



Parent / Superintendent Council Agenda Minutes
 September 24, 2014
 11:30 am –1:00 pm
 Combs Traditional Academy

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed the group and provided a brief explanation of the purpose of the Parent/Superintendent Council. The individuals present had an opportunity to introduce themselves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTA – <i>Knight's Note</i> Communication/Marketing Curriculum Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Berkshire presented by stating that CTA is in its fifth year with over 270 students enrolled. He discussed one of CTA's programs, <i>Knight's Note</i>, which promotes positive behavior strategies in rigor, responsibility, and respect. A few students shared their experience with the program and said they set goals for themselves to earn special privileges such as raising and lowering the flag or working as an office aide for a week. The group had an opportunity to see one of the students receive her full-fledged "Knight" status. <p>Discussion: A parent inquired about the kindergartens and if they were eligible to participate in the program. Principal Berkshire explained that the program is for grades 1-6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Blanchard discussed the comprehensive marketing brochure and provided one to each member in the group. She gave details about the contents of the brochure. Dr. Blanchard shared that District had met with local real estate agents and took them on a tour of the school sites in an effort to help them learn more about the J.O. Combs District. Dr. Blanchard offered the group additional copies of the brochure should they need them for site council, PTO, or any other marketing needs. PSC members may contact the District office for copies. Ms. Dunker, Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction invited the group into the computer lab for a demonstration of GoMath software. She explained that GoMath was purchased as part of the Math adoption for the 7th and 8th grades. Ms. Dunker explained that there is an extensive online component and a consumable textbook. She informed parents that login and password information has been provided. Ms. Dunker commented that one of the key components of the program is access to real world videos that introduce the Math lesson. The video also highlights careers so that the student may see the connection to Math. <p>Discussion: Mrs. Foster asked if the teacher assessment is per student. Ms. Dunker responded yes. A discussion continued about the cost of online learning compared to textbook learning. Although the District does not have a cost</p>

breakdown for this, Ms. Dunker stated that the textbook is good for six years and includes teacher upgrades in that time period. Dr. Rogers commented that it is less expensive than purchasing two sets of books per student (one to take home and one to keep at school). Dr. Blanchard acknowledged that it is important to support different learners. She shared that District will be using Galileo to track data.

- Community Education

- Mrs. Kelly Guerra, Coordinator of Community Education provided an overview of the different programs offered such as Combs Kidz, Kinder Prep, Young Coyotes, Fall Camp and Kids Night Out. She also discussed facilities rentals for churches and sports organizations.
- Mrs. Guerra explained that Combs Kidz helps support math practice in afterschool programs. She said since children are learning math differently, Community Education offers good ideas to site leaders to help support the math lesson.
- Mrs. Guerra discussed the topic of social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. She stated that she shares ideas for teachers and parents using Pinterest.

Discussion:

Mrs. Taylor asked if high school students are able to volunteer for Combs Kidz. Mrs. Guerra said yes they can and commented on the Child Development CTE classes offered at Combs High School.

There was a discussion about the flyer distribution policy and possibly posting a banner on the fence at CTA to promote an activity or event.

A few parents inquired about enrichment type swimming programs offered at the middle school level in order to prepare students for competitive swimming at the high school level. Mrs. Whitt asked if utilizing the pool at Encanterra was a possibility.

- Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

- Dr. Rogers shared the different employment and volunteer opportunities at J.O. Combs. She discussed the application process and requirements for substitutes and volunteers.

Discussion:

Mrs. Mandeville asked if the online application process can be paired down. She commented that the process is too lengthy. Dr. Rogers will follow up with Mrs. Mandeville for feedback on how to simplify the process.

- Future Agenda Items

- ADE Instructional Minutes (starting and ending time)
- School site recess and lunch schedule
- Intervention K-12
- Secondary Academic Recognition
- Anti-Bullying or Advocacy Program, Character Counts
- October 29 reminder - New council photo



Parent / Superintendent Council Agenda Minutes
 October 29, 2014
 11:30 am –1:00 pm
 Ranch Elementary

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed the group and introduced Mrs. Sue Kruse, Principal.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranch Elementary – <i>Attendance, Academics, Career</i> • Unified Sports Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Kruse remarked that she has been the principal at Ranch Elementary for six years now and sees the progress that students are making. She stated that Ranch is focused on attendance, academics, and career readiness, and helping students understand and the importance of education and encouraging students to follow their dream. Principal Kruse introduced Mrs. Laurie McRae, who is a social worker and new to Ranch this year. • Mrs. McRae shared with the group a little bit about herself saying that she is in her seventeenth year in doing social work and has worked in other school districts. She gave a PowerPoint presentation on the subject of building strong academics, consistent attendance and college and career preparedness. She explained that attendance matters and it is Ranch’s goal to increase student attendance. • Mrs. McRae described some of the ways that Ranch plans to reinforce the importance of attendance to students and parents. For example school newsletters, parent conference and meetings, school programs and activities, and daily school announcements. Ranch will also be tying the idea of college and career readiness through writing assignments and class discussions revolving around career choices. Mrs. McRae also invited community members to talk about their career choice and explain what it took to get there and how it impacted their life. <p>Discussion: Mrs. Whitt asked if there is an issue with attendance. Dr. Blanchard clarified that attendance has always been a conversation at all school sites. She shared that District was able to hire social workers at all elementary schools as a result of receiving Title I funding. Dr. Patty Rogers mentioned that although we have a good attendance rate, students who have attendance issues tend to fall further behind academically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jane Rupard provided a handout and shared details about the new Unified Sports program starting in the spring of 2015. She stated that there are three different unified sports: flag football, basketball, and track. However, District plans to start with one sport and that is basketball.

- School Calendars

- Dr. Rupard explained the program which combines individuals with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and individuals without intellectual disabilities (partners) on sports teams for training and competition. She added that it is a co-ed team and will play six games against teams in Coolidge, Chandler, and Florence.
- Dr. Rupard spoke about the Best Buddies group which involves about 60-70 students and is located at the high school. She described that it is a group of peers who go into the classroom to help a student with such things as a craft project, have lunch with them or assist them to get where they need to go (basically be their “buddy”). The group is a trade name and exists throughout the nation.
- Dr. Rupard shared that she will be meeting with Mrs. Jane Chu (Life Skills high school teacher) on Friday to discuss the program prior to sending out a letter to parents. She stated that Mr. Kirk Fauske will be the coach and Mrs. Jette Thompson will be the assistant coach. Transportation issues were discussed although many games will be at home in the high school gym.
- Dr. Rupard stated that this is a varsity sport recognized by the state and participants can earn varsity letters.
- Before discussing the school calendars, Dr. Rogers mentioned Pinal County will administer the paraprofessional test on November 24 at the District Office and to share the information with anyone who may be interested. She noted that it is a requirement of the state because we are a Title I school district.
- Dr. Rogers stated that the school calendar is a board approved document with another two year option to go before the board in February 2015. She explained that District has formed a calendar committee involving support staff, teachers, and administrators. Once drafted, the calendar will be brought to staff and Parent/Superintendent members for feedback before final approval.

