

ACCESS PTA
General Membership Meeting
February 18, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by David Fikstad at 6:35 p.m.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Motion was made to submit the minutes to the record. Seconded. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget:

- In the January meeting, new expenditures for guest artists for the drama instructor requests were approved. After that meeting, an invoice for previous technology expenses was received. The decision was made to delay the budget increase.
 - The drama instructor was able to fund one guest artist with funding from ACCESS and one from his \$350 .5 FTE teacher allotment
- New line item is “Gifted Education Advocacy” for donations for the 2E conference
 - Budget set at \$600, any shortfall (so far only \$10) will be taken from “miscellaneous expenses”
- Only one teacher has spent all of his PTA funds; have \$9000 budgeted, only \$2000 in requests so far
 - Suggestion was made to make a “drop dead” date for spending their PTA allocated funds

Q: Has Mr. Gilpin been told that the money is no longer available?

A: We didn't realize that he'd been told his requests would be funded; now he needs to be told that is no longer the case.

PRINCIPAL REPORT: Mark Sandilands

State testing:

- Wrapping up 4th and 7th grade assessments
- 7th grade online testing tool ended up not being available, back to pencil and paper
- Mobile lab has been checked out a few times for class use as well

Prospective students:

- Tours continue, last two tours will happen next week
- 60 families have taken the tour so far
- Applications are due March 12th

Information night:

- *March 3rd, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.*

- Has some parents already signed up to be there to answer questions, additional people can just show up to participate, prospective families would love to hear from current parents

Q: Will there be a panel?

A: There will be a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation, parents can tour classrooms, and can meet the staff (all core teachers and electives instructors will be there)

Q: Should current students come?

A: Yes, if they'd like to be there.

Numbers and location for next year:

- On Jan. 28th attended a meeting with principals of Sabin, Alameda, Beaumont, and PPS representative to talk about facility concerns and enrollment issues.
 - No decisions were made, going to continue talking
- ***No information on new location or on official numbers for next year***
 - Don't know if we can grow by another 50 students this year as in previous years
 - Staff allotments will be determined in the spring
 - Wouldn't have enough space in current location to grow by such a large amount
- Should hear from district in spring regarding location
- The High School Redesign is taking up most of the district's energy, but ACCESS continues to remind them of our space needs

Push for GIVE! Campaign in his last newsletter:

- Any family donating to the GIVE! Campaign will get a yearbook (going to be done professionally by Lifetouch)
- Plan is to make sure everyone gets a yearbook regardless
- The message is to give what you can even if it isn't \$100

Q: In the requests for next years funding and numbers, did you specify where you'd use another staff person?

A: Site council did discuss that 3rd and 4th grade are overcrowded (30 and 31 kids respectively). If we were to take any more students at those grades, we'd need another teacher. But there were no specifics mentioned. Related issues are the location (which affects the number of students we can enroll). Looking to the future, consider more ways to share more resources with our shared school.

Q: Is there a cap on how large the classes can get? 31 kids has been a difficult situation.

A: Staff thinks that the optimal # is 24-25; won't grow bigger than current sizes at the crowded grades. Also worth noting: the Special Education population at ACCESS has doubled.

Q: How much weight one should attach to the proposal created by the students regarding Smith school location?

A: It is a class project, and was a great project for the students who showed a lot of growth through the project, but it is not what we are looking at. It was a student led project. District wants to keep the vacant schools empty (for swing space), and the district wants to keep ACCESS centrally located.

Follow up comment: The class wants to present to the school board, one benefit is that the district will be presented with facts regarding the need for more space. It is currently unknown what the High School Redesign will lead to regarding spaces, but that seems to be the priority of the district right now.

Q: Do you think there is value to have parents put pressure on to make the argument for the space?

A: Could be helpful, don't recall if the board even responded to previous attempts; Mark is always reminding them about our space situation

Ken Rumbaugh (Sabin PTA president): Sarah Allen (Executive Director for Systematic Planning for Portland Public Schools) will be at Sabin to discuss the K-8 transition and welcomes ACCESS to participate

For this year, Charles Hobson replaced Jenny Villano (he is in charge of all focus options/alternative ed programs)

Q: If there is a chance ACCESS will have a permanent home in the next year and a half, does it make sense to move for a year? Is it worth the turmoil of moving twice?

