

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Community Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2008. 6:30 PM

Location: Carl Sandburg Lower Building

The meeting commenced at 6:34 PM.

Welcome Shannon

After greeting parents, Shannon passed around a book of memory pages from previous years for the benefit of new families.

Principal/VP Report Mark

Mark reported that April 14 begins the WASL testing period for Sandburg/DCS. He acknowledged that there are differing opinions of the test. It is important to view the WASL as just one measure of students' academic performance. It also serves as a general indicator of how effective academic programs are. Mark recommends that parents do what they can to decrease stress for students concerning the WASL. He recommends that students come to school well rested and fed on testing days.

Information Night Wrap-Up and Lottery Enrollment Diane/Janet

Janet reported that 37 families attended information night. The first grade had 20 applicants of which 8 were selected by lottery. Families have 2 weeks to respond to their invitation. Approximate numbers for upper grade waitlists are: 2nd grade: 11, 3rd grade: 5, 4th grade: 3, 5th grade: 2, 6th grade: 0.

Cool School Challenge Presentation Maren/Emma

Maren and Emma presented a student-driven project that focused on waste reduction in the classroom through decreasing energy consumption. The students surveyed teachers and Mrs Zins and calculated the estimated CO2 emissions in the classroom/year. They gave teachers tips on saving energy, such as turning off lights and putting computers in sleep mode. They plan to follow up with the staff to see how the implementation of this plan is going.

Teachers Report Diane

The Youngers are finishing their insect unit. The unit has been a success and DCS enjoyed an extra large supply of insects. Diane also noted that the Youngers has an informal class pet called "Koko" which is a stuffed gorilla and is part of an informal sign language unit.

The parent education topic tonight is Writing. Writing is scored by a Rubric which is introduced in the Youngers. This Rubric scores (on a scale of 1 - 4) Ideas, Organization, Voice, Style, and Conventions. Writing pieces can be scored in each area, which more accurately reflects the student's work. The use of a Writing Web, or outline, is also introduced. Editing is included in a minor way, not intended to stifle the student's work. Diane shared several examples of student writing.

Carol

The Middles had a successful field trip to Olympia with some unique opportunities such as a picture taken on the House Floor with State Representatives. Students also recently finished their Character Trait Book Reports.

Parent Education: The Middles learn to differentiate narrative and expository writing. They do reading of both types in class. Samples from the WASL are viewed and evaluated by students. The Rubric has a student and teacher version. Students practice evaluating their own work and also others' writing. They also learn to edit their drafts. Carol shared some examples of student writing.

Monica

Parent Education: Writing prompts in the Olders relates to something the students are doing in the classroom, such as Social Studies. A weekly writing assignment is a big chunk of their homework. Students start with a writing web, and are encouraged to use the rubric as a guide for their writing. Monica looks for quality vs. length in the writing piece, and stresses the importance of a good introduction and conclusion sentence.

The Olders also had a successful trip to Olympia. Monica shared pictures on the talk show that the students performed on "Who Really Discovered America?" Each student was involved in some way with this production.

Treasurer's Report Marc

Income continues to be greater than expenditures. We are still lacking some parent contributions.

Volunteer Report Anne

No comments at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance/Grants Cameron

A grant was submitted to the Department of Ecology in February and a response is expected in April. LWSD Foundation offers grants and the next round will be related to Science. Cameron will be following up with the teachers regarding this possibility.

Communications Dawn

Announcements can be sent to Dawn for posting to Parent Organizer. Dawn will try to post the same day, and will post the following day depending on how late the email is received.

Facilities Open

Community Outreach

Susan/Christi

- Community Service event at St Edward's State Park in honor of Earth Day
- Sat, April 26th 9a-12n

- Activities include: pulling ivy, planting trees, litter p/u, collecting flowers for centerpieces for an afternoon fair.
- Sign-up sheet will be sent around at the Community meeting for those families interested.

Enrichment Amy

- Spring Friday Specials are starting Friday, March 28 and will continue for 5 weeks: March 28, April 11, April 18, April 25, May 2.. (We skip a week after the first Friday because of Spring Break)
- This is the first time we have offered 4 topics – we're excited for the kids to have 5 quality weeks focusing on one project or topic of their interest.
- We are bringing back 2 favorites from last year – the DCS play (Diane J) and Building CO2 cars (Roger K) – and introducing two new topics – Digital Photography (Tom C-F) and Taking Care of Your Dog (Karen W).
- Topics will be presented and students will vote for their 1st and 2nd choices on Friday, March 21. Assignments will be announced the following Monday.
- Parent Volunteers are needed to support these activities. It's a great way to get hours and a lot of fun! So far, here are our Friday Special Leader requests:
 - Play: 2-3 parents to help Diane in class organizing and rehearsing with the student
 - 2-3 parents to work on costumes and sets
 - Taking Care of Your Dog:
 - 1 parent to help gather materials and assist during class activities
- If you can't volunteer all 5 Fridays, we still need your help! Please contact Amy with any questions or to volunteer.