Discussion:

There was a discussion regarding the high school and middle school fall and spring breaks and parent questions about a modified year round calendar. Mrs. Findlay said the modified year round topic came up in site council discussions. Mrs. Findlay shared that some of the parents want it so that families have time to spend together to do things and not impact attendance. The discussion continued with a few other items such as the impact of scheduling summer school, maintenance, and technology support.

A parent in the group asked if there is a way to find out if other schools are doing a modified schedule. Dr. Rogers shared that she had done a comparison of surrounding school districts. Dr. Blanchard said that Coolidge just made that transition this year. Dr. Rogers will contact Coolidge about their modified year round schedule and ask what worked, what did not, and what prompted the transition.

- Instructional Minutes

Dr. Rogers described the steps that are involved in reviewing and finalizing the district calendar and that we must have 180 days of a school year, thus keeping semesters equal and factoring in report card deadlines. She mentioned that professional development days do not count towards an academic quarter.

Mrs. Hargis asked about spring break and was interested to know how many students are not in attendance due to the timing of the Pinal County Fair which occurs the week after spring break. Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Rogers agreed to review the attendance data from last year.

- Dr. Rogers discussed the elementary instructional minutes and provided a handout to the group. She mentioned that the high school has only one lunch period for entire campus. Dr. Rogers explained that the instructional minutes are dictated by the state. She added that intervention time is included and that the minutes are now uniform across the district. Dr. Rogers further discussed the two tables which show the instructional minutes for Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday versus early release Wednesday by grade level and areas of instruction. She also explained how staff resources are utilized to satisfy the requirements.

Discussion:

The group had questions about elementary recess and lunch minutes. Dr. Rogers explained that there is one recess paired up with lunch time either taken before or after and is determined by site. She said that if students have specials in the morning then they generally have a recess in the afternoon and transition time is built into the schedule.

Dr. Blanchard encouraged parents to speak to their site administrator if they have questions or concerns regarding lunch recess. Although some schools have “free flow” lunch time, she encouraged parents to watch the lunch time flow to observe what happens. Principal Kruse commented that several factors are taken into consideration when determining before or after lunch time recess such as the design of the school specifically where the multi-purpose room is located in relationship to the courtyard. At Ranch, they believe it is better to have the children eat first. The decision is made based on what is in the best interest of the child.

Mrs. Foster inquired about acceptable noise level in the cafeteria during lunch time. Dr. Rogers acknowledged that there has to be a balance. She suggested if parents have a concern to talk to their site administrator.

Mrs. Mendoza asked when the instructional minutes changed or how often it is adjusted. Dr. Rogers explained that in previous years there had not been a consistency in instructional minutes. Now there is consistency, the instructional minutes will be reviewed each year based on the guidelines from the state. At this time, District does not see a need to make any adjustments for next year.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Academic Recognition and Anti-Bullying Information • Miscellaneous 	<p>Mrs. Martin asked who chooses how much homework to give to students. Dr. Blanchard shared that generally the rule of thumb is 10 minutes for each grade level but that there is no mandate by district. She suggested that Mrs. Martin speak to the site administrator regarding any homework concerns.</p> <p>A parent voiced her concern about English Language Arts (ELA) being too long mentioning 90 minutes is too long for students to sit through. The group discussed student engagement during instruction. Dr. Rogers explained that the 90 minute period is broken up into whole group and small group instruction. There was a question about Foundations. Dr. Blanchard offered to schedule a Foundations demonstration for the next meeting.</p> <p>Mrs. Whitt recapped that this is a small sampling of group representation of parent concerns and that hopefully we are hearing that the students are not getting an opportunity to eat lunch within the time designated. Mrs. Mandeville remarked that she has a problem with her child not having enough time to eat lunch. Mrs. Whitt commented that it is not an issue with the instructional minutes it is an issue with elementary kids not getting an opportunity to release their energy. Dr. Blanchard said she appreciated the comments and acknowledged that District has the opportunity to go back to the leadership group to discuss. She reminded parents they may go to their site administrator to discuss their concerns and perhaps ask what changes could be made if possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to time limits, Dr. Blanchard asked the group if they wanted to continue with the meeting or table the last two agenda items for the November meeting. The group agreed to table the last two agenda items. • Parent suggested Twitter and social media posting to Laredo, Wayne Ranch, and Castlegate community pages. Dr. Blanchard asked if PSC group members are able to take the lead to cross post any “good news” information sent out by the District.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Agenda Items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Academic Recognition • Anti-Bullying Information • Foundations • School ratings • EVIT or dual enrollment opportunities (January agenda) • Middle School Career Center (is this a possibility?) • Career exploration program information



Parent / Superintendent Council Agenda Minutes
 November 19, 2014
 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 J.O. Combs Middle School

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed everyone and introduced Principal Mauro.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combs Middle School – <i>CMS Student Council Respect Week</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Mauro handed out copies of “Your Guide to Helping Your Child Succeed in Middle School”. He said the booklets, purchased with Title I funds, were distributed to seventh graders to take home to their parents. Principal Mauro also handed out a write up regarding Astronomy Night and accessing the Math textbook online. He spoke a bit about both subjects. • Principal Mauro introduced Mrs. Laurene Schindledecker, Social Worker, who is working with student council officers on the upcoming assembly. He revealed that the student council had approached him with an idea to increase awareness in response to respect. • Mrs. Schindledecker talked about the upcoming assembly which is scheduled for the first week of December. She introduced student council President Ryan Watson, Kayla Santos Vice President, Katy Johnson Secretary, Kaiya Davis Treasurer, and Gus Adams Social Media Advisor. The students presented their ideas for <i>CMS Respect Week</i> and their plans to engage students. They explained that <i>Respect Week</i> is meant to help discourage disrespect and bullying on campus and to emulate the core values of the school mission. They intend to present information by performing skits and citing statistics. They outlined the daily theme for the weeks’ activities: <i>Make Your Day Monday, Terrific Talk Tuesday, Wonderful Wink Wednesday, Thumbs Up Thursday and Fabulous Friend Friday</i>. Each day is meant to reinforce positive behaviors. <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Mrs. Hargis asked the students about the assembly. Students plan to perform written skits and described one of their favorites as the “paper heart”. “Paper Heart” shows what people feel like when you tear out a piece of the heart by saying mean things and then saying nice things to put the heart back together. The student council feels it sends a powerful message to the student body.</p> <p>Mr. Apostol asked if there is an element of students being bullied and what students can do to prevent it. He asked if there are any tips to help students go to a “trusted adult” or do students just not talk about it. Principal Mauro remarked that at this age peers helping peers is key as well as the power of the student council to be the bridge or be the advocate. He said the other piece of is emphasizing the importance of a trusted adult and the courage to reach out.</p>