Q: As the HS redesign is moving forward, Grant parents are mobilizing: any opinions about whether ACCESS should continue at Grant? Or should continue at all?

A: Staying focused on ACCESS 1-8. Staying out of the HS issues.

GREEN TEAM REPORT: David Gates

Green Team: Waste Audit results

- Had Green team meeting a few days ago
- Presented a sheet with the results. Important to note these results are from one day's work, just a snapshot. Shows the types of the things we could find.
- The audit form is provided by the district
- Audited 9 rooms: 8 classrooms and the staff room
- The process (how the audit was done):
 - Got a big tarp, made laminated signs (aluminum, etc.), gloves and 5 gallon buckets.
 - Emptied out one trash bag at a time and sorted it. Came up with volume based on 5 gallon containers; weight: had a bathroom scale
- The school is charged according to volume (not weight)

- Sabin/ACCESS has 2 trash and 1 recyclable dumpsters, trash is picked up 2x/week, recycling 1x/wk
- The recyclable dumpster is not nearly full; if we could reduce to 1 trash dumpster, save money, and also help fulfill “green school” criteria

Results of the Audit

- Largest volume: wet paper towels

Q: Why aren't they compostable?

A: Don't have a system to handle it, need a system for it to be recycled - i.e. have a separate garbage can

Q: Is there a city system available for picking up the recyclables?

A: Cardboard, magazines, textbooks, plastic bottles with necks, aluminum cans are the only things that PPS system will recycle. Paper is taxing enough to collect from the classrooms.

- The octagonal containers have been lined with yellow to differentiate them as specific recycling efforts
- Need to make sure that anything put in place is a system that the teacher can manage (not too many cans)
- One possibility is to get parent volunteers to sort the things that can be recycled by the city or other ways (but that can't be recycled through PPS's system)
- Second largest volume: Mixed paper
 - We'd be able to qualify for Oregon green schools 1st level status, before we've even done our educational components – students are doing well
 - Even if we could reduce our total weight and volume, but that mixed paper % could still go up
- Third largest volume Juice Containers #3
 - One bag was all juice containers, all from breakfast
- In the general trash, not a lot of wasted stuff: pencils, crayons, sporks, wrappers, plastic baggies and the trash bags used to collect the trash
 - By reducing the amount of trash we great, the number of trash bags would be lower
 - Possibly create a system where the trash isn't picked up on a day if there's nothing perishable in the bag that must be removed that day

Q: If the goal is to reduce the amount taken away, audited only classrooms (not offices, cafeteria, etc.) what percent of the total amount of the trash for the school does this represent?

A: Cafeteria is a separate audit (waiting for warmer weather); the trays are a problem (polystyrene trays – not recyclable) there's nothing in the system to handle it. They're “contaminated” by recyclable standards. Same thing with milk cartons (only if they're drained can be recycled). But there's no system in place – lots of things possible with new systems (including things in the classroom). Currently trying to get our anchor to get our Oregon green schools classification

The future goals:

- Have students come up with creative solutions
- Involve the teachers to have cross-curricular opportunities.
- Trying to get these projects in the classrooms, would have to figure out logistics,
- Ultimate goal: embed it into the curriculum
- Start by showing what's possible through beginning steps.

Sabin PTA looked into buying 200 reusable trays, the dishwasher works with the trays but it would have cost \$3100 to fund the additional staff to handle the workload.

Q: Does \$3100 balance out with the cost of the buying the polystyrene trays and sporks?

A: Don't know.

Possibly have the students or parent volunteers wash the trays.

Q: Is there a connection between the Sabin and ACCESS green teams?

A: Currently focused on getting the ACCESS program up and running, hope to get it on a cooperative level. Also considering that if we're moving, worth getting our green school certification before we move

Q: What is the goal? Save money? Be "greener"?

A: Getting kids to understand the connection between how it affects our resources, economy and environment. Also to save money (one less dumpster). If a class could "adopt" a container, could also raise some money.

