

PTA General Membership Meeting

12/12/12

CALL TO ORDER

PTA President Kristen Sheeran called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and an amendment was proposed and approved without opposition. The revised minutes were approved without opposition and the amended version of the minutes can be found on BigTent at

http://www.bigtent.com/usr/files/74785492_2_00_PTAMinutes101012-Rev.doc

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ms. Maier expressed her thanks to the PTA and to Principal Bagby, who provided funds to enable her to purchase a large collection of nonfiction books at a deep discount from publisher Marshall Cavendish. The books will likely be kept in the teacher's rooms until ACCESS moves to its new location.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The December treasurer's report was presented and is available at

http://www.bigtent.com/usr/files/74528079_2_00_December_treasurer_report.pdf

It was noted that the Give! campaign income stands at about 40% of target, last year at this time it was at about 80% of target (the target is 50% participation at \$100/child).

Chinook book sales have been more successful than anticipated (thank you!), therefore the amount of money spent on supplies needed to be increased. **A motion to increase Chinook book expenses to \$512.50 was passed without opposition.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACCESS Move:

The PTA has been soliciting comments from the ACCESS community regarding issues and concerns related to the relocation of ACCESS. Several issues and concerns have been identified based on these comments, and the PTA requested that those present in this meeting help to prioritize the various issues. All attendees were asked to vote for their top three priorities, and based on this process, the issues were ranked from highest to lowest priority as follows:

Highest priority (21 votes)

- Grades 1-8 should be located together on a single campus.
- ACCESS should keep its current teachers and staff.

Second priority (8-9 votes)

- ACCESS should keep its current teachers and staff.
- Facilities at the new location should be appropriate and distributed equitably.
- ACCESS should continue to have its own administrator.

Third priority (3 votes)

- Maintain or expand the current FTE ratio.
 - New location should have a central location with district transportation support.
- Fourth priority (0 votes)
- ACCESS students should have the option to attend a high-performing high school in a single cohort.
 - ACCESS should be able to join the community at the new school, rather than being a separate community of tenants in a building.
 - There should be opportunities to work with the new school in a manner that is mutually beneficial

There was a strong interest expressed in integrating with the host school and in ensuring that co-location is beneficial for the host school as well as for ACCESS.

It was noted that the desire to maintain an option for ACCESS students to attend a high school other than the neighborhood of the host school will be in direct conflict with the goal of integration.

It was also noted that this fall ACCESS was shifted to fall under the administration of the Grant Cluster, rather than under Educational Options.

NEW BUSINESS

ACCESS Move:

PPS has announced plans for enrollment balancing in the Jefferson Cluster, and some of their proposed scenarios include moving ACCESS to Jefferson Cluster schools. More information about the proposed plans can be found at

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/enrollment-transfer/7722.htm>

The district administration is expected to make its recommendations to Superintendent Carol Smith January. There will be a Principal's Coffee on January 7th, which will include Carl Logan and Antonio Lopez, PPS administrators for the Grant and Jefferson Clusters.

Members of the King Elementary School community expressed interest in finding out more about ACCESS as soon as these scenarios became public. Kristen has been invited to attend King's next PTA meeting to answer questions, and Kristen has also spoken to King's administrator in charge of school improvement, who views this as a potential benefit for the brightest King students.

A community meeting with district personnel was held at Sabin/ACCESS on December 4th to discuss these scenarios. As part of this meeting, district personnel expressed an interest in receiving information regarding the long-term vision for ACCESS. Some parents have been working on a draft presentation presenting such a vision, and this draft was presented by Pamela Kislak for comment. A copy of the presentation can be found at <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B9r5k9NzMukNVnFEeVVyZTVrU1k/edit>

Some comments received from the membership regarding the proposed materials included:

- The slide showing the number of applications received should include information on the number of these applications that were accepted.

- The information regarding the number of children of color enrolled (and the change in enrollment of people of color) should include more detail and be very transparent as to what populations are represented.
- The fact that a letter from Principal Bagby regarding the ACCESS program was sent to all families with children testing at 99+% is believed to be a huge step toward reaching more equitable enrollment. However, it was noted that these letters were sent out very late in the year, which may limit their effectiveness.
- It was noted that placing ACCESS in schools within the Jefferson with large populations of children of color would also be very beneficial in helping potential ACCESS students from these populations. There are currently a relatively large number of ACCESS students from Sabin due to widespread knowledge of the program and active support by Sabin teachers.
- It was mentioned that there was a document presenting a vision for ACCESS approximately 6 yrs ago, and suggested that this should also be reviewed to look for material that may be useful.
- It was noted that greater specificity regarding the future of ACCESS can provide targets for specific criticism. More general statements might be less likely to prompt criticism.
- Avoid presenting ACCESS as a “STEM” only school, as there is significant community interest in art as well.
- Emphasize the fact that any ACCESS growth will be as a response to demand and need as reflected by the number of qualified applications.
- More information should be presented regarding the need for ACCESS. Particular support was expressed for linking the problem to the nationwide problems with adequate support for highly gifted, high risk children.
- A question was raised with regard to how many students from in district would qualify based on the 99+% criterion. It was noticed that the 99% limit is not arbitrary and is supported by data showing that this population is at significantly higher risk.
- It was noted that the additional criterion that a students needs are not being met at their neighborhood school is useful because it emphasizes that ACCESS is not merely poaching the best and the brightest from neighborhood schools, but rather helping students who are struggling in their neighborhood schools.
- A question was raised as to whether the current wait list includes out-of-district applications. It was noted that accepting out-of-district transfers may lead to further growth of the program.
- It was suggested that information regarding the potential size of the program be very clearly defined based on the size of the qualifying population. Being very explicit about future size may help avoid being sited in a location that would not be stable over time.
- It was noted that the program should be pulling in students who meet the admission criteria, rather than expecting families to push to get their children into the program.
- A question was raised regarding how to better spread information about the program through non-school channels, such as neighborhood associations.
- There was a request for any parents with advertising or branding experience support the preparation of this document.

The draft slides will be posted online for comments and editing by community members. Kristen will also arrange a meeting place for follow-up discussion during the week of December 17th.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40