- Miscellaneous

- Dr. Blanchard shared a few updates, first Mr. Ames Singley's (Principal at Harmon Elementary) move to Japan and second, the appointment of Ms. Angela Beauchene, Interim Principal at Harmon. She also mentioned Mrs. Laura Ridge as Interim Dean at Combs Middle School effective in January.
- The group asked a few questions about the interim position appointments. Dr. Blanchard explained that District will post the positions officially in the spring.
- Dr. Blanchard shared the news that the Marching Coyote Regiment received 5th place in the Division III competition held at Glendale Community College (November 15).
- In regards to interest in a modified District calendar, Dr. Blanchard shared that ongoing conversations are taking place at District Leadership and Dr. Rogers is leading the charge. She explained that District will continue with a traditional calendar 2015-2016 as we need more time to prepare. District wants to be fair to parents and employees who have arranged for summer plans and to look at any associated costs with implementing a modified calendar. Dr. Blanchard did acknowledge that District is looking at the timing of parent teacher conferences for K-8.
- Dr. Blanchard noted that the Foundations demonstration (a requested agenda item) has been deferred to an elementary campus location.
- Dr. Blanchard asked the group to think about participating in Twitter in an effort to get information out to stakeholders. She provided the group with the Twitter text messaging instructions to follow [jocombsusd](#).

Mrs. Martin suggested CPR certification as a requirement for graduation. She heard that this requirement has been implemented in a Tucson school but does not know how they funded it. Mrs. Martin will send information to Dr. Blanchard.

- Secondary Academic Recognition

- Dr. Blanchard distributed a hand out with information on middle school and high school academic recognition program/activities. She explained that it is a snapshot of what is occurring at the secondary level. Dr. Blanchard mentioned a few other opportunities available to students to garner academic growth recognition such as Pinal County Essay Contest, Academic Achievement with potential to earn letters and pins for academic success (CAS). District also participates in the annual San Tan Valley Scholastic Event which includes all schools in San Tan Valley.

- Anti-Bullying Information

- Dr. Blanchard provided the group with a copy of the anti-bullying policy. She shared that District partners with the notMykid program. notMykid provides parent and student presentations on a number of topics such as substance abuse, internet safety, and cyber bullying. Principal Mauro noted they just had a notMykid presentation on November 7 on internet safety and another presentation is scheduled November 21 regarding substance abuse. The upcoming presentations will be held at Combs High School in January.

Discussion:

Dr. Blanchard discussed the anti-bullying policy including reporting and investigating requirements and stated that we do not take the subject lightly. Principal Mauro shared his approach in dealing with bullying

situations that may occur at the middle school and the efforts taken to help students to report bullying behavior to a trusted adult.

Parents in the group raised questions concerning high school students and if they know who is a trusted adult. In some instances, students do not want parents to contact the teacher.

Dr. Blanchard stated that specific information helps her in addressing issues and parents may call her or email her if there is a concern. She stated that the bullying policy includes teachers and staff and there are additional policies regarding staff conduct and behavior. There is a specific set of reporting procedures and the first line is to contact the site administrator and if that does not work than contact Dr. Blanchard.

The group discussed how to help students (all grades) speak up and wanting the system to protect and encourage the student to be vocal about how they are feeling as well as measures to hold teachers accountable. The topic of parent education was brought up in regards to how to help students voice their opinion and ways to help parents have this conversation.

Mrs. Findlay asked if there is a type of peer support program at the high school much like "Best Buddies" or a career development type program. Dr. Blanchard commented that there are a number of activities at the high school level. She will find out what are the number of students who participate in club activities and the number who do not. Dr. Blanchard asked for Ms. Dunker's help on this.

- School Ratings / New Statewide Assessment

- Dr. Blanchard shared that site principals sent an email to parents regarding the new statewide assessment. She commented that District has maintained a "B" label.
- Ms. Santa Dunker, Coordinator of Curriculum & Instruction gave a PowerPoint presentation about the school ratings and the new statewide assessment AzMERIT. She discussed the present school labels and some of the action steps the District and each site are taking to improve student achievement and help support teachers.
- Ms. Dunker discussed the recently named state assessment AzMERIT which replaces AIMS and noted that the AIMS Science test will be given for grades 4, 8 and high school. She added that this year is a transition year with paper or computer based testing available and that total testing time is less than AIMS testing hours and will be broken out over several days.

Discussion:

Mr. Apostol asked if the action steps are tied to some type of indicator. Ms. Dunker explained that there is a tie based on each site and the review of their data.

Mrs. Whitt wanted to know how AzMERIT affects the student testing for graduation. Ms. Dunker explained that this year's juniors are the last cohort who have the AIMS requirement. She noted that AzMERIT will not count as a graduation requirement much like AIMS. Mrs. Findlay asked if

we are still taking the AIMS Science test. Ms. Dunker stated that we are and are planning to take it at the same time as AzMERIT. Dr. Blanchard stated that it will be an end of course assessment much like finals and the college and career readiness index. She said there are still a lot of unknowns for Districts and there are many questions. For more information, there is a webpage dedicated to AzMERIT.

Mrs. Findlay asked about the partnership with Pinal County ESA for math. Ms. Dunker explained that since District has had a difficult time finding a grade 7-12 math coach we partnered with ESA for educational specialist services. Ms. Dunker highlighted a few of ESA's services: 24 hours of training specific to college and career ready standards and District professional development to work with the math department.

Mrs. Mandeville asked about individual site ratings. Dr. Blanchard mentioned that ratings are based on various factors such as student proficiency achievement and growth, dropout rate, high school graduation rate, and ELL reclassification.

Mrs. Hargis asked for clarification concerning AIMS testing and school rating data namely, how it is measured. Ms. Dunker explained to the group that a student must be enrolled the first 10 days to be considered a full academic year student. For school letter grades, a student must be enrolled within the first 10 days for their data to be considered for A-F label rating. If a student enrolls on day 11 and takes the assessments, that student's score is not factored in the overall data. She commented that we do not know how AzMERIT will label schools.

- Career Exploration Programs

- Due to time limitations, Dr. Blanchard distributed copies of the career exploration program list and advised the group to review. She stated that if there are any questions the group may bring up for discussion at the January meeting.