Also have the newsletter under "News" on BigTent
Earth Day issue coming out in the near future.

COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT: Judy Berck

Haiti fundraising

- Ms. Morgan's class raised \$550 through their cookie drive (Hearts for Haiti)
- \$1350 raised online
- Money is going to Mercy Corps Help for Haiti (Mercy Corps is local)

There will be a CS recognition assembly at the end of the year

- Last year's speaker was from Oregon Food Bank, hoping to get someone from Mercy Corps to speak who was in Haiti doing supply distribution
- Ask teachers get questions for the speakers from students

Though it has been very successful, unsure if next year the meals at the Clark Center for homeless men will continue, would need to raise \$1300 for the cost of the meals

Volunteer opportunity: PPS Clothes closet Mon Feb 22nd – also posted on Big Tent in the events section

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE REPORT: David Fikstad

Childcare will be available at the next meeting, and will cost less than \$10/child

The person used for childcare at Sabin PTA meetings will be contacted.

NEW BUSINESS

Elect Nominating Committee

No one who is a current officer or was on the committee last year can serve again this year.

Current president and treasurer volunteered to continue in their current roles. Current vice-president and one of the secretaries declined to continue in their positions. Possible that the co-secretary, Jenny Holcomb, would be interested in serving as the secretary.

It was noted that according to PTA rules, only required positions are President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Birgit Koehler and Gail Shaloum volunteered, and will help to find a third member of the committee.

A motion was made to make Birgit Koehler and Gail Shaloum two of the members of the nominating committee. Seconded, motion carried.

Selection of attendees for the State PTA Conference on April 23-24: postponed until March meeting.

Raise a reader challenge: through BigTent, the school with the highest total minutes per capita gets a \$5000 grant for their library. ***Need someone to manage the Raise a Reader challenge***, to remind parents to submit their kids' minutes online.

Spring talent show: Barb Hughes and Chris Frimoth

Excited to be a part of the ACCESS community. Like to use their background in entertainment. Had done a "hidden talent show" at Fernwood.

- Want it to be non-competitive
- Can have kids who want to show off doing the most mundane things and call it "entertainment" (a Variety Show format)
 - Support those that want to get on the stage even if they're not traditionally interested in doing some kind of performance. Give them a chance to be in the spotlight
 - Previous acts have included: Saxophone playing, a monologue, pillow fight to music, acapella singing. Keyboards are available, can do karaoke style singing, rapping.
 - Try to get the principal/administrators/teachers do a song (with Chris playing the ukulele)
- Can be modified, taking the word "hidden" out
- No auditions, just sign up, tell them what the talent is.
- Usually for middle school – would that be considered 5th-8th? Or 6th-8th? (Usually 6-8 at ACCESS)
- Have had it at the end of the day instead of evening
- Have 1 rehearsal, each act 3 mins or less.
- At the end, there are awards for all participants.

Q: Have you videotaped previous shows and could you upload the videotape?

A: Will try to do a part of it on BigTent

Current volunteer needs:

- ***Looking for ideas for awards.***
- ***Someone to videotape performance***
- ***Volunteers to help backstage***
- ***People to help with the lights, curtains, soundboard (computer generated, very simple to run, could be a student who can take direction)***
- Especially helpful if the volunteers can come to the dress rehearsal
- Barb is the stage manager

Date for the show: April 20th

Q: Have you contacted Mr. Gilpin?

A: Not yet

Q: How long will the show last?

A: An hour to an hour and a half

Manage it with one act in front of the curtain with another act being set up behind the curtain.

SUN school AmeriCorps volunteer request for funds: discussion postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Garden Committee: ***Work day Saturday, Feb. 20 from 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.*** will be building new raised beds and weeding

Community Closet: need volunteer 2/22

Science night 3/16, will need volunteers

Chinook Books:

- Have committed to a certain # in the past
- If you put in your order earlier, the school gets 50% of the amount sold; if you request them later in the year, the percentage is lower
- Can return the last few unsold books
- For next year, best to have a parent that comes regularly. The parent responsible has to pick up the books, collect money for the sold books
- Trish did help this year, hesitant to have her do it all the time

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.