

**Parkland Community Advisory Council
November 20, 2008**

Co-Presidents

Nicole Mandry
Mark Hanichak

Vice President/Membership

Melissa Grube

Secretary

Lisa Adams

Attendees: Mark Hanichak, , Melissa Maggioncalda, Ann Segan, Melissa Grube, Nicole Mandry, Deb Martin, TJ Ortman

Guests: David Hein, Stephanie Hodges, Linda Perlman-McKenna, Amy Madeira, Ismail Kashkovish, Kim Pilgert, Helma Rosenthal, Greg Poremba, Rob Thornburg

Absent/Excused: Lisa Adams, Ben Gullede, Shital Rane, Bob Fager, Tony Grewe, Cheryl Smith

Student Representatives: Sarah Holko and Tyler Coulton-excused

School Board Representative: Roberta Marcus-excused

Administration: Dr. Donohue, Dr. Novey

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Nicole Mandry at 7:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Corrections to the October 16, 2008 minutes were presented by Mark Hanichak. Page 2 under the School Board Update should read:

The Budget's millage rose by .83 mill.

The sale disproved the Morning Call and dispelled the rumors circulating regarding a land developer purchasing this land.

The minutes were then approved as corrected: Motion by Deb Martin, seconded by Ann Segan.

Guidance and Student Services Report:

Mark Hanichak introduced Robert Thornburg, Director of Student Services; Helma Rosenthal, Elementary Guidance Department Head; Greg Poremba, Middle School Guidance Department Head; and Kim Pilgert, High School Guidance Department Head.

Handouts were distributed that were excerpted from the 2008-2014 Parkland School District Strategic Plan. The handouts summarized Student Services goals and objectives and the American School Counseling Standards followed at each level and addressed the three areas of Academic, Career, and Personal/Social. The department is cognizant of the fact that students can't learn unless they feel safe. They work to remove barriers that would impede the learning process.

Helma Rosenthal discussed guidance at the elementary level. The first area she discussed was Guidance Curriculum in which the department works on developing lessons and implementing those lessons into the classroom setting. The second area was Responsive Services which addresses prevention and intervention. This involves classroom meetings,

working with high risk students, consulting with nurses, administrators, etc. The third area discussed was Individual Student Planning. This area involves academic decision making, goal setting, academic transitioning, assessment, planning and consultation. Academic transitioning includes kindergarten orientation and transitioning 5th grade students to middle school. They assess whether there are emotional barriers if a student is not progressing. They review current as well as new student records and do behavior observations. The next area discussed was Systems Support which provides consent exchange information and a connection with parents through newsletters. The final area is Miscellaneous. This includes coordinating data for parents, physicians, psychologists, outside agencies and coordinating the PSSA. Elementary school students needs for guidance usually revolve around dealing with personal feelings, relationships with other students, family issues and anger management.

Greg Poremba discussed middle school guidance. He stated that middle school was unique in that the middle school counselors work with elementary students, elementary counselors and teachers in preparing students for the transition to middle school and they also work with high school administrators in transitioning students to the high school. In the Academic area, he stated that the guidance department spends a lot of time meeting the needs of special education students; they do a lot of record review particularly on new students coming into the school, helping those identified with special need issues and assisting the school psychologists in carrying out their duties. Transitioning is year-to-year in middle school as well as the elementary to middle school transition and the middle school to high school transition. Part of transitioning is the coordination of parent nights for fifth grade parents, going into every fifth grade classroom to meet with students, meeting with each high school counselor to discuss student needs, and taking eighth grade students to tour LCTI. The department also runs the open houses in September. The counselors deal with scheduling issues. They also go through every report card every marking period to identify and help students in danger of failing. They spend time with the Assistant Principal and Principal so that they are aware of students that need help. The counselors communicate with outside agencies such as the local police departments and Children & Youth. They coordinate the Student of the Month breakfasts and bulletin board, teach guidance classes and coordinate PSSA testing and make up testing. In the Career area, they utilize the Career Cruising Program. Mr. Poremba emphasized the fact that the number one thing they are there for is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the students.

Kim Pilgert stated that the high school has ten counselors which are assigned to the students alphabetically. Each counselor has about 325 students to work with. The students follow through with the same counselor for all four years that they are at the high school. Counselors meet with all freshmen by November 1. A lot of their work in the fall is working with seniors on college applications. Teen Screen is a new mental health screening program. A letter is sent to freshman parents asking if they want this testing done. In the spring there is a junior seminar where they look at where the students are at with college and career planning. Each junior meets individually with their counselor.

The Role of the Principal:

Dr. Donohue led the presentation on the role of the principal. She stated that the principal and counselor roles are very interrelated. Principals in Pennsylvania must have specific certification and must have taught before becoming principal. Most principals have a Masters+. The principal is the figurehead of the school and is viewed more as an instructional leader. The principal is out and about working with parents and students, spending time monitoring instruction, supervising staff, and creating a climate for quality instruction to occur.

The principal is accessible to people and works to remove obstacles to learning. They are liaisons between parents, students, staff and the community. Dr. Donohue stated that our principals are a well prepared, well trained group of life-long learners. They are role models for their staff and students. The principals know the kids and their families. They are not just there to discipline. They are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the students. The leadership team is made up of the administrators and the counseling staff. There is a chain of command that starts at the student/teacher level, then counselor, assistant principal and then principal. Principal is a challenging and exciting role. Dr. Donohue concluded by saying that Parkland has a top-notch, talented group of principals.

School Board Update:

Roberta Marcus was unable to attend and Mark Hanichak submitted the following report in her absence. The School Board held a student recognition night which was a wonderful event attended by both students and parents. The district is on schedule for the new elementary school to open in the fall of 2010. Dr. Novey will be resigning as Assistant Superintendent effective March 21, 2009.

Student Report:

Sarah Holko presented the student report. Parkland won all of their debates and is now 12-0. On November 21, there will be an assembly of international students who will speak about their home countries. Winter sports began on Monday, November 24.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Mark Hanichak distributed the CAC By-Laws.

Roundtable:

Dr. Donohue mentioned the test of the new phone dialing system which occurred last evening was 95% successful. Deb Martin reminded us to order from Market Day to support the post-prom party. Market Day flyers were on the table for pick up. Nicole Mandry reminded us that the next CAC meeting will be a Holiday Social and Wednesday, December 17 at the High School followed by the Orchestra/Chorale Concert.

Motion to Adjourn:

Mark Hanichak made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. with a second by Melissa Maggioncalda.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Grube
Vice President/Membership