- Future Agenda Items

- Foundations (moved to February)
- EVIT or dual enrollment opportunities (January agenda)
- Trending Chart – School ratings / Longitudinal Student Achievement Data
- Update on AZ College Campus day at High School
- Combs High School website and scholarship counseling web page (parents were asked to review and provide suggestions)
- Honors science course in science year- Mrs. Findlay / Santa will take a look
- Parent page, things I wish I would have known – Mr. Apostol
- Career center; scholarship info available
- College days? Will there be more opportunities; early spring financial aid packet meeting for parents



Parent / Superintendent Council Minutes
 January 28, 2015
 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 Combs High School

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Blanchard welcomed everyone and introduced Assistant Principal, Cindy Parravano who presented since Mrs. Brenda Mayberry was unable to attend the meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combs High School – <i>CHS Choir</i> • Combs High School Web Page / Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Principal Parravano introduced Miss Julie Trent, CHS Band and Choir Director. Choir students performed a few songs including a jazz piece. • Miss Trent shared that a few of the choir students auditioned for regional choir and did well at the auditions. She mentioned that the next concert date is February 17 at 7 p.m. in the high school gym. • Assistant Principal Parravano distributed information to the group and shared particulars about several high school celebrations for 2014-2015. She spoke about the many academic, athletic, and fine arts achievements that have occurred this past year including the Commitment to Graduate assembly for the 9th graders. • Assistant Principal Parravano introduced the high school counseling staff Ms. Jette Thompson (students A-G), Ms. Jule Stout (students H-Q), and Mr. Barry Smith (students R-Z). • Mrs. Stout gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the high school counseling web page and the information available. She mentioned that the counseling web page is new this year. <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Mr. Javier Apostol inquired about the possibility of obtaining high school transcripts electronically. Dr. Blanchard stated that District would look into the possibility of an electronic system to obtain transcripts.</p> <p>Mrs. Toni Findlay asked if District could take the guidance curriculum information, convert it to a pdf file by grade level, and place it in the course catalog.</p> <p>Dr. Blanchard pointed out that parent input is instrumental and that the counseling web page was developed in response to community comments about guidance counseling. Mrs. Stout shared that the high school counseling page is updated weekly. She noted that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) night has been rescheduled to February 26 at 5 p.m. in the CHS library.</p> <p>Mrs. Findlay asked about the calendar option in Jupiter Grades and feels that it is not being fully utilized this year. She mentioned that the calendar is blank in comparison to last year. It was noted that counseling events are</p>

listed in Jupiter Grades and there is a calendar on the counseling page. Dr. Rogers said she will have District look into it and check with technology to find out what may be done to upload information to keep the calendar current. Assistant Principal Parravano did confirm that Jupiter Grades has the capability to transfer information to the calendar.

Mrs. Stout shared that the counseling newsletter is distributed at the end of the month. The newsletter is sent to teachers and is posted. She mentioned that scholarship information is also posted each month. Mrs. Stout commented that she added Community Service & Social Connection information as well as a list of high school clubs.

Discussion:

The group discussed Arizona Career Information System (AzCIS) / ECAP which is the education career action plan that students are using. Ms. Debbie Sant, Professional Development Specialist, discussed a comprehensive K-12 counseling plan. She explained that District's goal is to have all 6th grade students and Arizona BizTown participants logged on and in AzCIS by the time students attend middle school. Ms. Sant commented that AzCIS is a wonderful resource for parents, students, counselors.

- Update on Arizona College Application Campaign

- Mrs. Stout talked about the Arizona College Application campaign and provided a handout to the group. The handout showed statistical data such as the number of students who applied to colleges or universities.
- Mrs. Stout mentioned that a guidance calendar was created and shared with CHS staff. The guidance curriculum is located on the high school counseling web page.

Discussion:

- Mrs. Ronnie Mandeville asked for clarification regarding the graduation percentage for Combs High School. Dr. Blanchard explained that the percentage combines graduation rates and dropout rates. For instance, if a student leaves the District and we do not know where they ended up then that student is considered a drop out. If a student leaves to obtain a GED then student is considered a drop out for that year.
- Mrs. Stout pointed out that the high school career center is located in the front office building. The career center provides military and college information, university brochures, scholarship information/applications, SAT and ACT information, EVIT brochures, trade schools and specialty colleges, and career information. There are four computers available to students to look up scholarships or apply for colleges.
- Mrs. Chantel Mower inquired about the high school seminary program and zero hour. Assistant Principal Parravano explained that the decision is made by the seminary school. Mr. Trent Allen, Seminary Principal, had met with Mrs. Mayberry and notified the school that seminary is only offered during the school day. Assistant Parravano explained the schedule and conveyed that it is based on number of students in a class. There has to be enough students in the section to have the class.
- Dr. Rogers commented that she is very impressed with the counseling page appreciating the time and effort that went into creating it.

- EVIT / Dual Enrollment Opportunities

- Dr. Blanchard distributed copies of the EVIT catalog, Central Arizona College (CAC) information, and the CHS Course Catalog to the group.
- Dr. Rogers shared information regarding the EVIT program and dual enrollment. The group also discussed the number of credits that may be earned while participating in the dual enrollment program.
- Promise for the Future offers up to 2 years of CAC college tuition free and if a student's GPA is high enough they may still qualify for the tuition free scholarship.

Discussion:

Mrs. Findlay asked about curriculum and how it is listed in the course catalog. Assistant Parravano noted that the Honors Science information has been corrected.

Mr. Apostol wanted to know if it is possible to list the graduation requirements (minimum) and note the different levels for a university, technical school or ivy league schools. Dr. Blanchard talked about college pathways such as STEM, CTE, or BIO Science program.

Dr. Rogers mentioned advanced placement (AP) courses and helping students to understand what they are looking at for a university and the path they want to take. The group discussed if students know about specific pathways that are available and taking advanced placement courses in high school. Dr. Rogers shared that page 14 was added to the course catalog in support of AzCIS. It is a pathways interest inventory with description and career options to help students to start looking at those classes.

Mrs. Kim Bawden asked if a student must have AP classes in order to get into college. The answer is no. Student may attend a two-year college and transfer the credits to a university. Dr. Rogers explained that AP courses are typically more rigorous and students may take the AP exam to obtain college credit. Ms. Sant explained that it is important to look at student ranking and GPA since it is important for scholarship opportunities. Some educational institutions do look at ranking information.

Dr. Blanchard shared that higher education institutions have their own rules. In the State of Arizona, 22 is the minimum high school credits to graduate.

Mrs. Stout shared that the counselors are adding a sample college application on the grade level guidance web page. The application will show sophomores what types of questions are asked.

