



Parent-Superintendent Council Minutes
November 16, 2016
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Ellsworth Elementary

Topic	Summary
• Welcome and Introductions	• Dr. Blanchard welcomed the group.
• Ellsworth Elementary - <i>Poems for Veterans and Violinists - America the Beautiful</i>	• Ms. Tammy Stimatze, Ellsworth Elementary Principal, put the spotlight on two sixth grade student violinists who played <i>America the Beautiful</i>. • Third grade teacher, Ms. Carrie McClure, spoke about Ellsworth's Veterans Day assembly highlighting how staff and students celebrated community veterans through poetry and music. Additionally, Ellsworth displayed many of the veteran bios in the foyer. Ms. McClure described the poetry contest explaining that each grade wrote for a specific branch of the military. With each branch of the military represented, students shared their winning poem. Discussion: Dr. Blanchard commented positively about the Veterans Day activities at each of the school sites, noting how well put together their programs were.
• Bond Election Update	• Dr. Blanchard provided an update regarding the Bond Election noting that the county is still counting ballots but results appear favorable. The results must go before the County Board of Supervisors. Dr. Blanchard will release an update and thanked everyone for all their help and support. She also thanked Ms. Hargis and Mr. D'Elena for their guidance and leadership with their Political Action Committee (PAC) and appreciates the community support. Discussion: As a representative of the PAC, Ms. Hargis is working on a "thank you" event for all the individuals who helped in some way with the bond election. The event is December 8, 2016 from 3-5pm at the Olive Mill. Mr. D'Elena explained "thank you STV" stickers will be pasted on the existing "Vote YES" banners as a way to let the J.O. Combs community know the PAC appreciates their efforts. He noted that the banners can stay up for 30 days after the election. Director of Business Services, Ms. Karla Slovitsky discussed the District's next steps for the distribution of bond funds (\$36.8 million) and the timeline for the sale of the bonds, as well as timing of construction. Ms. Slovitsky explained that we will have four bond sales and that we will

probably see a few new buses, some new technology, and hopefully the construction of the auditorium at the high school.

Dr. Blanchard indicated that updates and timelines will be shared on the Combs Kids Count! Facebook page.

Ms. Kathy Flynn inquired about the investors as it relates to the sale of the bonds. Ms. Slovisky clarified that we really do not know who buys the bonds but will bring this information (big investors or bank) back to the group.

- Food Allergies / Food Service Protocol

- Director of Support Services, Ms. Shannon Weber and Food and Nutrition Supervisor, Ms. Jennifer Roorda presented on the subject of Food allergies, specifically how the District supports the students who have known food allergies. Ms. Roorda explained the protocol, which includes yearly written documentation i.e., the Diet Order Form or the Allergy Form indicating the food allergen (such as lactose intolerant) which is then flagged for the student (should student choose from a-la-carte). The same rules apply to the after-school programs.
- Ms. Roorda also explained that many school sites have a peanut free zone as well as celiac disease zone. There are separate meal preparation areas, which also take into consideration anaphylactic risk. However, it is up to teachers to designate peanut free classrooms and forms are routed.

Discussion:

Ms. Stimatze described how she has managed food allergies at the classroom level. Often the school nurse will explain to students what a peanut allergy is and there is a 6th grader who advocates for himself.

Ms. Roorda noted that peanuts by far, are the biggest allergy issue and that special diets are in place for gluten and lactose intolerant students. Food Services will also flag a student account for vegetarian meals.

- Polarfest, SciTech Festival

- Ms. Kelly Guerra spoke about two big community events, Polarfest and SciTech Festival.
 - Polarfest on December 10th at Combs Middle School. The community is invited to this fun, family-friendly day filled with food, carnival rides and Santa.
 - SciTech Festival on February 16, 2017 at Combs High School from 6-7pm. The SciTech festival is a statewide initiative to raise awareness to continue to promote STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) or STEAM with the arts. A pamphlet will be sent home indicating we are an event host with all schools participating at some level (aerospace challenge and all high school CTE courses). There will be vendors and the event provides great fun activities for students to learn science.

Discussion:

Ms. Guerra shared that District is partnering with the *East Valley Ledger* to create a newsprint issue showcasing J.O. Combs. The issue will

• District Calendar (2017-2018)	include advertisements and represent each one of our schools and the amazing things they are doing. The plan is to distribute the newsprint issue at the Polarfest event. Additional issues are planned for February 2017 and May 2017. The May issue will highlight graduates both past and current. Ms. Guerra informed the group that high school journalism and photography students are contributors to these projects. • Dr. Blanchard discussed the steps involved in finalizing the District calendar. The process involves a yearly review of what works and what does not and includes the Calendar Committee, which looks at professional development days. She explained that calendars are pushed out two years at a time so we have one more year with our traditional calendar. • We will continue to have conversations regarding a modified calendar being mindful of the financial costs and resources such as utilities and maintenance. We will start the conversation again about the modified calendar with the calendar committee and parents. Discussion: Concerning the Wednesday ½ day schedule, the group discussed professional development for teachers recognizing that Friday is not the best day of the week to schedule professional development days. In regards to a modified calendar, there are other factors to consider such as support staff schedules in relation to delayed payroll procedures, discussed what other districts are doing, and understanding the scheduling impact of athletics and fine arts programs. Dr. Blanchard asked by a show of hands, how many preferred a traditional calendar over a modified calendar. By show of hands, five out of ten persons preferred the traditional calendar. Several had no preference. The group discussed the timing of fall break. Someone suggested the Wednesday before Thanksgiving be a no school day. Dr. Blanchard reminded the group if we designate the Wednesday before Thanksgiving a no school day then we have to pick it up somewhere else in the calendar. The group shared that they like the traditional calendar mid-week start. Dr. Blanchard pointed out that there is no information out there to support student achievement from the standpoint of a modified calendar.
• Miscellaneous	• Dr. Blanchard briefly discussed the middle school’s Cougar Skills for Success (CSS) program and that staff is moving forward with options for CSS. To be exact, looking at the best way to meet individual needs of students or making time for intervention. • Purchasing of buses will be to replace those that need to go. • Middle school schedule, later start therefore students are getting home later. Dr. Blanchard revealed that developmentally a later start is better based on research. However, in terms of schedules, athletic programs are an issue at the high school level.

	• Brief mention about lighting issues at the high school specifically, the in between lights at band room area (lights not working). Ms. Weber will check on it and look at the possibility of placing one more light in the walkway. • Elementary School Lunch Schedules - Dr. Blanchard to discuss this item with principals. • Dr. Blanchard confirmed that Combs High School Principal, Ms. Brooke Davis is starting to explore a split lunch schedule. • In response to a question regarding consequence options versus losing recess at the elementary site level, Dr. Blanchard affirmed that she does not support group punishment. This specific issue was referred to appropriate site administrator.
• Future Agenda Items	• Bond Sales