

Oxford PTA Meeting Notes
Coffee with the Principal/PTA Meeting
2/26/16

Meeting called to order at 8:10, approximately 12 people in attendance, including PTA Co-Presidents, Secretary and Principal.

Beth discussed the kind of professional development the staff does each Wednesday when the school day ends early. She highlighted the following:

1.- A recent discussion was held at a staff meeting about Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset, emphasizing the importance of hard work and practice to achieve success/master new skills.

Kirsten Tobey raised a question about how to focus 'growth mindset' for students who finish early. Beth replied that this is more easily supported for reading and writing, but math is still a growth area. They are going to be bringing in some new options: including Logic Links and increased options like Marcy Cooke math, etc.

2.- Importance of increased teacher observations in each other's classrooms, with debriefing and information-sharing on Wednesday.

Visiting grandparent asked whether teacher evaluations of teachers has been considered, with an emphasis on a 'peer review,' specific issues approach (rather than as a critique). Beth highlighted student participation on SGC survey and CA Healthy Kids survey. Last year's survey information from kids may not have been analyzed.

3.- Grade-level collaboration time often occurs at this time as well-- it is open (Beth can not direct what is covered during that time due to union rules), but teachers really value the time.

4.- Curriculum discussions are frequent with an effort to tweak/improve as needed. Recent cross-grade level collaboration focused on math was very productive, with teachers focusing on what specific skills are needed when students enter each grade level. An effort will be made to link afterschool math intervention to specific material being covered in the classrooms at the same time. Similar days focused on writing and reading are forthcoming.

Nina Cohen reported from a recent district-level meeting about the math curriculum, which has been set. Differentiation and intervention on both ends of the learning spectrum are district-wide areas of need.

5.- 'Equity strategies,' – including: high help/high expectations; connecting to their lives; multiple teaching strategies; opting-in (no pass to opt-out) – are a

district-wide area of focus that Principal Rhine is actively engaging with at Oxford.

Visiting grandparent raised theater as a powerful way to involve more students in classroom activity. Betsy Maisl emphasized how inclusive and engaging it can be.

Miscellaneous: Kimberley Gregg raised the importance of streamlining fundraising goals and being more strategic with our focus. (For example, emphasizing activities like the recent symphony). Importance of sitting down before next year to strategize calendar and communication strategies, focusing on direct ask and community matching. Nina Cohen described the importance of focusing on which events we should/should not continue with them as the first step.

Discussion followed with Betsy Maisl, Aida Pons-Garcia, Nina Cohen, Kimberley Gregg, Kathy Flock, Amy Feldman.