

**O'Rourke Middle School Building Council Minutes**  
**Monday, November 30, 2009 – 2:45 PM – Library Classroom**

*Attendance:* Don Germain, Nancy Pearse, Lindsey Armbruster, Kevin Ahern, Janet Bianchi, Judy Brinkman, Valerie Wadsworth, Carol Frost-Cyrus, Sharon Salmon, Karen Shipston, Pattie Rakvica, Penny McDonnell, Nancy Hyde, Tim Brunson

1. *Review of the Minutes:* The minutes from the October 29, 2009 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written.
2. *Giving Tree Program:* Tim Brunson and Nancy Hyde gave overviews of the charity initiatives they are involved in related to the development of a Middle School Giving Tree Program. Tim highlighted the efforts of the High School staff and students to support those in need through their PAT Team Giving Tree Program. Nancy highlighted the social workers initiatives through CHS, the local church consortium, and social agencies to support needy families. Questions from the Council members were fielded by the guest presenters.

Council members deliberated on the presentation and discussed options for future initiatives at O'Rourke that model these programs. They also reviewed current activities that are taking place that support charitable efforts in our school and community. The Council agreed that there are two facets of work they would like to deliberate on for future program development:

- a. Developing an organization in house to oversee charitable contributions...
- b. Taking some immediate action to support students, families, and staff during the current holiday season...

It was agreed that the members would continue to deliberate on the development of an in-house organization. It was also agreed that after consulting with our social workers, we would identify a family(ies) that could benefit immediately from some support. Prior to the holiday, action will be taken to solicit donations that will be utilized to provide for the needs of others by instituting a voluntary "Giving Tree" program. Details will be developed and forthcoming to the staff.

3. *Standing Committee Reports:*
  - a. American Education Week: Fifty five parents participated in the American Education Week activities. These numbers represent a slight increase over last year's participation. The program ran extremely well with a few minor transition related glitches that are easily resolved. Other school-wide activities support and encourage parent involvement on an ongoing basis, opening our doors to public participation and review.
  - b. Committee for Academic and Personal Excellence: The Committee met for the first time in November to begin dialog on best homework practices. Background information was presented on the history, policies, and practices that drive the delivery of homework in the school setting. A healthy dialog ensued related to the purposeful delivery of homework.

Future meetings will address a framework for research, professional development considerations, and anomalies in our current practices.

- c. Student Sunshine Committee: The Student Sunshine Committee had its first meeting in November. Close to 20 students participated and agreed to begin some non-monetary initiatives that would support students in need: cards, letters, posters, etc. An anonymous donor gave supplies to the group and work on personal note cards was begun.
- d. Class Night Committee: The Class Night Committee has yet to meet this year. Penny McDonnell, the staff chairperson will contact the PTA to finalize a meeting schedule. Currently only two staff members sit on the Committee and more volunteers will be solicited.
- e. Wellness Committee: The student portion of the Wellness Committee met in November and began to develop strategies for healthy lifestyle initiatives.

4. Awards Proposals: Two verbal presentations for additions to the Class Night Awards were presented at the October meeting: one for a Drama Club Memorial Award and one for a Health Department Award. Lindsey Armbruster from the Health Department presented a written proposal to the Council for consideration at this meeting. Council members deliberated over the proposal and its components: selection criteria, review process, monetary value, and other award protocols. It was approved unanimously, to be instituted this spring as part of our awards ceremony. The Drama Club proposal was tabled until the December meeting where a formal, written proposal can be presented.

5. *Open Agenda*: The following items were addressed during the open agenda portion of the meeting –
- a. Budget and Referendum: An update on the upcoming bond referendum and fluctuating fiscal climate was presented to the members.
  - b. Clubs: We have seen a significant increase in proposals for student clubs, particularly at the grade 6 level. Students have to write and present a formal proposal to the Principal outlining the specific details of the clubs development, management, funding, and oversight. Proposals have been comprehensive and creative. We will continue to encourage and support student engagement in governance and well being through this process. Thanks to the staff members who have volunteered their time and expertise to work with these students.
  - c. Staffing Transitions: We are currently in the process of hiring staff members to fill vacancies or leaves in the following positions: Assistant Principal, School Nurse, and two current maternity positions. The process is ongoing. Information will be forwarded to the educational community as the process is completed and the positions filled. Thanks for your support and patience as we move forward.
  - d. Strategic Framework: Questions were fielded regarding the development of the District Strategic Planning Framework.