- Longitudinal Student Achievement Data

- Dr. Rogers shared a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed AIMS longitudinal data and the upcoming AzMERIT assessment. She also discussed AIMS science. Dr. Rogers noted that AzMERIT would replace AIMS except for AIMS science which students will take in 4th, 8th, and 9th grade.
- Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Rogers clarified that the numbers represented on the chart are percentile of meets and exceeds.
- Dr. Rogers mentioned that Galileo is used for benchmarks.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscellaneous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Rogers communicated that the student achievement data has been presented to the Governing Board. Mrs. Mower asked about testing accommodations for a student who is “color blind” and who does not have the ability to distinguish highlighted text. Dr. Rogers mentioned that a 504 plan might be applicable. Dr. Rogers shared that the testing window for AzMERIT is the week of April 13-24. Combs Traditional Academy and J.O. Combs Middle School will conduct online testing. Dr. Rogers explained that there may be a late start testing window for the high school and it will be a paper test. **An adjustment has been made to the assessment dates for AzMERIT and AIMS. Combs Middle School (computer based testing) March 30-May 1, Combs Traditional Academy (computer based testing) April 7-24, Combs High School (paper based testing) April 13-24, and Ellsworth, Harmon, Ranch, and Simonton (paper based testing) April 13-24. AIMS Science testing will take place on April 22, 2015 for grades, 4, 8, and high school. There is no late start testing for Combs High School.** Dr. Rogers discussed AzMERIT testing and core class end of course assessments. Testing results will not be back until September. Mrs. Teresa Whitt asked if it is a pass or fail test and if it affects graduation. Dr. Rogers stated that AIMS is still required for cohort year 2016. Dr. Blanchard said that District reviews the data continually and is shared every year at governing board and leadership retreats. She mentioned that the PowerPoints are posted on the website under the Board agenda. Dr. Blanchard also shared that District has peer groups (determined by Auditor General’s Office) for different areas. Dr. Blanchard talked about the new Leadership Academy which mentors leaders in the district, teachers, coaches, and academic coaches. The Academy encourages learning, helps develop leaders and promotes retention Free all day kindergarten program for 2015-2016 Board approved calendar for 2015-2016. Dr. Rogers will continue to work with the calendar committee to explore a modified calendar Parent survey questionnaire scheduled to go out in March Please take a minute to complete the Technology survey <p>Discussion: Mrs. Mower mentioned in talking with other school sites there are conflicts in scheduling PTO events/activities. Dr. Rogers is working on communicating with all sites and is working on a master calendar and suggested PTOs continue to work with their site administrator.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Agenda Items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations demonstration lesson Talk about retaining quality teachers what are we doing Diversity and relationship, connecting with our teachers

Combs

J.O. Combs Unified School District

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Parent / Superintendent Council Minutes

February 25, 2015

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Ellsworth Elementary School

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome & Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed everyone and introduced Principal Tammy Stimatze.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ellsworth Elementary – 6th Grade Orchestra Group• 2nd Grade Foundations Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal Stimatze introduced Orchestra teacher Mr. Guido Lavorata and the 6th grade Orchestra students. Ms. Stimatze shared that the Orchestra students serenaded the Ellsworth staff on Valentine’s Day. Students introduced themselves and identified the instruments they play. The Orchestra students were asked a couple of questions by the attendees in the group.• Ms. Stimatze introduced 2nd grade teacher Miss Emileigh Miller. Miss Miller along with several 2nd grade students demonstrated a Foundations lesson starting with the use of flashcards, sounding out the word, pronunciation of syllables, tapping out the sounds they hear and then writing the word on a white board. The teacher guided the students through the exercise.• Mrs. Cassie Bates, Reading Coach, discussed the K-3 phonic program which is about 30-40 minutes of a student’s reading day and covers rules of language and language structure.• Mrs. Bates pointed out a few things about Foundations in that it is a very interactive, sensory exercise. There are many multi-functions in Foundations with demonstrated procedures to enable student to focus on new concepts. Today’s demonstration is just a representation of the Foundations program throughout the District. <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Mrs. Mandeville had some questions about the Foundations program. Mrs. Bates explained that the focus this year was to expand coaching days, Foundations and reading instruction as well as modeling lessons as needed.</p> <p>Mr. Apostol asked about correlation between Foundations and reading improvement. Mrs. Bates noted improvement in Kindergarten at Ranch Elementary. She further explained that District did see gains in grades 1 and 2 but not as much as was seen in Kindergarten.</p> <p>Mrs. Mandeville wanted to know if phonics would remain in grades K-3. Mrs. Bates shared that District’s goal is K-3 Foundations with more intervention for older kids. Mrs. Mandeville asked if there are students that are struggling with the program. Mrs. Bates shared that students are more confident even if they do struggle and that District saw a lot of immediate feedback in regards to Foundations. She mentioned that with the Foundations program, there are rules so students do not have to guess. For those students who need practice and clarification, a double dose lesson is given.</p>

- Governor's Proposed Budget and Legislative Issue

Dr. Blanchard commented that District would continue to track the data. She shared that the training and implementation part has been intensive.

- Dr. Blanchard talked about the Governor's proposed budget and legislative issues. Wanting to share the facts, she reiterated what was in an email she had sent to the community and mentioned the legislative bills. Dr. Blanchard commented the State is not proposing to give public schools any more dollars. The State is proposing \$113 million in cuts statewide. Dr. Blanchard shared a one-page handout (pie chart) which was taken from a PowerPoint presentation created by Mrs. Karla Slovitsky, Director of Business Services. The pie chart was used at a Governing Board presentation a couple of months ago and shows the categories and percentages of spending. She shared that many Superintendents sent communication regarding their concerns to the State.
- Dr. Blanchard noted that the State average is about 10% for administrative costs, stating that the Governor's proposed budget affects all those employees that go in to help support our schools and our students.

Discussion:

Mrs. Hargis asked about transportation dollars, is it one "bucket" and can we take transportation dollars and use in classrooms. Dr. Blanchard explained that no, you cannot just take money and move to a different bucket.

Dr. Blanchard suggested parents communicate to the legislature. When the news first went out, many people initially thought there would be more dollars in the classroom.

Mrs. Hargis inquired about classroom percentage which increased last year when it went to the Board. Dr. Blanchard mentioned 52% to 54% and hovering.

Dr. Blanchard talked about the seven legislative bills that address vouchers and that this is something to be watching for. Since day one, the Governor mandated a Civics test and it appears this will be happening across the nation. Arizona is the first to make this happen. On Friday at 4:00 p.m., there was an emergency bill regarding the AIMS test and that a student did not have to take it to graduate. However, students may take the AIMS test to increase their scores for scholarship purposes.

There was a discussion concerning high school students that did not graduate because they did not pass AIMS. District can now issue those students a diploma.

Mrs. Mandeville asked about graduation requirements. Dr. Blanchard noted that students still must meet the minimum credit requirements to graduate.

Dr. Blanchard noted that District is moving forward with AzMERIT testing this spring.

