

MOUNTVIEW

Middle School



270 Shrewsbury Street
Holden, Massachusetts 01520
Phone (508) 829-5577
Fax (508) 829-3711

Wachusett Regional School District

C. Erik Githmark, Principal
Karen Hughes, Assistant Principal
Brian McCarthy, Assistant Principal

School Improvement Council (SIMCO) Minutes
Tuesday, November 15, 2011

I. Meeting was called to order at 5:30pm

Council members introduced themselves again: C. Erik Githmark, Steve Hammond, Tina McAndrew, Carol Flionis, Mary Jude Pigsley, Tracy Field, Lisa Swalec, Emily McGuinness, Juliette Rice, Andrew Fritsche

II. Approval of Minutes from October 18, 2011 Meeting

Minutes from the October 18th meeting were unanimously approved. Motion to approve: Tracy Field, 2nd: Andrew Fritsche.

III. Spring of 2011 Student Survey Results: Review and Discussion

Various questions and answers were reviewed by the Council. Some highlights are

- Question #6 “Students show respect for one another” – not overwhelmingly positive
- Question #8 “I am challenged to do my best work” 80% strongly agree/agree
- Question #16 “I feel comfortable asking questions if I do not understand something” 70% strongly agree/agree
- Question #17 “Mountview has enough technology available to support my learning” - Erik mentioned receiving new computers and monitors in the computer lab
- Question #23 “Mountview disciplines students fairly” 55% strongly agree/agree
Comments were made that over 200 students disagree that students are getting disciplined fairly. It may be that we aren’t catching all the bullies
- Question #24 “Bullying is a problem at our school” 40% strongly agree/agree
Question arose whether students know what bullying means. Perhaps there is a difference between students’ interpretation of the word between 6th and 8th grade.

Erik will split the comments out between these grades for this question to see if there is a difference.

- Question #25 “I have been bullied at school” Do more 6th graders say it? Erik will split the comments up between 6th and 8th grades for this question as well.
- Question #27 “Cyber bullying on the internet and through texting is an issue in our school” - it is a problem at MTV

Erik commented that issues that arise via text or online during the weekend become issues that administration must deal with on Monday morning.

- Question #30 “If I had a problem or concern, I know of at least one teacher/staff member that I would be comfortable sharing the information with” 80% strongly agree/agree

Juliette and Emily commented that asking a teacher for help depends on the teacher and the other students in the class.

- Question #32 “I feel like I belong at Mountview” 72% strongly agree/agree
- Question #33 “I like to come to school” 52% strongly agree/agree
- Question #35 “Homework is assigned to help students learn” only 58% strongly agree/agree
- Question #36 “Homework assignments are meaningful; not just busywork” 38% strongly agreed/agreed
- Question #37 57% think there is too much homework
- Question #39 98.2% have access to internet at home
- Question #40 35% of students say they have more than more 90 minutes of homework a night
- Question #42 66% of students are using an agenda book

Erik handed out several open response/short answers and asked the Council to review them on its own for discussion at the December meeting.

IV. Reluctant Learners (handout)

Erik referenced a question by Carol at the October meeting about a reluctant learner article in the T&G. Erik handed the article out to the Council and described reluctant learners as the most difficult to work with. These types of learners may lack support at home and don't buy into the idea of school. How do you get through to those kids? Erik tries to positively promote the kids when they do things well. Sometimes the schools have to get the courts involved to ensure attendance which makes the kids even angrier. Tracy brought up the 3 legged stool - parent, student, teacher - analogy. If one of the legs is missing, there is no success.

V. Community Partnerships

A goal in our school improvement plan is to continue to create community partnerships with companies. Lorraine Neilan and Wayne Boisselle currently have connections with Alden Labs. Erik will work with staff to discover their needs and try to find which community members can fill these needs.

VI. Mountview Building Committee Update

The state building committee had been going back and forth with number which number

to approve for Mountview. The state wanted to approve a 700 student school while Holden wanted to have approved an 800 student school. The state agreed to the 800 number which means the new potential school could house up to 960 students. This will give a lot more space than what currently exists now.

If a new school is rebuilt there will be

- 28 multipurpose classrooms (have 22 right now)
- 7 science lab/classrooms (have 6 right now) plus storage areas and prep rooms
- 6 self contained special education classrooms (have 3 now) - 4 resource rooms, 2 smaller rooms
- Band room with 2 music practice rooms
- 2 tech education classrooms
- Gym with 6000 sq feet
- Cafeteria that would be 6000 sq feet so that we could feed the entire school in 2 seatings
- 5000 sq foot media center
- 1600 sq foot stage
- 300 sq foot staff room
- Larger kitchen
- 350 sq foot guidance office plus waiting room

Next Tuesday is the next building committee meeting.

VII. School Committee Update: Steve Hammond

Steve reported that the creation of an Ipad program will not be funded by ending the middle school foreign language program. The Ipad proposal would be funded by money left over from the oil remediation when the Central Office oil tank leaked. Because it was deemed an environmental disaster, the EPA, state and towns set aside money for the cleanup. Since the ground is looking good, we will ask towns to use the leftover money not used for clean up to buy I pads. Borrowed money can't be used to pay salaries so this money can't pay for the foreign language program either way. Math coaches are also needed to help increase math MCAS schools in middle schools. The money will still be available if not used for wireless technology.

During the town meeting in January 2012 there will be a cumulative percentage yes no vote by the towns. More information will be available at tonight's School Committee Meeting.

VIII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 at 5:30pm in the library

Coffee and Chat is this Friday at 9am in the cafeteria. There is no PTA meeting this Thursday due to the conflict with the 8th grade orientation at the high school. Not hiring guidance counselors at the middle school level is due to a financial problem district wide – it is not budgeted.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm