

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.