Mr. Apostol asked if District would be sending letters or email to those students who did not graduate. Dr. Rogers commented that the high school is in the process of contacting those students impacted.

The “Parent opt out” bill was briefly mentioned. The intent of the bill is to give parents the choice to opt out of assessments; however, State will lose federal dollars.

Dr. Blanchard mentioned that there is a bill concerning the start and ending dates of a school calendar. School starts on Labor Day and would end before June 30 but if on a modified calendar, you are exempt. Dr. Blanchard explained that if the bill is approved, District could not convert to a modified calendar.

There was a discussion about the proposed tax credit bill – equalization of tax credit. A person can give money or tax credit; cap the amount of tax dollars we could have and the rest would go to general fund; up to \$47.38.

The Governor’s proposed budget would impact Charter schools by 3.5% reduction.

Dr. Blanchard stressed the importance of getting the facts and the information. If people have questions ask them to contact District or explain by referring to the District’s financial pie chart.

There was a discussion among the group regarding assessment testing since it is not a graduation requirement. Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Rogers explained end of year final.

- Attracting and Retaining Quality Teachers

- Dr. Rogers gave a PowerPoint presentation on recruiting and retaining quality teachers. She discussed what District is currently doing and is working on. Dr. Rogers shared demographic information such as teacher workforce, student makeup, facts about teachers in Arizona, and J.O. Combs staff percentages.
- Dr. Blanchard commented on the number of teachers that have certifications in the state of Arizona versus the number of people who are teaching.
- Dr. Blanchard spoke about the District’s Leadership Academy for our aspiring leaders in the District.
- Dr. Rogers shared information about the upcoming Job Fair April 6th at Combs High School 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Dr. Rogers also discussed some of the ways District is working to recruit teachers such as updating the District’s website, reaching out to universities outside of Arizona, reaching out to other online websites to post employment opportunities, researching search engine optimization (SEO) features, investigating a partnership with Central Arizona College (CAC) for a teacher program, and collaborating with Arizona State University (ASU) and University of Arizona (U of A) for their iTeach programs and placing student teachers.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity - Staff and Students • Food Allergies - School Procedures • Future Agenda Items 	<p>Discussion:</p> <p>Mr. Apostol remarked that the data is good and he appreciates the information considering he had the diversity questions. Dr. Rogers noted that she had attended a conference where a lot of the statistical information had been shared.</p> <p>Mr. Apostol talked about a sense of giving back to the community especially in a large Hispanic community. A recruiting talking point may be that these students need you as mentors in our community. Mr. Apostol stated how much power that has in recruiting teachers.</p> <p>This topic was covered in the PowerPoint presentation given by Dr. Rogers (see previous bullet).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to time limit, the group agreed to move this item to the March agenda. • Legislative updates as things continue to happen • Food Allergies • Middle School Competitive Sports Program
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Parent / Superintendent Council Agenda Minutes
 March 25, 2015
 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 Simonton Elementary School

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed everyone and introduced Principal Bradley Shepstead. A video presenting student activities and campus highpoints played in the background as participants arrived. The video had been shared at the Governing Board meeting (held February 11) as part of the Focus on Students segment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simonton Elementary – <i>Leader in Me</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Shepstead stated that this year he started introducing the <i>7 Habits of Highly Effective People</i> to staff. He explained that the <i>Leader in Me</i> is a school component of that and wants to provide those types of life skills to Simonton students and to implement those practices in their daily lives and at home. Principal Shepstead noted that Simonton applied for a grant sponsored by <i>I am a Leader</i> to fund the program. Simonton will find out by May if approved and if so will implement for next school year. Simonton will host <i>7 Habits of Happy Families</i> on April 15th, 22nd and 29th from 5:45-7:45 p.m. The facilitator is from Franklin Covey and the seminar is free to the community with childcare being provided at no charge. Principal Shepstead introduced Ms. Amelia Ortiz, 5th grade teacher. Ms. Ortiz discussed her classroom experience and said she liked the book so much that she purchased the <i>7 Habits of Highly Effective People</i> by Shawn Covey and <i>8th Habit</i> thereby connecting the two books and using the <i>7 Habits of Happy Kids</i>. Ms. Ortiz uses it in her classroom and she sees the students catching on, doing things without being asked and taking initiative. Ms. Ortiz introduced two students whom she said show their leadership qualities. Both students shared their story about how the <i>7 Habits</i> have helped them in their daily life and how they apply the skills. Ms. Ortiz noted that since implementing the <i>7 Habits</i>, students are willing to be active participants and be engaged, students are willing to do things without being asked. <p>Discussion: Ms. Teresa Whitt asked Ms. Ortiz about what part of the day she works with the <i>7 Habits</i> program. Ms. Ortiz shared that at the beginning it was 10-20 minutes separate from the academic time. As time went by, she started to incorporate the principles within lessons. Her goal is to connect and embed them into class lessons, playground life and social life.</p> <p>There was a discussion about what Simonton plans to do if the grant is not approved. Mr. Shepstead commented that Simonton’s leadership truly believes in this program and it is the right thing for students so let us be optimistic. Ms. Whitt discussed impact on both the student and the parent</p>

• Legislative / Budget Update

and that it is good. Ms. Ortiz shared that it impacted her own relationship with her daughter in a positive way.

Mr. Apostol inquired if there will be any bilingual parent training. Mr. Shepstead said he needs to work on that piece. He is looking into a Spanish version of the parent training.

- Dr. Blanchard talked about the Governor's signed 9.1 billion dollar budget. She noted that the requirement of shifting non classroom to classroom dollars has gone away. There is a slight increase in Maintenance & Operations (M&O) but \$113.5 million across the states reduction in District Additional Assistance. Ms. Slovitsky commented that legislators are starting to recognize that non-classroom dollars are really part of the classroom expenses.
- Dr. Blanchard shared that Pinal County Community College will be funded however Maricopa and Pima are receiving no funding.
- Dr. Blanchard reviewed the status of some of the legislative bills and mentioned another hot topic is Common Core. She explained that five new members have been appointed to the State Board of Education
- Dr. Blanchard mentioned that District is moving forward with AzMERIT testing which starts in two weeks.

Discussion:

There was a discussion about how a decrease in non-classroom dollars affects charter schools noting that public schools are at 5% and charter is at 3%. Ms. Hargis wanted to know why there is a different percentage rate for public schools versus charter. Dr. Blanchard and Ms. Slovitsky shared their opinion that perhaps with charter schools comes "choice" and public schools have the option to conduct override elections. Dr. Blanchard pointed out that public schools were never presented with an explanation.

Dr. Blanchard explained that school officials must conduct a public meeting to show how they are going to reduce additional assistance dollar amount and what that looks like. Ms. Findlay asked if Charter schools have to do that too. Dr. Blanchard and Ms. Slovitsky answered yes.

