

Central Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Gathering Notes for Central Families

Monday, November 14, 2022, 7:00-8:30 pm

Zoom Conference Call

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85109415828>

November PAC Meeting [Agenda](#)

Notes:

7:00 pm Welcome — *Sunny Kase, & Anika Carter Ward, PAC Co-Chairs*

- Format of PAC meetings - These are gatherings. Our goals for these gatherings are to introduce people, share information about what you want to know about where your child is going to school. We are working to build community.
 - Mint provides translation services for families. Languages translated in live time include Hmong, Spanish, Somali, Karen.
 - Our meetings are also closed captioned.
- Mission and Vision of the PAC: PAC is a group of parents, guardians, community members, and others with a connection to Central High School who meet (via Zoom) on the first Monday of the month (7:00-8:30 PM). All are welcome at these meetings. PAC's mission is "(t)o support and enhance the education of students and the experience of staff and the school community". We do this by raising and distributing funds, supporting special projects and initiatives, fostering communication between families and the school, organizing parent volunteers, and finding ways to show our appreciation for Central teachers and staff members. Note that the Central High School PAC is also a registered non-profit group, or 501(c)(3) Organization.
- What is HUEmyns of Central? Organized by the Central High School PAC officers over the summer of 2020, HUEmyns of Central is a "Special Committee" of the PAC. The mission of HUEmyns of Central is... "(t)o use a racial equity lens to support and enhance the education of all students, with a focus on eliminating barriers and providing equitable opportunities for students of color and building a strong community of all stakeholders at Central High School. HUEmyns of Central Committee meetings are open to all parents, students, community members and others with a connection to Central High School.
- Introduction of co-Chair Anika Ward
 - Long standing member of the St. Paul community. Graduate of Central HS. Business owner. Very interested in rethinking how we are approaching our work.
- Introduction of Principal Ayers.

7:05 pm Leadership Updates — *Cherise Ayers, Principal of Central High School*

Principal Ayers reported that she loves this job. Had some tough days, but it's a wonderful job. It's so much fun and she gets to work with the most wonderful staff.

- T.O.G.E.T.H.E.R. - New signage at Central "You belong here!"
 - TOGETHER stands for: Trust; Outreach; Growth; Empathy; Transparency, Holding space; Equity; and Respect.
- Last month has been difficult. We are still in the middle of a pandemic and are suffering from being short handed. We've had a few incidents that have been challenging including the tragic death of one of our students. The staff has been amazing and has come together in beautiful ways.
- Communication - She's sent out three messages recently. Note that the last couple messages were sent out by someone temporarily working on the communications due to a staff on leave. Those went out as PDFs and some folks were unable to open the message. If something happens like this, please just let the school know and they'll adjust. They want to be responsive.
- No school this Friday! It's a professional day for teachers.
- Safety and Security -
 - Two lockdowns recently - In all of the events there were no weapons. Transparency is very important and she is working to build trust in our community. Principal Ayers wants people to trust that she is communicating everything possible while also protecting student privacy. There are things that she's not able to say; but, if there are ever weapons involved, she will acknowledge that information. If that is not mentioned, that means there wasn't one.
 - If you need additional information, please call Principal Ayers. She's happy to discuss the event within the boundaries of what she's able to share. She also wants to know how parents are feeling and is happy to provide a space for processing all that is going on.
 - Relationships are important. She wants to be sure that all students have adults that they trust and can talk to about what's going on in their life. Your kids should see their administrators everyday and should know who their grade level administrator is. They should have a favorite teacher. Parents - please ask them about their relationships with their teachers and administrators to help build those up and make them stronger
 - She's asking parents to get comfortable with Schoology. Ask your students to see their grades. Congratulate them on successes, stay on top of them when they're not doing their work.
- Questions for Principal Ayers and her staff
 - How can we help you? Empower your students to advocate for themselves and for others. Ask them to be accountable for their actions. Example: Today was the second day of 2nd quarter. Her message to them today was "Onward to class!". At the end of the quarter, it's a stressful time. Kids are trying to turn in extra assignments and teachers are grading a lot of late assignments.
 - Are you planning on holding tours for potential students? They're working on that and will advertise that when it happens. School choice fair is in December. Open house is January 26th but there will be a communication

out about that. They are coordinating with the other high schools to make sure they're consistent.

