

Marathon Middle/High School Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

April 3, 2012

6:00 PM MMHS Media Center

SAC Members in Attendance: Principal Hammond Gracy, Assistant Principals Liz Logan and Wendy McPherson, Athletic Director Teresa Konrath, Secretary Anita Nelson, Karen Angle, Diane Culver, Delvis DelPozo (Cabrera), SGA Representative Alexander Morato, Mike Puto, and Suzanne Ryals. **Not in attendance:** Beth Ann Connell, Louis Gonzalez, Lisa Maeder, Karen McKeon, Spook Roussin, and Regina Ryan.

1.,2. Welcome:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Secretary Anita Nelson, in Mr. Gonzalez' absence due to baseball coaching commitments. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Karen Angle made a motion to approve the minutes to the March 6, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mike Puto and was unanimously approved.

4. Special Music Performance and Presentation:

Band instructor Mr. Rayhill and his students, Hannah, Annie and Abby Gracy, performed two jazz numbers for the audience; Hannah gave a presentation of her views on why electives should not be cut due to budget constraints - namely, that electives, and the arts specifically, are what many students enjoy and what encourages them to stay in school and to keep trying.

5. Dolphins of Distinction:

a. Dolphins of Distinction for March and April were announced. Awards will be presented to non-certificated personnel, office manager Regina Ryan and CCC lab technician Sharon Helms; both are essential employees without whom the school could not operate efficiently. Certificated personnel awards go to Mike Lettau, who has worked with multiple grade levels in implementing writing curriculum and improving writing performance; and to social studies teacher Jeanette Maresma, who has helped her middle school students achieve top scores. Ms. Maresma was on hand to receive her award.

6. Teacher Appreciation Week

a. Ms. Nelson announced that Teacher Appreciation Week is coming up the week of May 7th; specific information will be forthcoming by e-mail. SAC members will be asked to assist with a luncheon to say "thank you" to our hardworking teachers and staff members; donations of small gifts to teachers and staffers, to be presented via drawings each morning, are encouraged. We will coordinate with the culinary department and tentatively hold the luncheon in the Dolphin Bistro.

7. SGA President's Report:

SGA President, Alexander Morato, and advisor, Suzanne Ryals, summarized SGA and class activities as follows:

a. Elections for class and SGA officers will take place this Thursday, April 5th; an impressive number of students are participating and running for office.

- b. Kudos to the many MMHS students who participated in the Relay for Life event.
- c. Honor roll assemblies, to honor students who have excelled the 3rd nine weeks and had perfect attendance, will be scheduled shortly.
- d. High school field day will be Friday, April 13th from 1-2:30 p.m.
- e. A senior class fund-raising car wash is scheduled for April 15th at IberiaBank.
- f. *Class of 2012*: Grad Bash is April 27-28. The “senior wall” will be posted in both the cafeteria and the media center. This is intended to encourage underclassmen and give seniors a chance to “show off.”
- g. *Class of 2013*: A bagging fundraiser will take place this Saturday, April 7th, at Publix. A garage sale will take place on Saturday, April 14th, in the Winn Dixie parking lot, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.; donations are needed and may be brought into the school office any time before the sale. Prom, with the theme of “Arabian Paradise,” will be on May 19th at Sombrero Country Club. Advance tickets @ \$30 will be available starting May 7th, and will be \$40 at the door. Library fines must be cleared before tickets can be issued to seniors or sold to juniors or dates. Formal attire is encouraged, appropriate behavior expected, and inappropriate dancing prohibited.
- h. *Class of 2014*: There will be a fundraising car wash at IberiaBank on April 22nd from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Presale of tickets to schedule car washes are available, with a minimum suggested donation of \$5. A hot dog eating competition will take place at lunchtime on May 2nd; donation for a team of 5 to enter is \$25; winners will receive a reward in food that is NOT a hot dog.
- i. *Class of 2015*: Is continuing to take orders for t-shirts
- j. *Class of 2016*: Kudos to their participation: Fifteen students are running for class offices.

8. ***Principal’s Report:***

Mr. Gracy offered some information on budget and other issues for the remainder of this year and for 2012-13; see the full report, attached. The main point is that our budget is already “cut to the bone,” with the prospect of further cuts for the 2012-13 year. Highlights included:

- a. MMHS is in danger of losing 5 teaching positions for next school year. In addition, two assistant principals (needed at our school), our bookkeeper and data entry clerk are not fully funded. We are over allocation with paraprofessionals, and the athletic director had a full teaching load – including teaching Keys Center Academy students - in addition to AD duties. Additional funding would be needed to return to 7 class periods next year.
- b. To retain two assistant principals this year, they took on additional duties at a pay cut, including co-teaching to meet classroom size requirements; critical thinking classes; and the yearbook class.
- c. If layoffs are required, some beginning teachers may have to be cut, and non-core class sizes increased.
- d. The ISS (In-school Suspension) option might be cut for 2012-13. If so, the only alternatives will be detention and Out-of-School Suspension. OSS does not give students the opportunity to make up work. Recently, ISS has been

“covered” by rotating three paraprofessionals, so no one para became “burnt out.”