The group also discussed the funding source for All-Day Kindergarten program and how that came about. Ms. Slovitsky explained the increase from M&O and the use of Community Education dollars to help balance. The goal is to increase student enrollment (need about 100 additional new students) to balance out the budget.

Dr. Blanchard explained that the All-Day Kindergarten program is modeled on the existing Kinder Express program. The Kinder Express program has been successfully running for the past three years. Basically, taking the existing program with a few minor changes and not charging tuition. There was a question if it will put an impact on transportation. Dr. Blanchard said it will actually help since there will be no mid-day route.

Ms. Hargis asked about the 100th day report and if we have any idea about influx regarding students returning from charter schools. Ms. Slovitsky will run those numbers and review.

- Food Allergies – School Procedures

- Dr. Blanchard spoke briefly on the topic of food allergies. Since this was a carryover from the previous agenda, Dr. Blanchard will follow up with Ms. Christa Moak who initially brought up the item but was not in attendance.
- Dr. Blanchard noted that District has very specific procedures that come from the district nurse and are distributed to the health aides at each school site.

Discussion:

There were no additional comments or questions about this topic.

- Community Education

- Ms. Kelly Guerra, Coordinator of Community Education, provided an update concerning the many programs/activities being offered over the summer including Young Coyotes, middle school academic enrichment and high school credit recovery. Summer camp will be held at Ellsworth Elementary. A copy of the summer camp flyer was distributed to the group.
- Dr. Blanchard shared that Ms. Guerra has been running the Community Education Department for the past four years noting that these programs provide opportunities for our community and help to generate revenue (facility rentals).
- Ms. Guerra also shared that the summer food program will be at Ellsworth Elementary this year. Dr. Blanchard explained that this is a community program offering free breakfast and lunch and is funded through the federal food program.
- Ms. Guerra stated that Camps are open to any San Tan Valley student. However transportation is not included.

Discussion:

The group discussed advertising efforts including local news media, “sandwich” boards, and banners.

Ms. Guerra discussed the partnership with EVIT and the middle school enrichment currently on the docket with one or two week camps. Possible classes include: Introduction to java script, cryptology, veterinary camp, robotics, fashion upcycling, babysitting basics, fire science, cosmetology and 3-D graphics. Classes are open to San Tan Valley students ages 12-15 (middle school demographics) and scheduled during the high school summer school times for transportation purposes. Classes will be at the high school. Fees will vary.

Ms. Whitt inquired if there is a fee for middle school intervention.

Ms. Guerra said that it is all paid through Title I. This class focuses on students who have failed a semester or students who need the most help with intervention.

Ms. Whit asked about transportation to middle school and back.

Ms. Guerra may talk to transportation regarding pickup and drop off route times understanding that it is hard for some of the students to get from point A to point B.

Ms. Hargis suggested to the group that they go online once the summer information is posted to Facebook and add a comment in the comments section. She explained that sometimes people are more inclined to read the comments before doing the research.

Ms. Guerra noted that high school summer school is credit recovery only at this time at a cost of \$150.00 per session. She did say that if a student has attended more than 30 hours of tutoring they are “scholarshipped” in. There is also a financial assistance application that may be completed.

Ms. Findlay inquired about a student’s ability to take a math course if they want to take a scientific route of courses. She has a child who wants to take math during summer school. Is there any way to do this through summer school? Ms. Guerra will follow up with Ms. Findlay.

The group discussed some suggestions for adult enrichment classes in the community. Possible foreign language, computer classes, emergency preparedness, CPR, first aide, and basic sewing skills. Ms. Hargis asked if a fitness class may be scheduled during the day at any of our campuses. Ms. Guerra explained that due to security concerns, this is not practical.

Dr. Blanchard recognized Ms. Guerra saying that she is creative and innovative and is very proud of the work Ms. Guerra has done.

- Online Arizona Certification and Information System (OACIS)

- Dr. Blanchard talked about the new Department of Education parent portal called Online Arizona Certification and Information System (OACIS). She explained the purpose of the parent portal which is to find out about your child’s teacher(s) certification.

Discussion:

Ms. Mandeville mentioned that she had read something about the topic; it may have been in the Arizona Republic. Dr. Blanchard noted that the site does not show what grade level is taught by the teacher. Ms. Mandeville asked what to do if a parent has questions about the information they find. Dr. Blanchard suggested that parents contact the teacher’s principal for a follow up discussion.

- Job Fair – April 6th

- Dr. Blanchard talked about the upcoming Job Fair and the various marketing pieces being put in place to advertise the event such as the huge banner on the bus located at the corner of Ironwood and Ocotillo roads. Dr. Blanchard asked the group for their help to promote the event and distributed the job fair flyer.
- Dr. Blanchard shared some key points about the goal of the job fair such as increasing the pool of substitutes.

Discussion:

The group discussed salary structure, emergency certification requirements and the challenges of middle school and high school assignments over elementary.

- Parent Survey

- Dr. Blanchard talked about the parent survey noting that everyone should have received several notifications through the Community Education Department, school site, and their child’s teacher. Due to lack of participation, last year’s survey results were not helpful enough. This year’s survey is open until Friday, March 27. Ms. Hargis shared that with three children enrolled in the district it was much easier to complete the survey this year.
- Dr. Blanchard shared that the parent survey results will be shared with the PSC group at the next meeting scheduled April 29.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscellaneous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Javier Apostol commented that it was nice to receive Jupiter emails generated by the high school counselors which included an issue of the counseling department newsletter. Ms. Mandeville inquired about a parent’s preferred method of communication and how it compares to the District/School email and phone call contact lists. Dr. Blanchard stated that with matters of importance, District would rather over communicate than under communicate. Dr. Blanchard will work with Ms. Guerra to determine how SchoolMessenger is set up at school sites and how the lists are created and maintained. There was a brief discussion about the ability to “unsubscribe” from the email list. Dr. Blanchard noted that as a rule, SchoolMessenger phone call notifications are not sent in the middle of the day unless it is an emergency.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Agenda Items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Parent Survey Update on Job Fair Update on AzMERIT with testing at CMS and CTA being done online and the remaining sites being paper and pencil



Parent / Superintendent Council Minutes
 April 29, 2015
 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 Harmon Elementary School

