

**Parents' Representative Council Meeting**  
**Friday, December 18, 2015**  
**12:00 – 1:30 PM**  
**Central Office – Hammonasset Room**

**Purpose**

The general purpose of the Parents' Representative Council (PRC) is to advise the Superintendent regarding parental concerns about the schools, to provide a forum for parent liaisons from each school to have a voice in decision making and problem solving and to foster a spirit of cooperative community and parental involvement in the promotion of the Madison Public Schools.

**PRC Meeting Dates**

September 18	January 15	May 20
October 16	February 19	June 3
November 20	March 18	
December 18	April 22	

**AGENDA**

**Attendees**

**PRC Co-Chairs**

**DHHS**

**Polson**

**Brown**

**Island Ave**

**Jeffrey**

**Ryerson**

**TCLC**

**Others:**

✓ Maureen Lewis

✓ Katy Wallace

✓ Paula Steere

✓ Keiler Snow

\_\_\_ Sarah Hansen

✓ Tina Phelan

✓ Carol Ahlijanian

✓ Melissa Gulish

✓ Beth Skudder

\_\_\_ Claudia Dunsmore

\_\_\_ Jen Thompson

\_\_\_ Carolyn O'Connell

✓ Linda Paine      \_\_\_ Katie Bonito

✓ Nicole Wiles

\_\_\_ Diane Infantine-Vyce

✓ Christine Piteo

**Meeting Notes**

Meeting was called to order at 12:05 by Beth.

**1) Superintendent's Report**

- School Utilization Study is ongoing, will pause for school/town budget season and resume in Spring; hope to have a decision by June 2016. Geography is the biggest challenge, traffic is part of the conversation.
  - o Met with Boards of Selectmen and Finance this week
  - o Three models are being focused on –
    - 6 schools = current configuration
    - 5 schools = close either Island or Ryerson
    - 4 schools = New building would be a true early childhood center, grades K-2. Security would be much better. Expected costs are less than renovating/upgrading two or three of the current elementary schools. Possible site in Jeffrey area. Efficient to have staff all on one campus (teachers, custodians, Student Resource Officer) and cross-campus student activities are possible.

- Exploring moving Polson start time to match Brown time. Currently Polson is 7:30am bell/kids at bus stops at 6:30am; Brown is 8:05am bell. Will go to BOE in January. (Edited with this update: BOE is studying as many as 25+ questions around the proposed change in bell times, and the BOE Planning Committee will report back to BOE in March with the results of their findings.)
  - o Advantages:
    - good for kids
    - would help traffic with a 30-40% reduction in staff/parent traffic on Green Hill during the morning congestion.
    - No additional bus would be needed/no transportation cost associated with the change
  - o Challenges
    - DHHS uses Polson gyms and locker rooms/impacts sports.
- School Calendar – BOE will vote on 2016 – 2017 School Calendar which includes the first day of school will be after Labor Day 2016. (Edited with this update: BOE approved this calendar on 1/5/16.)
- 2016 – 2017 School Budget – Tom presents the budget to BOE on 1/5/16, and in more detail at 1/7/16 budget workshop.
  - o \$1.5 million shortfall = 2.5% budget increase with no actual increased expenditures, just to cover increased healthcare and benefit costs. (School and town budgets are facing the same issue.)
  - o There will be layoffs because of decreasing enrollment
  - o Tom asks for PRC support at BOE and town meetings (BOS and BOF) in support of the school budget
  - o Tom will let us know a date for an evening budget presentation for all 3 elementary schools. Location TBD.
- Showing and panel discussion of movie “Most Likely to Succeed” at The Country School on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Information to follow via e-notify.  
<http://www.thecountryschool.org/about/current-parents/most-likely-to-succeed>

2) **Review/Approve Minutes** – November minutes approved, with minor changes.

3) **PRC business** – All up to date.

#### 4) **Subcommittee Reports**

- a) **Boxtops** – Brown/Carolyn O’Connell
- b) **Custodian** – Brown/Carolyn O’Connell
- c) **Art Show** – Island/
- d) **Transportation Council**; DHHS/Katy Wallace. Meetings at 10:00am in Hammonasset Room on 10/22/15, 12/17/15, 2/25/16, 4/21/16, 5/12/16
  - Allergy issue on buses is a concern – this is being taken very seriously
  - Regarding the recent issue of a student having an allergic reaction on the bus: the bus was near Opening Hill, driver and student knew the nurse at Brown had an Epi-Pen for her, the bus beat 911 responders to Brown
  - HS kids traveling to sports want to eat on the bus. Working with Craig Semple (Athletic Director) regarding athletes having food before getting on the bus
  - Researching training bus drivers for Epi-Pen – affects contract/salary, union issues
  - Bus drivers need to watch road vs watching kids for food – little kids can’t even be seen because of the high seats.
  - Polson and Hand buses still need to practice evacuation drills
  - Question for Katy for the next meeting – what is the time threshold for notification that a bus will be late?

