

Parent Communication Council Orientation Summary  
July 20, 2015

**Present:**

Stacy Weinert, Central; Kari Schacke, Chippewa; Jennifer Tabor, Cumberland; Jodi Nabor, Forest; Bree Burkett, Iroquois; Pam Kroschel, Iroquois & North; Peggy Ryan, North; Mae Pasemba, Orchard Place; Brian Inzerello, South; Lindsay Garcia, Terrace; Dr. Terry Lindsay, Board of Education, Terry Ryan & Mindy Ward, D62 Community Relations

**General Information**

Contact Information – Please contact Community Relations if leaders or contact information changes.

Please remember to:

- Meet with your principal (s) prior to general membership/board meetings to plan agendas and follow-up
- Invite school board members to parent engagement and fundraising activities sponsored by the parent group. (See attachment for Adopt-A-School assignments.)
- Each new school volunteer, regardless of time spent volunteering, should complete a volunteer application on Applitrack. This can be access in the Employment link of the District 62 website.
- Returning volunteers should of received an email that directs to the Volunteer Database archived on Applitrack to revise.
- Community Relations will attend meetings throughout the year.

**District News**

The District's student assessment math and reading scores have shown good progress and will be released in October.

Superintendent Dr. Jane Westerhold announced she will retire at the end of the 2015-16 school year. The school board will hire a search firm in early fall. PCC officers and members may be invited to participate in parent engagement opportunities that are offered by the search firm. Officers and members will also be invited to participate in events to honoring Dr. Westerhold.

Maine West changed their school calendar. Parents in District 62 were surveyed about change. This will be an item of discussion in the winter months as the calendar committee establishes next year's calendar and the Board of Education approves it.

Bi-annual PCC meetings are held to share and exchange information. These meetings are also for Mindy and the administrative team to learn from parent leaders about what's going on and what's being talked about.

Each school has a volunteer coordinator who is available for PCC to ask for assistance. When you are looking for volunteers for specific events or projects, contact the volunteer coordinator. A list was included in the information packet. Current volunteers (2014-2015 school year) were sent emails to access and revise volunteer information. Community Relations is using Applitrack, the same system used for Human Resources, to archive data contact information. The goal is to go paperless this school year. A list of volunteer coordinators is included in the orientation folder.

Community Relations is discontinuing the district-wide volunteer reception. Instead, we are going to recognize corporate partners and volunteer awards at the April board meeting and give each school additional money for school receptions.

## **Member Share**

Iroquois – The members are all very new. They had a book fair the day before the first day that was successful, but it was hard to get in touch with people before the start of school. They don't have a lot of volunteers. Trying a theme of "Pay it Forward" this year and being careful to thank everyone who volunteers. The members will be at parent night. They are planning a parent education night for November. The new board president is looking at past history and how to make files accessible in some way.

Orchard Place – Lost a lot of active parents. They're going to be downsizing if they don't get more members. A lot of parents speak second language and don't want to participate in engagement activities. The librarian is taking over the book fair. Parents come for one meeting but are not returning.

Chippewa Middle School - Carrie came in as president last year at Chippewa. Only returning parent on the board. It was an opportunity to look at the purpose of middle school PTO, what we can do and can't do. Parents feel wanted at elementary but that seems to halt at middle school. So many kids at awkward ages it's different for parents. Trying to get parents to feel there's a place to volunteer, it just looks different. Trying to get parents to come to the meeting. The opportunity to sit with principal is priceless. Because of PTO feedback, the school completely changed how they did conferences. They dropped student-led conferences. Now there are at least three teachers one-on-one with each parent and child. The group has spent a lot of time appreciating our teachers because no one appreciates middle school teachers. Not just one week in May. Monthly. Very successful.

Central School– The PTO is small but mighty. It is running like a well-oiled machine. They formed a nominations committee to find new people to come on the board.

Backpack drive for four years. They are partnering with a neighborhood Lutheran church for a backpack drive. Also provide refills in school supplies.

North School– Still low volunteer rate. Best thing this past year was more teacher involvement. Like to see more parents get involved this year.

South School – The treasurer reported he designed a digital PTO site. One of the biggest questions the PTO gets is what do they do. The digital site will allow them to share minutes with parents. Includes meeting minutes, calendar, see every activity in the school. They are planning a breakfast for parents of kindergarteners on the first day of school for the first time. They plan to try to recruit parents and explain to them how they can be involved.

Cumberland – There is a sense among parents for the way it used to be. There was a break down and now starting up again. Ended up spending the year on how the way things were. Trying to improve communications on fliers and explain what is going on to entice more parents to attend events. Last year, they greatly improved Held an International Night – got restaurants involved, then added Taste of Des Plaines with desserts. Everybody wants to be needed. They have also started a digital PTO site and Facebook account. Developed online signup for field day and it was very successful. Re-wrote membership rules to include grand parents. Funded the expansion of playground at Forest.

### **Future PCC Meetings**

Monday, October 5, 2015, 6 PM, Administration Center

Monday, January 25, 2016, 6 PM, Administration Center

*Each school should be represented at PCC meetings.*