

Portland Public Schools TAG Advisory Council (TAGAC)
October 14, 2014 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes – draft 1

Attending Members: Johanna Colgrove, Mark Feldman, Deborah F., Miriam Zellnik (NO QUORUM)

Absent Members: Terese Bushnell, Susan Lattimore, Callie Love, Mercedes Munoz, Diana Ortiz, Amy Rueda, Brenda Ray Scott

Attending Guests: Mike Marsden

Attending PPS Staff: Matthew Marchyok

I. Call to Order and Preliminaries

6:30

A quorum was not present, so meeting minutes could not be voted on. The meeting did not proceed exactly in order of the agenda, but is described here as if it did.

II. Old Business and Unfinished Action Items (AI)

Matthew helped Mark verify that there is one speaker phone in the Mazama Conference room that could be used to call out. But that could only be used by one person, so is not a general solution to allowing members to attend by phone. Kimberly's action item will be dropped since she is no longer at PPS. No other Action Items were addressed.

Mark distributed a draft copy of his end of year report for last year. Deborah suggested that TAGAC had removed mention of the Beaverton Summa program from the recommendations, so it should not be mentioned in the report. Mark said that he thought that was in reference to Summa accepting all students based solely on qualifying test scores rather than alternative education considerations. But in the letter, it is used as an example of having a single program on multiple campuses and generally, along with Lake Oswego, as a reminder that other nearby districts have gifted programs we have evaluated. The letter says only what we agreed on, which was that ACCESS "accept all qualified students."

Mark briefly went over what he thought should be TAGAC's priorities for the year:

- Advocate for our Recommendations
- Focus on Equity – produce Recommendations by end of the year.
- Recruit MS & HS members to provide input on MS/HS issues.

III. Conversations with PPS

Due to low turnout, most of the meeting was an impromptu informal discussion with Matthew of how to improve communications with TAG parents. It was suggested that TAGAC members could manage a blog which was linked to from the PPS TAG website. All TAGAC members could post to it as well as TAG Dept staff. Comments would have to be moderated somehow to prevent inappropriate personal information references to PPS staff and teachers as well as other objectionable content. Other options such as a yahoo or google group were brought up, but it was felt that those required yahoo or google accounts to access most easily, and we didn't want to require PPS parents to get one if they didn't have to. Facebook was rejected due to the acknowledgement that some parents have strong feelings against using it. Mark said that he owns the domain ppstag.org and had experimented with bulletin board software, but hadn't found the right software yet that could be configured appropriately and also had appropriate moderation. Mike suggested some other possible software. Johanna thought it should be possible to find a community service minded volunteer to help us implement something. In the end, the only quickly implementable solution seemed to be a blogger or wordpress blog site.

Discussion from last month about using email to contact TAG parents continued. TAGAC members would like it if the TAG Dept sent out a monthly newsletter to all TAG parents by email. TAGAC could submit items for inclusion. PPS could post a copy of a monthly newsletter in a blog, bulletin board or other channel, as just discussed.

At a small group meeting, Erika Gillis had previously told some TAGAC members that although the Single Subject Acceleration Policy and related descriptions had disappeared from the TAG Dept website, the policy was simply being revised and will be back up in January. There was discussion about the frustration this had caused because it had taken so much effort by TAGAC to get it up there last year and to rewrite website information about all types of acceleration in easy to understand language and in a format that was easy to read on a mobile device, for parents who did not have fast internet connections at home. In addition, this made it appear as though the policy was eliminated. The lack of any information made it so that anyone who didn't already know about it could not find out about it and the yearly testing deadlines. (In a meeting followup email from Erika Gillis, she reemphasized that "...SSA is not going away. Instead, the process of how we conduct it is under review, and we are already engaged in moving this work forward.")

During further discussion about the website, Matthew asked if posting information regarding instructional strategies, perhaps video examples of them being used in class, would be useful. General consensus was that this would be very helpful.

IV. Committee Sessions

none

V. New Business

Johanna suggested that we may want to present our recommendations to the Portland Council PTA at a future meeting. If we could get their support, local school PTAs might help disseminate the information to schools. This was thought to be an excellent idea and (**Action Item**) Johanna will investigate further.

VI. Questions and Comments from Guests

VII Adjourn

8:00

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday November 18, 2014 from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

BESC (District admin. building) at 501 N. Dixon St, 97227 Mazama Room (second floor behind cafeteria)