Community Building Pauline

Elections: Nominations for 2008-09 officers are ongoing. Please send nominees to Pauline. A recent report of nominees was sent out via email. Elections will be held at the April Community Meeting. Shannon encouraged the Community to view itself as an entity of combined gifts. We can look to the older members for their experience and newer members to energize the group. The Org chart was reviewed and various roles in the community were clarified for newer parents. Many positions on the Org chart were created by parents who had a passion and vision for the role.

OTHER BUSINESS

Parent Education Opportunity Cris

- Workshop Subject: How to Talk to Your Children About Safety
- Tuesday, April 8th at 7:00 P.M.
- There is a lot that caring adults can do to prevent children from being assaulted. This workshop is designed to strengthen our confidence when discussing this tough and necessary subject with our children.

Spring Camp at Camp Indianola, May 9-11, 2008

- Invitation to Hogwarts – signup form inside. Return by Friday, April 11 w/ payment
- Brochure will be sent home with lots of info, like what to bring, schedule, activities to expect, etc.
- The event will be mostly catered this year – will need Friday night and Sunday morning assistance only.
- Volunteer signups to go around...great opportunities for hours!
- Getting there – plan on carpooling! Park & ride? (Depends on volunteer)
- Handheld GPS anyone? Mark stated that we can borrow a sufficient number of GPS units from EAS.
- Activities, both scheduled and non-scheduled may include:
- Campfire (bring your guitar, etc.)
- Skits (got talent?) and DCS Play
- Outdoor sports (basketball hoops, soccer field)
- Polar bear swim (bring swim wear)
- Beach cleanup (gloves/pickup sticks/old ski poles)
- Hiking trails (bring your hiking shoes!)
- Beach walks (bring more shoes!)
- Crafts and activities-- Cory is activity directory.
- Rope swing

New Business/Q &A

The Women's Walking Group of Discovery (not a LWSD sponsored, DCS

sponsored, or parent group sponsored group) is an informal group of women that occasionally walk together, on average once a week. The group welcomes new members (dads too!). There is an email group for communication. Any person can suggest a walking time and see if others are interested. Stuart can inform us how to get on to the list and will send this information out to the Community, so that anyone interested can join in.

The recent Pool Party was a success and Cameron was acknowledged for organizing this.

Ron noted that this year's summer camp will probably be the last one that he and Patty will host. This event requires about 9 months advance planning. He suggested that someone else may be interested in carrying on this tradition.

The staff (Carol, Diane, Monica and Janet) were given flowers by Staff Appreciation Committee as an expression of the Community's ongoing appreciation.

Diane noted that she was able to get an art drying cart and some math materials from Fun Run funds.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Steering Meeting MINUTES
March 6, 2008 6:30 PM

Location: Carl Sandburg Teacher's Lounge

Present: Amy, Sara, Diane, Pete, Mark, Cameron, Jill, Dawn, Linda, Shannon, Toby, Anne, Susan

The meeting commenced at 6:32 PM.

Welcome Shannon/Pete

No comments.

Staff Report/Enrollment Toby/Diane

Diane reported that "Discovery Time" is going well; there is currently a "Play it forward" theme for this time. The Older's class decided to donate some money that was gifted to them as a result of this session. "Double Triad" groups are working better than the "Single Triad" groups.

Prospective families are now taking part in class observations. Parent reps are scheduled to be present for observations to assist. There are applicants for the upper grades as well as 1st grade. Currently there are 3 applicants for 2nd grade, 5 for 3rd grade, 3 for 4th grade, and 2 for 5th grade. The Lottery will be held on March 14th and parents whose children are accepted will be notified on this day. It is positive that we have applicants for upper grades as the State caps for class size are rising, and it is important that DCS classes be filled to capacity as much as possible to help assure continued District funding of the program. There are 26 spots available in the Youngers class, 27 in the Middles and 28 in the Olders, with the new Caps in effect. As these numbers are increasing, it is important to communicate with parent volunteers who work in the classroom that their commitment is important. If they have volunteered for a slot of class time, their attendance is mandatory except in the case of illness.

Discussion continued on the importance of volunteers and that there appears to be a more pronounced "volunteer crunch" this year. There has been some difficulty with getting volunteers for field trips. It was suggested that parents should be advised that it is "strongly suggested" that they assist on at least one field trip per year. It was agreed that it would be prohibitive to make this a mandatory requirement. A suggestion was made that for working parents it is very helpful to get advance notification of volunteer opportunities, so that they can make adjustments in their work schedule to assist. It can also be helpful for parents to share a regular volunteer position by alternating weeks and providing back up for each other. Mark reported that he will be having a new "Copier Training" session for volunteers to assist in this area.

