

ACCESS PTA

General Membership Meeting

May 18, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by David Fikstad at 7:08

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Motion was made to submit the minutes to the record. Seconded. Motion passed with 1 opposed vote.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Financial Reports provided

The current financial picture is "fantastic." The social committee is doing great. CREATE raised around \$450 for next year. Our teachers are drawing down their funds rapidly as school wraps up. Around \$500 will be carried over for next year.

- Discussion regarding what to do with unused funds

If teachers do not spend all their allocated funds, the funds should be returned to the PTA general fund rather than allowing the teachers to choose where funds should go.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Mark Sandilands

- Mr. Sandilands is leaving Access

Mr. Sandilands is leaving Access the end of June with mixed emotions. He has loved his time at Access and has enjoyed watching Access grow. Although it is hard to leave Access, his goal has been to be a "building principal," an opportunity offered at Winterhaven.

- New Administrator of Special Programs

The position being filled is called Administrator of Special Programs. Mr. Sandilands is working with the school district to ensure that the Access "program continues on its path." There will be a community meeting in the library to discuss the next steps in filling the position (location may change) **Thursday, May 27, 2010, 6:30 to 8:00.**

Forms will be provided to parents and will be posted on the Access website and on Big Tent. The forms include a student survey, community survey, and self-nomination form to be on the interview committee (this committee will be made up of parents and staff).

Q. What sort of candidates will be attracted to this position?

A. Applications have been collected from applicants who want to be a principal.

I do not know the number of applicants. This can be addressed further at the community meeting.

Q. What constraints are there due to the fact that the position is not a "principal," but rather, an "administrator of special programs?"

A. In the past 3 years, I have experienced that "building principal" has quite a bit of power, and that the administrator does not have that same amount of power. The administrator has to work with the building principal.

Q. You were not an equal with Sabin's Principal?

A. Correct. If there was a disagreement, then Sabin's Principal's view controlled. The District is losing some personnel that have been involved in Access. Jenny is leaving, but Mr. Sandilands believes she will be replaced. There will also be a new Deputy Superintendent.

- Mr. Sandilands wants to thank the following: thank you Becky Tyler, Run of the Arts (and all Run for the Arts volunteers); thank you Gail for CREATE; thank you Social Committee for the Sock Hop.

Q. Will you give "exit interviews" to those who can use your knowledge? (i.e., PTA, etc.)

A. Yes. I will tell my replacement that regardless of what you hear about Access; go in with an open mind. The parents want what's best for their kids, but if you work with them, you will see that good things can/will happen. And, "I have never had a 20 page email" from an Access parent.

- Enrollment 2011-2012

The district capped Access enrollment for 2011-2012 at 200 students. The decision was made to have no first grade next year. This does not mean first grade is gone forever. For next year, 2nd/3rd grades will stay blended, and 4th/5th grades will also be blended. There will be two 6th grade classes next year.

- Next year, Access will use room 220A for next year for Mr. Holm all day. Mr. Weinberg (Sabin PE teacher) is leaving Sabin. There should be enough lockers next year for 6th to 8th grades.
- Renaissance Faire, Friday, May 21, 6:30 to 8:30.
- Community Service Awards Assembly, Run for the Arts winners: June 3, 2010
- 8th Grade trip to Oaks Park, June 14, 2010
- Last Day of School, June 15, 2010
- 8th Grade Promotion, June 15, 2010, 9:00 a.m.
- Year Books – every student gets a year book

NEW BUSINESS

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2010-2011

Amaya Urzaa for Treasurer
Jen Holcomb for Secretary
Kim Grimme for Vice-President
David Fikstad for President

Voted in unanimously.

SELECTION OF AUDITING COMMITTEE

No available volunteers. PTA will work on getting volunteers.

DISCUSSION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF REDUCTION AND LOBBYING EFFORTS

Next year, Sabin (K-8)/Access (2-8) will share 1 full time Special Ed. Teacher. For the 2009-2010 year, Sabin had 1 full time Special Ed. Teacher, and Access had Morgan Lake .5 time, and full time Special Ed. Assistant (Mr. Swinder).

Sabin/Access combined will lose a .5 Special Education Teacher and a full time Special Education Assistant.

According to district regulations, there are 23 students at K-5 (Access/Sabin combined) with IEPs, and 23 students 6-8 (Access/Sabin combined) with IEPs. The students who are counted are those who receive services in the "Learning Center." The district regulations require a full time Special Education Teacher for every 23-35 students.

Many Access parents are concerned that this reduction in staff will affect all students, not just those with special needs. Parents also feel that there is a need for an Access only specialist who understands the TAG component.

A letter has been written to Lorraine Adams with signatures from the Access community. The request is for a .5 FTE dedicated to Access. Mr. Sandilands thinks it is a good letter. He believes the numbers justify the FTE, they just were not yet complete when the district counted (because some students had not yet had IEP plans completed). Mr. Sandilands thinks it should not just be 1 FTE, it should be 2.

Q. Can we ask for TAG students to have IEPs?

A. TAG students do not yet qualify for an IEP.

Para-professionals are assigned by the special education department; educational assistants are placed by Mr. Sandilands. We do not yet know about student teacher placement next year.

PLANNING FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITY EVENTS IN 2010-2011

Big Tent will have an on-line poll asking parents what events they enjoyed/want to keep/think about for next year.

Q. CREATE fundraising question: we can do the event next year as-is (combining art and talent show), but we could also add a fundraising component. We want to stay sensitive to GIVE campaign.

A. Feedback from Sabin is that classroom art raises lots of money.

A. Silent Auctions can be added to any events.

A. Maybe next year, the GIVE campaign will be publicized as "Access's main fundraiser," rather than the "only fundraiser."

Further discussion is needed on this fundraising topic.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

It was very hard for the board to pick a volunteer of the year, because all the volunteers do SO much. The board selected Gail Shaloum because nothing could happen without volunteers, and she did a fantastic job filling the volunteer positions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Run For the Arts

Access raised \$8,100, minus 7% plus, and minus the costs of the t-shirts. The highest fundraising class was Ms. Haliburton's - \$2,000. The highest fundraiser was Anders Olson. Chace Smith ran the farthest.

This past year, Run for the Arts funds were used for the artist-in-residence. The posts that the children made have been put in the garden, and the tiles and bird baths will be installed soon.

Book Fair

Barns & Noble book fair date set. Powell's also does book fair. We will investigate holding future book fairs at Powell's because a lot of people would enjoy using a local book seller.

SUN Program

The SUN program wants to retain an Americorps volunteer. To do so, Access has been asked to provide matching funds. Sabin is putting in \$3,000. Right now, we have no funds. We do not know the percentage of students participating in SUN. With buses, only a handful of students are participating in the SUN programs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15.