- e. In spite of budget constraints, MMHS has done a great job in 2011-12 in supporting a full program of activities, support services and sports for 620 students, including many ESE and 61 ESOL students. The recently approved ½-mil did *not* solve the District’s budget woes. The three high school principals have conferred in attempting to come up with solutions. Loss of some electives, such as music, art and P.E.; and outsourcing and consolidation of some services, such as food services and transportation, is probable for next year. A final 2012-13 budget is due to the District office by April 13th.
- f. Stakeholders are encouraged to attend Superintendent Jara’s town hall meeting to discuss budget matters, to be held Tuesday, April 10th from 6-8 p.m. in the media center. Participants are asked to come with suggestions for solutions, not just gripes.
- g. The search for an appointed superintendent is underway, and details can be found on the District Web site.
- h. The implementation of an Academic Booster Club (ABC) is recommended. The Club would be independent of the school and SAC. The goals of ABC might be to support – financially and otherwise – programs such as AVID and Advanced Placement; to find funding for these programs as well as grants and endowments; to find funding for school supplies; to recognize students for academic success; and to promote Saturday school and summer bridge programs, as well as other initiatives as approved by the ABC. Melissa Grady from Centennial Bank is a contact person.
- i. One comment made was whether a solution might be to look at the millage side of the budget question, instead of continuing to cut expenses “past the bone.”
- j. Information on Florida Virtual School (FLVS) courses which are available, for summer and for credit recovery, was provided; please see the attached summary. Students/parents are encouraged to talk to their guidance counselor to determine if credit recovery/forgiveness is possible.
- k. One discussion topic was whether MMHS loses an FTE (full-time equivalent) funding allocation for a student taking online classes; if the student takes a majority of “live” classes at MMHS, there is no loss of FTEs.

9.,10. Assistant Principal Updates:

High School and Middle School Updates: Ms. McPherson and Ms. Logan reported on the following:

- a. Twenty students have been recruited from Sugarloaf School to attend MMHS next year.
- b. Yearbook sales are needed; cost is \$65. Yearbooks will be distributed about 3 days before the end of school.
- c. FCAT testing will take place starting the week of April 16th. Sixth grade reading tests will be computer-based, but other tests (reading, math, science) will be “hard copy.”

- d. A combined AVID/National Junior Honor Society/Critical Thinking classes field trip to Florida Gulf Coast University has been approved for May 10th. Ms. Buhyoff is coordinating the trip.
- e. Orientation is scheduled for incoming 6th graders: On May 3rd, a group of students will go to Switlik School; on May 9th, Switlik students will come to MMHS. Ms. Logan asks for ideas to help incoming students transition to their new school.
- f. Eighth graders are planning a “Peace Day”/anti-bullying campaign, to take place Friday, May 11th. Middle school classes will rotate through booths which will be set up.

11. Athletic Report:

Ms. Konrath reported on the following:

- a. Cheerleading and volleyball tryouts are coming up, plus a spring football tournament to take place at Coral Shores.
- b. The baseball team has a Thursday game with Miami Country Day, and District and Conference tournaments are upcoming. The softball team has scored some wins, including one recent matchup with a 6A school.
- c. Kudos to the Marathon Alumni Athletic Club – in particular, Luis Gonzalez, Spook Roussin and Mike Puto – for supporting MMHS sports. 478 stone crab dinner tickets were sold in the recent fundraiser, and combined with the \$10K drawing, generated \$31,000 gross to support scholarships and travel costs. Vivian Culmer was the grand prize winner in the drawing.

12. Open Agenda Items:

- a. Ms. Nelson reminded attendees that an initial slate of SAC board members would be presented at the next meeting. Volunteers to serve on the 2012-13 board are requested. Luis Gonzalez has volunteered to continue as Chairperson if elected.
- b. Ms. Ryals emphasized that students should confer with teachers to determine if teachers would be willing to tutor students and/or allow makeup or retakes of assignments and tests for grade recovery. She advised students not to wait until the last minute, however, and to keep appointments.
- c. Ms. Konrath encouraged members to attend the town hall meeting and voice their concerns about the budget, saying that “cutting electives is not OK.”
- d. Mr. Gonzalez lead some discussion about when the newly appointed superintendent would begin, who is on the selection committee, and what level of fund balance the district has to maintain. This latter amount is controllable and determined by the school board.
- e. It was announced that Governor Scott and Cabinet members will be visiting the Keys on May 8th. They will have a meeting, open to the public, from 9-11 a.m. in the Switlik School cafeteria.

13. Adjournment:

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted this 9th day of April, 2012, by
Anita J. Nelson, Secretary

(Note: Sports and testing schedules and the school calendar are posted on the school Web site and on the Florida Department of Education site. Please see Addendum for Principal's Report.)