- Will newsletters resume? Yes, our lead clerk was out for a few weeks and there wasn't an easy way to get that out during her absence. Newsletters will resume asap.
- Does Central need jackets for student? Do you need donations? Yes, we have a closet for coats, hats, mittens, and other things for students. It is located in the counseling office.
- What do educators need in general from parents and guardians? Principal Ayers will ask. Teachers always appreciate treats! But she'll circle back with more specific needs and desires.
- What kind of support is there for kids that might be stressed at the end of the quarter? Who would you recommend is the first person that they should reach out to in order to be better prepared for next time? How can we give them the best advice? First thought is their counselor, but second reaction is whoever they connect with most. Whoever they're most comfortable with. Any teacher will help move them in the right direction.
- How do we make sure that concerning signs aren't missed? Principal Ayers will send a message out to the staff to be attentive to the signs of stress and anxiety - in order to help them recognize, be astute and aware of warning signs. She will (and also asks parents to) encourage students to say "I'm not getting what I need." We want students to advocate and be prepared to say that, and then the adults are ready to respond and build trust. Also worth noting that behavior is communication. It can indicate that something is going on and that help might be needed.
- What is the expectation about staff to respond to emails? Expectation is 24 hours.
- Some parents have expressed concerns about grading systems. Some students don't want to take some classes because the grading is more punitive instead of guiding. Can you address this? Thank you for bringing it up. This happens at all schools. There are two parts to it: Some students don't respond to the teacher's style but some students do. We work to have the teachers be adept at responding to a diverse community of students. They're working on addressing feedback and data about classes where students are struggling.
- A parent shared some feedback she'd heard from students: "The kids say things are getting better. It's feeling safer. It's nice!" We appreciate you!

7:40 pm Staff Sharing - Jessica Ostrov, PAC Communications

- Alicia Ekegren, Athletic Director
 - Apologies that she hasn't been able to give updates at other PAC meetings. Lots of conflicts with sports events!
 - Highlights & Shout outs: Coach Howell - Football team made it to the section championship game! Boys and girls soccer games both won the championship games and did well at sectionals. Volleyball team did great at sections. Cross country had three students run at the state meet.

Swimming and diving had their section meet last week and several students

- Signing day! 4 student athletes were signed by colleges
- Meet and greets with Principal Ayers with the teams and parents. Were able to
- Winter sports kicked off today! Skiers are excited.
- Alumni group - honored the AD's assistant
- Give to the Max - Booster Club is working to raise enough money to get all teams new uniforms.
- Scott Howell, Title One Coordinator
 - Reminder that if you know of families in need - we have the Everymeal program. 75 families are currently benefiting. We will have the link in the newsletter.
 - Union Gospel Mission is also giving away free meals. If we know of families in need, on Tuesday 11/22 families can show up in person and will be able to get a meal at that time.
 - Supplies for student - we have a closet for winter clothing but also backpacks, paper, pencils, etc. Cold weather - everyone needs a locker now! Have students scan the QR code and they'll get a locker within 24 hours with the information about where their locker is and what the combination is. Have students go to Coach Howell if they need anything.
 - Lunch coordinator is out currently so this has been delayed but Coach Howell is asking everyone to fill out the free and reduced lunch form. It brings in additional money for the school so everyone should fill this out.
 - EDL - Extended Day Learning. On 12/5/22, this starts for those who failed a class last quarter or last year to make up the credits.
 - Photo of a class visit to the Gopher Football game.



- Ashley Welke, Counseling - College Preparation and Application
 - College application process. Lots going on - Deadlines are starting and some have passed for early decision and early action. If your student has not yet applied for college that's ok. You can apply all the way through the school year - ideally in January and February. Achieve Twin Cities is helping with filling out the FAFSA form for seniors who are applying for college. You can fill this out until June but the sooner it's in, the sooner

your student will know what the financial package offer is from school.
Drawing for gift cards will be held for those who filled out that information.

- Wallin Scholarship - 4 year and 2 year scholarship. Talk with Tori in career pathway. They'll be coming to a PAC meeting soon.
- Dunwoody and UMD will be visiting Central tomorrow. They'll be available to talk about their offerings.
- Xello program - This is a program that helps students plan for their college and career planning. It gives them a tool to learn about their styles and allows them to search for schools. It helps with a personalized learning program.
- Office window - lots of opportunities posted about visits from schools, etc.
- Emily Punyko - The Fashion Club's design on their school t-shirt this year. The back will say: "We're in this together" with each word wrapped around it.

8:00 pm City of St. Paul Grant Partnership -

- Sarah Stewart, *Safe Routes to School Lead, SPPS* and Jimmy Schoemaker, *Senior City Transportation Planner at City of Saint Paul*
 - Safe Routes to School Information: Seeking funding to improve the pedestrian improvements on Marshall avenue. No guarantee that the funding will be awarded, but the request is for:
 - Crossing island at Dunlap and Marshall
 - Crossing island at Oxford and Marshall.
 - Turning restrictions at the parking lot entrance to Central.
 - Please write letters of support that can be included in the application.
 - Describe the existing issue - difficulty crossing
 - Central and Oxford Community Center as destinations - not just for the community.
 - Application is due December 30th
 - MNDOT decides who will get awards in the spring of 2023.
 - If awarded, the city would design improvements in 2023 and construction would happen in 2024.

