

Oak Hill Middle School: School Council Meeting: May 12, 2011

School Council Members in attendance: Elaine Whalen, Eva Thompson, Risa Shames, Steve Siegel, Elizabeth Matera, Susan Kane

Parent: Betsy Blagdon

1. **New Oak Hill Website – check it out.**
2. **Next year’s School Council**
 - Susan Kane will not be continuing. The group thanked her for her participation this year.
 - Steve Siegel will be running for School Committee and he will make sure that he can still serve on the council, as a candidate for School Committee.
 - Risa and Elaine would like to continue on the Council.
3. **“Connecting Matters” summary:** Risa gave a brief summary of the “Connecting Matters” event, held on April 29th in Wellesley that brought together school and community leaders from Newton, Wellesley and Needham. The purpose of the community action was to increase students’ connections to adults in their lives, either at school, synagogue/church or other community groups. Oak Hill and Newton were well represented with school staff, parents and students. The next steps will be to build on the conversations and connections that have been made over the course of the year.
4. **Apparel Guidelines** – Risa had drafted a blurb for the student handbook that Eva tweaked, with input from Paul Stein. Eva is recommending that next year’s student council engage in dialogue about the impact of wearing apparel representing celebrations; she will raise awareness of the issue in her Principal’s Notes this spring. Steve Siegel will reach out to Temple Beth Avodah. Risa will reach out to Temple Shalom and Temple Emanuel, or work with OH parents who are congregants there. Risa will also check if nearby communities have guidelines such as this.
5. **2010-2011 Accomplishments:** Eva outlined what she sees as accomplishments for this school year.
 - The school has engaged in collaborative work through study groups focused on school improvement areas. There has been a positive impact on the culture and climate of the school.
 - Teachers have worked together in a variety of collaborative team structures leading to less isolated work.
 - Teachers are working together to support the goal that students leave each grade with similar skills, strategies and content. *How* teachers address the content may appropriately vary depending on teacher style.
 - The faculty uses the school improvement plan to guide this work.
6. **School Department changes:** Eva outlined some of the new hires and reorganization at the administrative level of the Newton Public Schools.

7. **Technology:** The group discussed the technology needs at the middle school. The Newton Schools Foundation is now focusing on fundraising for technology needs across the district.