

School Improvement Council
October 21, 2009

Attendees:

Linda Weene, Principal
Terry Stewart, Assistant Principal
Alanna Bravman, K Parent
Jen Golden, Grade 1 Parent
Michael Benadon, Grade 2 Parent
Heather Dalton, Guidance Counselor
Ellen Ahern, Placentino School Librarian
Betsy Usherwood, Grade 2 Teacher
David Gatchell, Community Representative

1. The first meeting of the 2009-2010 Placentino School Council came to order at 3:45PM.
2. Linda welcomed the new Council and advised that our Preschool Representative, Evelyn Perry would not be available until January to attend the meetings. Ms. Perry is currently teaching an evening course at Framingham State College and this conflicts with the Council meetings at this time.
3. The Council members introduced themselves to the newest member of the Council, Mrs. Alanna Bravman, the Kindergarten Representative.
4. The Council members reviewed the schedule for this year and their contact information.
5. Linda advised that there is still an opening on the Placentino Council, the Parent Representative that is not Grade Level based. There will be an election to determine that position. Mr. Will Brown and Mr. Ken Richardson have both expressed interest in that position. It is anticipated that the position will be filled for the November meeting.
6. The Council elected Mrs. Stewart as the co-chair of the Council for this year.
7. Linda explained that the "work of the Council is to create the School Improvement Plan for the 2010-2011 school year." She explained that typically in the past the Councils have continued some of the goals established the year before; however, Councils have also chosen to introduce new goals, new initiatives or critical issues that have arisen to be the focus for the next school year. Linda reviewed the 3 core goals that have been the focus of the last several Plans - Curriculum, Communication, Health, Safety and Wellness. She also explained that the Placentino Plan should reflect the goals of the District Strategic Plan. The District Plan is being updated this year, and Michael Benadon is working with the Superintendent to guide that Committee in its work.
8. Linda advised the Council that we had an excellent start of the school year at Placentino. She explained that one of the changes due to the budget cuts was that Ellen Ahern is the librarian for both the Placentino and Miller School Libraries. She stressed that Ellen has done an amazing job keeping both libraries going at the same high level of service at both buildings. Linda reminded the Council that as we all know the library is at the core of our school.

Ellen advised the Council that she is "loving" the work that she is doing at Miller. She praised the large volunteer support that both schools have and that it is due to these exceptional individuals that the change has gone smoothly.

Linda added that "Officer Dave" Gatchell had joined her in the "Safety" assemblies held the second week of school. These assemblies provide an opportunity for the children to hear the important safety messages from Linda and to see "Officer Dave" and recognize him as an important Community Helper at our school.

Several Council members agreed that this was an excellent start to the year. Their comments ranged from Jen Golden being "very impressed with the level of work in Grade One,;" Michael Benadon stating, "My girls love school, and that he wasn't doing this level of Math in Grade Two;" Betsy Usherwood sharing that "the Grade 2 students are starting writing assignments focused on the Science module of trees;" and Alana Bravmen stating that her daughter had "heard Officer Dave" and that she is "starting to read."

10. The Council then reviewed the current 2009-2010 School Improvement Plan. As the Council reviewed the Curriculum Goal and Initiatives, Ellen advised the group that one of the changes at the Miller School is the addition of an "Engineering" class. This change has led to Ellen teaching "Study Skills" as part of her new duties as the Miller School.

Linda explained that Curriculum has to be "dynamic, vigorous, and responsive to assessment and our standards. The enVision math Program that we adopted 2 years ago reflects these criteria. Linda also advised the Council that the Placentino and Miller Schools have been chosen by the Pearson Publishing Company as one of 8 sites in the United States to participate in the "research project" that they are running on their future 2011 Reading series. This research is ongoing in Grades K, 1 and 4 this year, and next year Grades 1, 2, and 5 will continue with the research. At the end of the project, if the schools decide to adopt the series, the Pearson Publishing Company will provide our schools with materials valued in excess of \$500,00.00.

As the Council reviewed the Communication Goal discussion centered around the "YUMMY" initiative that has been introduced in the Cafeteria this year. Linda and Terry explained that the goal was to reduce the level of noise that had been upsetting to many children in the past and to provide a positive reinforcement to good behavior and good manners through this initiative. Linda stated that the initiative has been well received and that classes are "earning their penguins" on a regular basis. When a class has 4 weeks of earning penguins each day in the Cafeteria, that class can choose to have "extra recess with Mrs. Weene" or a "story read to them by Mrs. Weene."

Linda and Ellen advised the Council that Senator Karen Spilka had contacted Ellen to read at the Placentino School. It was decided to invite the Senator to read at Placentino Reading Night on November 17th. Linda will also contact State Representative Carolyn Dykema to see if she would be available to read at the spring Placentino Reading Night.

The final goal that was reviewed was the Health, Wellness, and Safety Goal. Linda advised that she looking forward to beginning the "walking club," and Officer Dave indicated that perhaps parents could help with the "Safe Routes To School" program. If the school participates in this program for 2 years, we would then be eligible for a grant to improve conditions that would make walking to school safer for

the children.

11. Linda explained that the purpose of this year's Council is to create the School Improvement Plan for the 2010-2011 school year. She asked that the Council members think about what they would like to see in next year's plan now that they were all familiar with the current plan.
12. The meeting adjourned at 4:50PM. The next meeting will be on November 18, 2009 in the Placentino Library at 3:45PM.