8:15 pm PAC Committees - Sunny Kase, PAC Co-Chair

- PAC Standing Committees Reports
 - Conference Food: Joelle Hiers and Ann Hoen
 - Communications & Marketing Committee: Michelle Neal
 - Grad Party: Tricia Wencel & Lindsey Farwell
 - This is kicking off in December. Please let them know if you'd like to be involved. Reach out to PAC leadership centralhspac@gmail.com
 - Fundraising: Ryan Willemsen & Amy Cram Helwich
 - Amazing work happening here! The Give to the Max fundraising event is happening on Thursday. Lots of fun interaction is planned. They have a \$50,000 goal and a \$20,000 matching gift.

- You don't have to donate via GivetotheMax (which takes a cut). The communications will have information about other ways to donate. You can send a check to: PAC PO Box 40123, Saint Paul, MN 55104
 - Volunteer Coordination: Ronda Plathe

8:20 pm ByLaws & Decision Making - *Kate McCready, PAC Secretary & Amy Ireland, Parent Volunteer*

- Our bylaws are out of date and do not fully reflect the work that we do.
- Motivations for updating the bylaws:
 - The current bylaws don't always accurately reflect the organization that we are, the organization that we want to become, nor our current practices.
 - Shift toward focusing on equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism lives beyond the efforts we're putting in now.
 - Want to be sure that our documentation reflects our work and also protects each/all of the board members and the decisions that we make.
 - They are a vehicle for communication about our work and help with creating transparency and engagement.
- The PAC Board is in the process of determining what elements should go into our bylaws including:
 - Our mission and vision
 - Our roles and responsibilities
 - Our legal requirements as a 501(c)(3) organization
- We have created a structure for future bylaws but there are many outstanding questions. We are going to have conversations at upcoming PAC Board meetings about these elements, especially the vision and mission of PAC. We will also be working to determine how to bring that conversation to the full PAC membership.
- We hope to have this work completed in the early spring.

8: 25 pm Financial Report — *Heidi Van Schooten, PAC Treasurer*

- Overview of the Budget
 - Have funded some projects and needs from the counseling staff.
 - Supporting the Black Student Union to rent out theater space - that's been announced at school.
 - We are now coming to the end of the Calendar Year 2022 budget.
 - Give to the Max fundraising along with our budget balance will give us the information that we need in order to create a budget for 2023.
 - Questions: centralhspactreasurer@gmail.com

PAC 2022 (Calendar Year) Budget in progress ☆ 📄 🌐

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	2022 Calendar Year Budget						
	Budget Items	Budgeted	Spent to date	Remaining	Spent		
	Teacher Requests (Spring 22)	\$15,000.00	\$11,933.54	\$3,066.46	79.56%		
	Teacher Requests (Fall 22)	\$7,000.00	\$3,019.40	\$3,980.60	43.13%		
	Huemyns-Outreach Committee	\$9,000.00	\$11,043.98	-\$2,043.98	122.71%		
	Teacher Appreciation	\$9,000.00	\$11,139.70	-\$2,139.70	123.77%		
	PAC Admin	\$5,000.00	\$4,501.43	\$498.57	90.03%		
	Class \$ from GiveMN (5,000 per class)	\$20,000.00	\$7,236.00	\$12,764.00	36.18%		
	Transportation	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	0.00%		
	Emergency Relief Fund	\$5,000.00	\$4,536.41	\$463.59	90.73%		
	Freshman Retreat	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	0.00%		
			\$0.00	\$0.00			
	Total	\$76,000.00	\$53,410.46	\$22,589.54	70.28%		
	Specific Designation for Be the Change	\$15,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$13,000.00	(flow through)		
	Total with Be the Change	\$91,000.00	\$55,410.46	\$35,589.54			
	Current Balance:	\$67,564.09					
	Account Balance 1/1/2022		96,745.10	96,745.10	(carried forward)		
	2022		Transactions	Reconciled Transactions			
	Expenses		\$55,410.46	\$52,593.89			
	Deposits		\$23,412.88	\$23,412.88	(15,000 is from Philando Castile Relief Fund)		
	Balance		\$64,747.52	\$67,564.09			

8:30 pm Close

We had 46 people on tonight. Thank you for sharing space with us!