

# Marathon Middle/High School Advisory Council

## MEETING MINUTES

January 11, 2011

6:00 PM Marathon High School Media Center

**SAC Board Members in Attendance:** Principal Hammond Gracy; Assistant Principal Wendy McPherson; Luis Gonzalez; Cindy Durkin Bull; Anita Nelson; Karen McKeon; Karen Angle; Beth Ann Connell and SGA President Annabelle Walker; **Not in attendance:** Assistant Principal Liz Logan; Teresa Konrath; Regina Morgan; Tammy Bruland; Delvis Cabrera; David and Tara Coleman; Diane Culver; Debra Davis; Tracy Hannah; Mike Puto and Spook Roussin.

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by SAC Chair, Luis Gonzalez, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance directed by SGA President, Annabelle Walker.

1. **Approval of Minutes:**  
Ms. Durkin Bull moved to approve the December 7, 2010 minutes, Ms. Walker seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by those in attendance. (Approval was solicited and obtained via e-mail from additional board members to represent a quorum.)
2. **Dolphins of Distinction:** Council Chair Mr. Gonzalez and Principal Gracy presented the January awards. The instructional recipient was math teacher Mark Van Voorst and the staff member recipient was auditorium manager and Webmaster David Oser. Both go above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff.
3. **Student Government Association Report:** SGA President Annabelle Walker reported on SGA activities as follows:
  - a. Seniors are distributing computerized Valentine's Day compatibility surveys which when returned and tabulated will provide personalized lists of compatible classmates.
  - b. Senior Grad Bash is Friday and Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at Universal Studios, Orlando.
  - c. Juniors have settled on "A Masked Affair," a costume party, as the theme for prom. Students are asked to not wear masks to the dance, but masks will be provided as party favors. Prom will be held at the airport terminal. Juniors will also host a "Sadie Hawkins dance" on Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup> from 9 p.m. to midnight in the Switlik cafetorium.
4. **Keynote Topic: Student Services/Attendance Process:** Keys Center Counselor Mary Lou Darczuk reported on efforts to improve attendance at MM/MHS. She - as well as Lourdes Gomez (data entry), Kristen Butcher (MMS Counselor) and Kathy Sympton (MHS Counselor) - is part of the Attendance Intervention Team (AIT) which meets weekly. Ms. Darczuk outlined steps which are taken if a student has excessive absences:
  - a. After five or more unexcused absences, the AIT meets and a letter goes out to parents.
  - b. If absences continue, the Truancy Intervention Committee, including Mr. Gracy, meets and a second letter goes out to parents. Mr. Anthony Pica from the Department of Juvenile Justice may also intervene, via

the DJJ's "SINS/FINS" program ("Students in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services"). Other placements for the student in question may be considered.

5. ***Principal's Report:*** Mr. Gracy summarized progress in implementing the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program at MHS. Keys high school principals Mr. Gracy, Dr. Rodriguez and Ms. Axford have met and the schools are preparing for an April 1<sup>st</sup> application deadline. One goal is to be the first Florida school district to begin implementing the IB program in the elementary grades and continuing on up into high school. Further implementation steps will or may include:
  - a. Videoconferencing with other schools to provide curriculum that might otherwise not be available;
  - b. Putting qualified instructional staff in place; and
  - c. Passing an accreditation phase.Other points made included:
  - d. Teacher training in the IB program will take place before the end of the year and next summer;
  - e. Next year's 9<sup>th</sup> grade class will be the first cohort, and the students will take their first exams in 11<sup>th</sup> grade;
  - f. Partial IB participation is possible; and
  - g. Mr. Gracy and Dr. Canaday met today to discuss scheduling to promote student success in the IB program. Scheduling will likely differ from existing schedules and will be geared toward student needs, not necessarily adults'. IB meetings are occurring throughout this week, and stakeholders will know the schedules by the end of this year.
6. ***Middle School Update:*** Gifted teacher Ms. Skaggs reported on efforts to promote the success of middle school students, including:
  - a. Teacher "adoption" of students having low grades or attendance issues, to foster improvement; and
  - b. The "scripted" Springboard Math and Language Arts curricula created by the College Board, which have been a big hit. Springboard promotes higher-level reasoning skills and consistency in the curriculum.
7. ***High School Update:*** Assistant Principal McPherson and Mr. Gracy reported on the following:
  - a. Midterm exams will be on January 14<sup>th</sup> (for first period high school classes only on this date), and January 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Current tests are being written by high school teams, but the Florida Department of Education and the schools are working to implement state-developed end-of-course exams. See the school's Web site for the exam schedule.
  - b. Teacher contracts were ratified by United Teachers of Monroe, and have been sent to the School Board for approval. Teacher accountability is a big part of the new three-year contract.
  - c. High school efforts to promote student success mirror those occurring in the middle school, and include catch-up contracts with students.

- d. Mr. Gracy emphasized that it is best to focus on a few initiatives (IB, AP, AVID, Springboard), and make these a success, rather than getting carried away with initiatives.
  - e. In a Florida Department of Education letter from Commissioner Eric J. Smith, Florida was acknowledged for achieving a #5 ranking in Education Week's annual "Quality Counts" report. This is an improvement over 2010's #9 rank.
8. ***Athletic Update:*** In Ms. Konrath's absence due to sports activities, Mr. Gonzalez reported on the following:
- a. The fall sports awards assembly will be at 6 p.m. on February 3<sup>rd</sup> in the auditorium. This is the day before honor roll assemblies.
  - b. Softball tryouts are this week.
  - c. Baseball tryouts will be next Tuesday.
  - d. Girls' soccer districts will unfortunately be during midterm week. Players will be able to make up any missed exams on Friday the 21<sup>st</sup>.
9. ***Math Department and Other Openings:*** Mr. Gracy reported on the ongoing efforts to hire a teacher for the senior high/DE math opening, in the wake of Mr. Kailian's resignation, and also reported on other job openings:
- a. A qualified math teacher, not necessarily with a master's degree but with an enthusiasm for teaching, is being sought. FKCC has been approached to determine if an adjunct professor from the college could be enlisted to co-teach the college-level classes on a part-time basis so the students might achieve DE credits. FKCC has assured the school that there will be no penalties for withdrawing from the DE classes if that is the only option. The college algebra class will transition to a pre-calculus course.
  - b. Mr. Green has tendered his resignation, and a qualified culinary instructor is being sought. Mr. Green is working feverishly to complete the Dolphin Bistro before his departure.
  - c. Mr. Keeney has resigned to pursue a law enforcement career, and candidates are also being interviewed to succeed Ms. Clark as bookkeeper.
10. ***Open Agenda Items:***
- a. A question again arose as to whether FTE (Full Time Equivalent) dollars at \$5 per student will be coming to the school for this year and last. This will be researched.
  - b. PSAT results will be available after midterms.
11. ***Adjournment:*** There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

(Note: The monthly calendar and testing schedules are available on the MHS and District Web sites, respectively; school accountability reports are available on the Florida Department of Education website.)

Minutes submitted January 18, 2010 by Anita J. Nelson, SAC Secretary