

MINUTES
11/28/16 SITE COUNCIL MEETING

In attendance: Ray Aponte, Steve Richter, Sharon White, Sharon Rush, Steve Simondet, Mercedes Reynolds, Arthur French, Michael Luseni, Scott Schluter, Richard Mammen, Rick Wessling, Mike Prestine, and Karen Holly.

Principal's Report:

Ray shared referral comparison data (see attached). Numbers have dropped by about half. He's pleased with the work the school-wide engagement plan has implemented.

Also went over aggregate data: GPA is up and failure rates are down. He believes it's due to more students taking advantage of coaching and mentoring on a regular basis. Additionally, we have fewer suspensions. Student engagement is key. It was asked how we measure growth/improvement: student surveys, GPA, raw numbers.

SIP:

Steve Simondet handed out an information sheet (attached).

General Discussion – Athletic Field:

Steve Richter just became more involved after some Washburn Site Council parents contacted him about 10 days ago. Scott Schluter has been involved and trying to find answer/information. He's started a blog – mpsneedsaplan.weebly.com. The main concern is there has to be a long term plan. The property around South is being eaten up so there will be no possibility in the future to expand/improve.

Richard Mammen was on the board in 2014 when the Brown Building was sold to Hennepin County and this plan started taking shape. In the Spring of 2015, the land on Lake Street was purchased to move ABE and Transition Plus into one space. Transition Plus is currently at the Wilder Building servicing approximately 280 to 300 students. The facility was built as an elementary school so it's not ideal for students 18 years and older.

Superintendent Graff has approved the decision to move forward with this plan. At the 11/15/16 school board meeting, the board approved to apply for a \$350,000.00 grant for athletic field improvements at South and North High.

Rick Wessling from Urban Works showed drawings of the plans for the space purchased on Lake Street. ABE will have 23 classrooms that will be shared with Transition Plus – since that program ends at 4:30 pm daily. This site was chosen because a large number of people that would use this facility live within a 2.5 mile radius. The close proximity to mass transit was also a factor. It was asked if other spaces were looked at – i.e. Cooper off Lake Street. That’s a building that would be sufficient in size and also fits the above criteria. Couldn’t Wilder be renovated to accommodate students 18 years and older? The district says Wilder’s lay out doesn’t work – rooms scattered, restrooms not appropriate for adults, lighting not sufficient. Does not serve as a state of the art facility. The district did look at the vacant Rainbow Foods building but that was not chosen.

The Board was going to vote on the 5-year capital plan Tuesday, November 29th. This Lake Street property project was approved previously by the Board.

Mike Prestine says the project is currently in the design phase. Once the design is approved, construction will begin. It’s a linear time-line. They figure it will be about 18 months before ground is broken.

Site Council wants a community conversation regarding South – our needs. What can be done? What are the limits? What funds are available? Mr. Luseni gave a “silo” analogy. We don’t want individual programs/spaces going on all around us without working together. This could be an opportunity to benefit South and ABE/Transition Plus. Want to make it clear we are not opposed to a building for ABE and Transition Plus. Just want to find a way that will benefit the entire South High Community.

Resolution: Want a conversation! We want to look at this as an asset – a comprehensive South High “Campus”. Steve Richter, Scott Schluter, Arthur French and other Site Council members will draft a letter. We want to express our concerns that there is no shared vision and we want to slow down the process so there is time to discuss how to integrate South High into this plan. We are not convinced there are any plans in the works in regards to South High’s needs. We want a plan in place before this process proceeds. Site Council members need to look at a few dates to attend PUSH meetings or hold Town Hall meetings to involve the South community and families. Frustration is high. The district may think South High was part of the conversation in 2014 when all this was being decided, but it was not – at least at the parent/family level.

Future Agenda Items:

Move forward with involving South High parents/families in regards to future plans for South.