Topic	Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Gayle Blanchard welcomed everyone and introduced Harmon Principal Angie Beauchene. Ms. Beauchene is the newest principal in the district having served as interim and officially appointed to the position in March. Dr. Blanchard remarked that Ms. Beauchene is doing a fabulous job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmon Elementary – Write from the Beginning • Job Fair Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Beauchene thanked Harmon PTSO for providing lunch. She introduced Ms. Mitzi Prueher, 1/2 Grade Combo Teacher who talked about the pilot program Write from the Beginning. The program teaches students how to express their thoughts through writing. Ms. Prueher’s students gave a presentation about the steps they use to write. Two students shared their writings. • Ms. Prueher discussed paragraph, organizers, circle maps and flow maps and that as the teacher she provides the student with writing ideas. Several students shared their writing assignments. • Dr. Blanchard noted there will be a recommendation to the Governing Board for approval of the Write from the Beginning program at the next board meeting. • Ms. Beauchene commented it is a great way for students to organize their thoughts and has been very effective with the use of thinking maps. <p>Discussion: Ms. Mandeville asked if Ms. Beauchene has seen improvement in Harmon scores. Ms. Beauchene said yes.</p> <p>Ms. Dunker explained the District’s Write from the Beginning pilot program. Mr. Apostol mentioned that in his work place, engineers use a similar mind mapping process, noting the business and education connection.</p> <p>Dr. Blanchard commented what an outstanding teacher Ms. Prueher is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Blanchard provided an update about the Job Fair held in April. She said there were over 250 people in attendance. Dr. Blanchard recognized the Leadership Academy for their efforts to help man tables and help with interviews. Principals also attended. She mentioned that 25 teachers from the event had been hired and four or five support staff. She acknowledged Dr. Rogers for doing a nice job. <p>Discussion: Ms. Mandeville commented that the job fair was one of the most organized events she had been to and noted that the computers were full the entire time.</p>

- Bonding Capacity and District Needs

- Dr. Blanchard explained that District is seeking input and is soliciting ideas and thoughts from the group. District is in the process of conducting a needs analysis regarding capital needs for such things as repairs, building, technology, air conditioning, roofing, buses, etc.
- State of Arizona has reduced capital dollars within the last five years. Now referred to as District Additional Assistance (DAA). Projected DAA for 2015-2016 = 2.1 million, 2015-2016 State Reduction of DAA = 1.8 million, total DAA dollars available for 2015-2016 = \$259,874
- Dr. Blanchard identified four categories of need: Technology, Transportation, Facility Maintenance, and Auditorium.

Discussion:

The group discussed the four categories including the possibility of an auditorium for the high school. Dr. Blanchard explained that the original site design included a location for a large venue that would allow the District to utilize the space for our programs such as band and drama and renting it through facility rental program. There is no other venue like that in San Tan Valley. Similar venues are in Queen Creek or Higley and District must pay to utilize those venues.

Most members in the group support an auditorium believing it to be beneficial to the District as well as the community. Schools are the hub of a community. Ms. Christa Moak asked where the rental money would end up going. Ms. Slovitsky explained that any revenue would go into a fund for civic use of any type of M&O expenses. Additional questions pertained to construction, such as seating capacity and construction timeline.

Dr. Blanchard asked the group to prioritize the four categories. The group agreed that Transportation is the priority.

Ms. Whitt remarked that an auditorium is a money generating opportunity. Mr. Apostol stated that performing arts does good things for kids.

Dr. Blanchard explained the option of selling bonds. Selling bonds requires approval from the governing board and goes out to the voters during an election.

Dr. Blanchard noted that District is in the planning stage of gathering data and the impact on tax rate. Dr. Blanchard asked for input to try to determine where the threshold is for the community. She asked if we could do all four things for an additional \$90 per year per home is that asking too much from our community. The group asked questions about a survey. Dr. Blanchard explained that a phone survey was done in the past by an outside agency for a truly unbiased report.

The group discussed that it needs to be understood where the money is going, how it is being used, and the terms of how long to fund (how long does it affect us). Dr. Blanchard believes all four categories are important. Those needs are not going to go away.

Dr. Blanchard explained that good schools maintain home values; if you have quality programs and quality schools then home values increase.

Dr. Blanchard shared that there is a Study Session scheduled May 6 to discuss the subject in greater depth.

AzMERIT Testing Update

- Ms. Dunker provided an update about AzMERIT testing noting that tests have been boxed up and are ready for pickup. Adding that there are no major issues on the test.
- Ms. Dunker explained that test results will be available sometime in September.

Discussion:

Ms. Mandeville shared her thoughts about the testing, commenting that her sixth grader and third grader like the test. Both were a paper and pencil test.

Ms. Mendoza mentioned that her child can't type so it took him longer to complete the on-line test. She asked if typing skills will be offered in the future. Ms. Dunker acknowledged that typing was one of the challenges and that there will be an opportunity to spend some time on keyboarding.

Ms. Mendoza asked if the test schedule will be a whole month long. Ms. Dunker discussed the writing testing schedules. District will look at the testing schedule for the middle school for next year.

Some of the parents mentioned that they heard that teachers do not have time to get grading caught up in Jupiter Grades during AzMERIT testing. Ms. Dunker will follow up.

Ms. Dunker explained that there are accommodations for the students such as color overlays for visually impaired students and options to magnify.

The group discussed the expectation for scores. Dr. Blanchard mentioned that District does not know what the bar is going to be; cut points of the test. District does not know what the data is going to look like. However, school letter grades are gone for this year and next. Dr. Blanchard will explain and communicate that information to community, parents, and students as the District receives updated information.

Ms. Dunker confirmed that parents will receive their child's individual test score(s). If she receives any updates during the summer, she will send them to Dr. Blanchard. Dr. Blanchard will forward to PSC members.

- AdvanceED Accreditation, Combs High School
- State Board of Education Committee
- ADE Equity Town Hall Meetings

- Dr. Blanchard mentioned to the group that they should have received information from Ms. Mayberry to take a survey. She asked that they please share with other high school parents.
- Dr. Blanchard briefly discussed the process of accreditation.
- Dr. Blanchard shared information regarding opportunities that the group might be interested in. Dr. Blanchard will send the State Board of Education link to the group. Please note the application process closes on May 6.
- Dr. Blanchard shared a handout detailing information about Arizona Department of Education Equity Town Hall sessions. ADE is looking for stakeholders. This opportunity is different from the Diane Douglas listening tour meetings. Dr. Blanchard will resend the email regarding the listening tour with locations.

- Miscellaneous

- Future Agenda Items

- Dr. Blanchard explained that these Equity Town Halls are a part of a new project. Sessions in San Tan Valley are scheduled May 4 from 5-7:00 p.m. at Walker Butte Elementary.
- A packet of Community Education information promoting events and summer programs were made available to the group.
- Dr. Blanchard closed the meeting by thanking the group for their thoughts, suggestions, service and commitment. She further added that on behalf of the Governing Board thank you for your dedication to this group and the District.
- Ms. Mendoza asked for the “things I wish I knew” information for incoming high school. Mr. Apostol had volunteered to generate this material and agreed to create and share.
- Ms. Whitt recognized that career path information for students going to college has improved at the high school.

- None listed.