

School Council Meeting October 3, 2019

Welcome and Introductions

What is School Council?

- Angie explained the background and purpose of the School Council
- Education Reform Act of 1993
 - Helped create charter schools
 - Enabled schools to be student-need-centered
- Purpose and Tasks
 - Spelled out in the handout “School Councils Questions and Answers”.

- Last year’s Parent Involvement person is unable to continue doing it and Angie is hoping someone will be willing to take over the role.
 - Linda talked about the previous person and how hard she worked on parent involvement.
 - The Council discussed the current level of parent involvement.
 - The involvement is higher K-2 than in higher grades, as expected.
 - There is not a diverse population of parents volunteering.
 - Many parents work and don’t have the time to come in.
 - There are also issues with parents not having transportation.
- Suggestions to increase parent involvement
 - Kerry asked if it would be possible for parents who don’t have transportation being allowed to ride on school buses (acting as monitors for the ride possibly) so they can come and go from school to volunteer.
 - Mary explained that communication from the school to parents is key in getting them involved. Not only email but also social media.
 - Marybeth, whose children previously attended Ben Franklin Charter School, which is currently K-8, said that at their school the older kids helped out with younger kids
 - She added that the school sent out surveys and received back many reasons why parents couldn’t volunteer.
 - The school decided to plan activities and events around the parents’ abilities and interests as well as their schedules.
 - This was done by the P(T)A, rather than the school itself.

- Other suggestions
 - The old August mailing is now replaced by an electronic version and response rates have soared. However, some things have fallen through the cracks.

- Kerry thinks pod parents could again be very useful in reaching out to other parents, requesting information on skills and willingness to volunteer.
- She stated that there are at least four reasons why this could be a good thing:
 - The requests would come in small “bites” as opposed to large mailings/emailings
 - Requests that come from the Development Office are often seen as looking for money
 - The beginning of the year is hectic and full, and hearing from a pod parent after things have settled down could be easier to respond to. For instance, it can be difficult to come up with a list of usable skills when thinking of lots of other things involved with starting school.
 - Marybeth can get paperwork from her previous school that they used to assess parent skills, availability, etc.
- Angie said the Administrative team is working on logistics etc. regarding field trips.
 - There are several issues: costs, chaperones, curriculum connections, number of trips, who pays for them, transportation, etc.
 - In some schools the PA subsidizes field trips.
 - Feedback from the Council welcome.
 - Kerry suggested trading the use of our school bus with other communities/companies in exchange for one of theirs at a different time.
- Angie will share the School Improvement Plan (SIP) with the Council members, as well as the field trip information when it’s available.
- A parent co-chair is needed for this group; Mary Carter had that role but no longer has children in the school.

Meeting adjourned at 4:32

Attending:

Angie Pepin

Kerry Griffin

Mary Carter

Derek Powers

Joe Kay

Linda Cook

Marybeth Samborski

Stephanie Inniss
Achille Yangambi
Erica Perry
Joanne Manning