- e) **Food Services Council;** Ryerson/Michele Menard. Meetings at 10:00am in Hammonasset Room on 12/10/15, 2/11/16, 4/7/16, 5/19/16
  - Wellness Policy is under discussion. Because this is a district committee on a policy under review, further comment is not permitted. Committee includes a nurse, two principals., Wendy Brighindi, a PE teacher and Michelle are on the committee.
  - Parent input will be sought later in the process.
  
- f) **MADE;** Polson/Jen Thompson. Meetings at 3:30pm in Hammonasset Room on 2/3, 4/12, and 6:30pm in Senior Center Café on 6/14.
  - Jen and Karen from Polson both attended the most recent meeting of the Stress Task Force and are pleased with the participation.
  - Go to the MADE website to sign up for notifications, also lots of articles and resources
  - MADE is relevant for all ages
  - Suggestion made to separate MADE and MYFS PRC committees for next year (they were combined for this year following a suggestion to combine last year.)
  - <http://www.madeinmadison.org/>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/MADE.in.Madison/>
  
- g) **MYFS;** Mtgs: Polson/Paula Steere and Jen Thompson.
  - Paula attended, will switch with Karen
  - 1/19/16 7:00 – 8:30pm in Polson Auditorium (Snow date 1/21) Feeding the Body and Soul of Our Tweens and Teens: Body Image and Self Esteem. Presenters: Dr Springhorn, Dr Nolfo, Marybeth Golja, Holly David. Appropriate for parents of boys and girls. \*\*SEE PURPLE HANDOUT from December meeting
  - Meeting covered budget for 2016 – 2017.
  - January 2016 – new director Scott Cochran starts (previously assistant director), Marj Adler to retire; two students serve on their board.
  - MYFS serves 6-21 year olds, fees are a sliding scale. 128 cases in 2015, plus 383 short term interventions (a phone call or 1 or 2 sessions)
  - Polson Peer Helpers – trained to help with friendships, substance abuse, stress and coping, hoping for budget increase so more kids can get involved
  - DHHS students appreciated yoga and puppies for stress relief during exams
  - <http://www.madisonct.org/myfs/>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/MadisonYouthandFamilyServices/>
  
- h) **Political Action:** Jeffrey/Tina Phelan/Nicole Wiles – All payments for Candidates Forum and Vote Tuesday signs have been received.

## 5) Roundtable

- a) **DHHS** – M.A.S.H. was awesome, sold many tickets. Chorusline is the Spring Musical. SAT will be free in school, no SBAC. Spirit Week included a video for Joe Barber. Honor Breakfast. Holiday door decorating, PJ Day. Winter Sports have started. International trips to Paris and Belgium were cancelled and will travel to Quebec City, Canada instead. The summer trip to Spain will travel to the MPS partner school in Costa Rica instead.
  
- b) **Polson** – Veterans' Day event, lots of food donations. Next meeting is 1/25/16 at 9am (alternating am/pm meetings) Topic: Student Stress and Coping Skills – panel including counselors and all in-building support staff, hoping it is attractive for Polson families.

- c) **Brown** – still working on digital citizenship presentation with Mike Ginsburg, likely with elementary schools, not Polson, given age appropriateness. Book Fair in February. Movie Night date TBD.
- d) **Island Ave** – Holiday Shop – kids bring \$2 to shop for family members. Book Fair in February. Annual PJ and book drive to benefit Milner Core Knowledge K-8 school in Hartford.
- e) **Jeffrey** – Book Fair scheduled during the same week as music class informances, helped increase traffic, book fair profits were up over last few years, included winter spirit wear sale as well. Grand Apizza 15% of all sales Monday – Thursday (with form) to Jeffrey PTO – a new idea, about 55 orders, about \$300, easy and great connection with community. Musical Mondays 1x/month – flute and piano, kids were more chatty this time. Encore sang to kids right before December vacation.
- f) **Ryerson** – Omni Golf Family Night – raised \$300 through 50/50 event fees – great time. Kids Stuff Coupon Books has raised \$1400 (50% of book price), 30 families still haven't returned books. Teacher holiday luncheon yesterday, lots of food. Winter Solstice assembly, toy drive, food drive. Give to Grow April event needs volunteers, trying to simplify event. Looking to try new events – spaghetti dinner family event tbd.
- g) **TCLC** – First PTO meeting is on 1/12/15. Starting a Special Ed Advocacy meeting, Child care available. Starting SEPTO (Special Ed PTO) with Liz to support parents looking for a voice and for information/resources. Will only ask parents for money to pay for speakers/presenters, will include help with writing IEPs, getting through the schools/transitioning between schools, Shoreline resources. 12% of all kids/all ages in Madison school district are in Special Ed. Families of students in Special Education classes are encouraged to sign up for the PAC-SE e-notify here:  
<http://www.madison.k12.ct.us/page.cfm?p=393>

## 6) Wrap Up/Things to do/Share with your PTO etc

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- d) Tom asks for PRC support at BOE and town meetings (BOS and BOF) in support of the school budget
- e) For your reference:  
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<https://www.facebook.com/MadisonYouthandFamilyServices/>  
<http://www.madeinmadison.org/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/MADE.in.Madison/>

**\*\* NO SOLICITATIONS!**