Toby added that DCS has an advantage in that there is a guarantee that classes will not be over-filled, as they may be in the conventional schools. He affirmed that it is important to have DCS classes filled. He also reported that there have been 83 applications for Carl Sandburg Kindergarten, with 60 requests for all day kindergarten. These numbers are increased from last year but still unpredictable as parents may

make changes in their kindergarten choice between now and September.

Treasurer's Report Sara

Expenses continue to be low. Sara distributed an Income and Expense Report, dated and current through 3/6/08. See the attached report for details.

Volunteer Report Anne

An initial email went out to 10 families during the first week of February whose volunteer hours were low. One half of these families have increased their volunteer hours to an appropriate level. A letter will go out soon to 5 families who have not completed 39 volunteer hours at the end of February requesting that they call to schedule a meeting with Anne and Shannon or Pete.

Committee Reports

Enrichment Amy

A five week Friday special will start on March 28 and will run through May 2nd. There will be four choices: The DCS Play with Diane, CO2 cars with Roger, Digital Photography with Tom, and "Taking Care of Your Dog" with Karen. It is hoped that these will be a success and inspiration for the continuation of Friday Specials in the fall. Friday Special leaders have a planning form and account for any special circumstances/troubleshooting in advance.

Finance/Grants Cameron

Cameron learned that the Lake Washington School Foundation offers science related grants of \$1500. Cameron will continue to research this as a possible grant for DCS. The Foundation appears to offer these on a regular basis with the next set of applications due in April.

Community Outreach Susan

Susan reported that she believes that Nancy is short on funds for the Homeless Women's Lunch. This Luncheon has been historically funded by the community. The luncheon underwent many last minute changes this year per the request of the facility due to their move. It may be that there was some confusion on the amount of donations needed. It was suggested that Nancy try to get donations from the community to cover her costs. If she still does not get enough funds, then she can bring this to Steering. Steering will then vote on providing the difference to Nancy from DCS funds.

ACTION ITEM: Susan will communicate this to Nancy.

The Homeless Women's Luncheon was a success despite the last minute changes. Students decorated and filled 150 lunch bags which were delivered to the Women's Shelter.

Susan and Christi are now planning an Earth Day related service project. There is the possibility of doing this event at Cotton Hill Park, where a larger service project will be held from 9-12. Volunteers will remove invasive species of plants and plant trees. The event includes goats who eat non-native blackberry bushes. There is a similar event at St Edwards Park. This event will be on a Saturday, either April 19 or April 26. It will be a "Parent Group Sponsored Event". Susan and Christi will firm up the details and have a sign up sheet on March 19 at the Community Meeting.

A suggestion was made that St Edward Park can also organize custom visits for a field trip, if desired. For either event, there will be representatives to help explain and direct the kids.

Community Building/Elections Update

Pauline

An update was sent out on email about the upcoming elections. Elections will be held on 4/17/08. Pauline asks everyone to consider their current and future role at DCS. Also people are asked to encourage others to consider their volunteer contributions and what position they might be suited for. Pauline is also looking for a PNO volunteer for the spring.

Communications

Dawn

No new business reported in Communications.

Other Business

Spring Camp Update

Dawn

Spring Camp paperwork will go out on 3/10. The theme will be a surprise for the kids. There is a GPS geo-caching/treasure hunt being planned. There is a need for 5-8 GPS units for this event.

ACTION ITEM: Mark will investigate to see if some GPS units can be borrowed from Middle Schools or Junior Highs.

ACTION ITEM: Sara will check on availability of a unit from her brother.

Camp will be held May 9-11. It will start Friday evening. There will be a chicken stew/taco soup choice for Friday dinner that Dawn will prepare. There will be a campfire Friday night. All meals will be catered on Saturday. Saturday activities will include bottle rockets, the polar swim (depending on lifeguard availability), crafts, beach clean up, the DCS play and Saturday night skits. Unfortunately the CO2 cars cannot be accommodated this year due to the catered meals in the upper building. The DCS play will be performed on Friday at school for those who cannot attend camp.

The cost will be as follows: Overnight use: Child one night, \$40. Child two nights, \$50. Adult one night, \$60. Adult two nights, \$80. Day use for child/adult, \$30. Special lodging requests can be made on the application.

New Business

The idea of a "caring" type of position was raised. This person might follow up in some way with needs that arise among Community members, to ensure that all members are getting support if they need or desire. This might be helpful during a time such as a new baby, surgery, or death in the family.

These needs have been met over the years in various ways, with ebbs and flows depending on the leadership at the time. Room reps have also helped in this area. No conclusion was reached at this time.

Action Items

FROM MARCH STEERING MEETING

Susan Communicate with Nancy about today's discussion regarding funds for the Homeless Women's Luncheon.

Mark Check into District availability of GPS units for Spring Camp.

Sara Check on availability of GPS units for use at Spring Camp.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.