiatives that could be considered for future implementation, (3) an initial list of allowable and not-allowed purchases by the PTO or

Foundation, (4), a tentative framework for the process of bringing new initiatives forward, and (5) a tentative timeline for next steps in 2017-18. She highlighted the role of PTOs in that timeline, including plans to reconvene the representatives for a second meeting, and planning work to take place in roughly February - April 2018 around considerations for major initiatives or funding ideas for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

D181 Foundation Executive Director Meg Cooper described the Foundation's criteria for approving teacher grants, noting that such requests are sometimes denied by the Foundation and in some cases, the submitting staff member is encouraged to talk with the PTO about the request instead. She encouraged the PTOs to have students apply for KIDS Grants when planning service-oriented projects, as they can earn up to \$150 to support their efforts.

Other

- PTO Presidents were asked to send Ms. McGuigan updates to the Comparison Chart for 2017-18.
- Mrs. McGuigan will be forwarding information on an after-school programming opportunity that she received, and PTOs may respond as they wish.

Adjourn

10:45am