

School Improvement Council  
Minutes  
February 11, 2009

Attendees:

Linda Weene, Principal  
Terry Stewart, Assistant Principal  
Dawn Nebrosky, PreK Parent  
Jen Golden, K Parent  
Mary Killelea, Grade 1 Parent  
Heather Dalton, Guidance Counselor  
Ellen Ahern, Placentino School Librarian  
Betsy Usherwood, Grade 2 Teacher

1. The meeting came to order at 3:50PM. Dave Gatchell and Maureen Gonsalves were absent. Dawn Nebrosky arrived after the meeting began.
2. The minutes of the January meeting were not available for review. The Council was advised that they will be sent as soon as possible, and they will be reviewed at the March Council meeting.
3. Linda updated the Council on the Budget issues that the District is facing. She advised the members that the Superintendent is committed to protecting the needs of the classroom. She reminded the members that the Superintendent's presentations on the Budget issues are available on the District website, and the website is updated on a consistent basis. Also, Erika Plunkett, a School Committee member, emails anyone interested after every School Committee Meeting. If anyone would like to be added to Erika's email list, Linda would be glad to assist. In response to a question, Linda advised the Council that the fiscal year for the Town and the Schools runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> of every cycle. The next fiscal year is from 7/1/2009 to 6/30/2010.
4. The Council began their discussion of the 2009-2010 School Improvement Plan:
  - Ellen Ahern discussed the concerns that she has heard among the library parent volunteers concerning the difficulties with "lice" this year. She shared the experience of one parent who hired a "professional" to help with this issue in her home. Ellen recommended that the Council consider including a Parent Evening with a professional who could provide feedback on this issue to parents. This would be under the Health and Well-Being Goal for next year. Linda reminded the Council that Cathy Porcello, our school nurse, is vigilant in this area. She also explained that there are protocols in the Parent/Student Handbook that refer to many Health issues. Placentino School has a "no nit" policy.

- Jen Golden questioned if we should have a Parent Evening on "bullying." Linda explained that we did this last year, but we may want to review again. Linda also advised that she meets with all the classes in small groups at the beginning of the year to discuss the issue of "bullying," and during the meeting she "role plays" with a teacher to model how the children should respond if they are the target of a bully. Linda also advised that our Open Circle Program provides a strong language component that directly teaches the children how to respond to a bully.
- Mike Benadon presented the concept of "no TV week." He explained that families would commit to turn off the TV for one week and participate in more family oriented activities. Linda explained that the Town had an "Unplugged" day a few years ago, and that seemed to go well. Some ideas for this concept were to link it to Sciencefest with ideas of things to do if there was no TV – family walk, etc. "What to do" could also be a homework assignment prior to the no TV week.
- The Council then divided the planning responsibilities into sub-committees based on the 3 major goals of next year's School Improvement Plan:
  - Health, Safety and Well-Being – Ellen Ahern, Betsy Usherwood, Michael Benadon, Jen Golden, Linda Weene, Terry Stewart
  - Communication - Michael Benadon, Dawn Nebrosky, Linda Weene, Terry Stewart
  - Curriculum - Ellen Ahern, Heather Dalton, Betsy Usherwood, Linda Weene, Terry Stewart
- Discussion around the focus of the Health sub-committee involved:
  - a. Parent presentations by Cathy Porcello focusing on Health issues
  - b. Including the "NO TV" concept during the week of Placentino Reading Night
  - c. The Safe Routes program discussed by Dave Gatchell at previous meetings
  - d. A "Walking Wednesday"
  - e. A "running club" or a "walking club" as after-school activities
- Discussion around the focus of the Communication sub-committee involved:
  - a. Institute a PreK Information Evening with a focus on the curriculum
  - b. Ideas to parents on "What to do over the summer" – packets with information on Social and Academic opportunities and "How to get Ready for next year."

5. Mary Killelea, Jen Golden, and Heather Dalton will work on the pending Critical Issue of creating a "go to" list with names, email addresses and phone numbers of youth programs and support groups. This is part of this year's School Improvement Plan.
6. Linda explained that the "Kids Care" program will begin at Placentino after the February vacation. Each classroom will have a packet that contains a visual reminder for donations to the Food Pantry and the Box Top collection. Each Monday as part of her Monday Morning Announcements, Linda will remind the children to think about the importance of those donations. Teachers will post the visual in their classrooms all week long.
7. Linda reminded the Council that "March Mail" will begin shortly after the February vacation. This project focuses on letter writing across the grades. Children buy Placentino stamps to send their "mail." The money collected is donated to the Holliston Food Pantry.
8. The meeting adjourned at 4:45PM. The next meeting is at 3:45 on March 18<sup>th</sup> in the Placentino Library.