

Monthly Parent Communications Meeting

December 6, 2012

1. Rezoning for Pisgah Elementary Opening

Communications Director Elise Shelton and Director of Schools B. J. Worthington discussed the proposed zoning plan for the 2013-14 school year. The zoning changes are due to the scheduled opening of Pisgah Elementary School next fall. Mrs. Shelton and Dr. Worthington shared the zoning proposal presentation explaining the current capacities at affected schools; the anticipated future growth in the school zones; and the percentage of students in each area that are on free/reduced meals. Dr. Worthington explained that the goal is to keep each school balanced as much as possible.

Mrs. Shelton showed the group where the information was located on the website and the location on the CMCSS website where individuals can enter their address to see if they will be affected by the proposed rezoning. She also explained that feedback about the proposal may be made on the CMCSS website or on forms available in the schools. Maps have been placed in the schools impacted by the rezoning proposal. She stressed that this is only a proposal at this time. There will be a public hearing on the proposal at CMCSS on January 8, and the School Board will consider the recommendation for approval on January 22, 2013.

A question was asked about why Northeast Elementary will still be over 100% capacity after this rezoning. Dr. Worthington explained that the next elementary school to be built will be between the current Northeast and Rossvie Elementary zones, and that school will help alleviate over-capacity conditions for both of those schools. If the students were rezoned now, they may face rezoning again when the next elementary school opens. He explained that every effort is made not to move the same students any more often than is absolutely necessary.

The question was asked when the next elementary following Pisgah was scheduled for opening. Dr. Worthington said possibly in 2015-16 or 2016-17 depending on economic conditions and growth in the area.

A question was asked about the timeline for building future middle and high schools. It was explained that the district had a twenty-year plan and there is a new middle and high school on the plan, however, not in the next couple of years. CMCSS owns land near or off of Arkadelphia Road that is a large enough parcel to have an elementary/middle/high school complex. This will be the Kirkwood school complex.

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2. Grant Update

Dr. Worthington shared that CMCSS had not made the finalist list for the federal grant that had been applied for. Metro-Nashville is the only district in Tennessee to make the finalist list.

3. Communication Closing

Dr. Worthington and Mrs. Shelton shared that a website link has been set up where all parents can see the notes from the Parent Communications meetings. On the CMCSS website, click on Our Schools, click on your school, then click on Parent Info, and in the column on the right side click on Parent Communication Committee Notes. Dr. Worthington asked how the representatives were communicating within their schools. Representatives shared different approaches they are trying to use.

Dr. Worthington explained the purpose of the questions is to help the district determine the direction of strategic work and also determine the perception of what is going on in the district.

4. Question of the Month

The representatives worked in small groups to discuss and write out their answer to the question: Are the mission, vision, and beliefs guiding the teaching and learning in the schools? If not, what are your concerns? (another way to say it – Is the teaching and learning meeting the needs of all students?) The information gathered was given to the Continuous Improvement Coordinator.

Dr. Worthington told the representatives that a way for them to better communicate at their school – perhaps a question box in the school office - would be looked into. More information will follow at a later date.

5. The Future: What is important and how do we get the word out?

Dr. Worthington noted that the group would be hearing about Common Core at their January meeting. Dr. Worthington commented that Common Core assessments will be implemented in 2014-15. Right now, we are teaching current curriculum and the new Common Core curriculum “side by side” until Common Core is fully implemented.

He told the group that in February and March they would be used as “screeners”. He explained that CMCSS department managers have been asked to come up with highlights for their respective departments. These highlights will be shared with the parent reps. They will then choose which of the points are the most important to be shared in the community and help determine how CMCSS can best tell our story.

Other Questions and Comments:

One of the representatives asked if more hours were going to be added to the school day as seen on television media lately. Dr. Worthington said no, we were not going to add more hours. He said the schools adding more hours were the lower performing schools and they had been offered this option as a way to improve. He was not certain if there had been an application process for this or not.

A representative asked about STEM and why it was offered at different grade levels, but not all grade levels. Dr. Worthington said that STEM was originally piloted in 9th grade at KHS, 8th grade at KMS, and in K-5 at Moore Magnet. The following year it was implemented in all high schools and middle schools in only 9th and 8th grade and elementary schools were given a choice to add 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade STEM. As implementation continues, eventually all grade levels 3rd through 9th will have STEM. Dr. Worthington shared that Race to the Top federal funds had been used to implement STEM and that CMCSS has been awarded a DODEA grant that will continue the work. He commented that STEM takes a lot of professional training for the instructors.