

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Steering Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2008 6:30 PM
Carl Sandburg Teacher's Lounge

Present: Ingrid, Jill, Susan, Diane, Dawn, Cameron, Sara, Ingrid, Denise, Anne, Mark Ba, Pauline, Pete, Mark Bl., Shannon, Stuart, Nadine, Stella

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mark Bl

Mark commented that it is good to see that classrooms are full. Efforts at recruitment have been successful. September will be an eventful month with Curriculum nights and the Ice Cream Social. Mark acknowledged the work of Dawn and others on the DCS website. The website is exemplary for the district. The website's calendar is a useful tool and parents need training on how to use it. The long term plan is to eventually phase out the use of Parent Organizer and transition to use of the website. At this time PO is still needed for forms and authorizations.

Action Items:

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|--------------------|------|--|
| Mark Bl | DONE | Add links from Sandburg website to DCS and vice versa. |
| Dawn | | Contact Laurie at LWSD about Google analytics to track use of the website. |
| Dawn/Mark B | | Look into website calendar sign-up for parents vs parent organizer vs email lists. |

TEACHER REPORT

Diane

Diane reported that things in the classrooms are running smoothly. The larger class size has been accommodated for in the Youngers. A discussion followed regarding the numerous changes over the summer in enrollment. Reasons for the changes included long commutes, siblings in other schools and the option of parochial school. Parents may have several choices and tend to make their decisions at the last minute. It was noted that extended care is allowing more kids into their program this year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Sara

Sara noted that there was a \$9,000 surplus in the 2007-08 budget. This brings the total surplus (added to prior years surpluses) to \$20,000. Spring camp in 2008 netted about \$500. Some events were canceled last year and the 2007-08 budget was expanded given larger

expenditures in the previous year. Corporate matching also contributes to the surplus. The use of these surplus funds was encouraged. A discussion followed regarding possible ways to spend these monies. Teachers would like new digital cameras, a video camera for use at school, items to support the handwriting program, and possible gifts for Sandburg such as wands for active boards. There was discussion on implications of the use of a video camera at school, including the potential request of parents for copies of films (and needed equipment), and the complication of no photo release requests. It was decided to table the discussion of the video camera until the next Steering Meeting. It was noted that such expenditures can be submitted to PTSA as well.

The idea of supporting the community at large was suggested, such as purchasing supplies for another school. A suggestion was made to collaborate with the St Edwards environmental learning center. It was noted that use of public funds can be tricky due to complicated WA State rules. Donations cannot be made from the school budget, but rather must be collected for a specific purpose. A suggestion was made to host a teacher training event and invite other schools to participate. A concern was voiced that we should be sure that the needs of DCS and it's students are met before giving funds away. The possibility of foreign language instruction at DCS was suggested. It was noted that suggestions for other possible expenditures should be solicited from the greater Community at the next Community Meeting. A form could be distributed for the Community to submit proposals to the Treasurer.

Action items:

- Mark Bl:** Look into school finance/public funds/donation rules.
- Pauline:** Investigate 501c3 organization rules.
- Jill:** Approach the St Edwards environmental learning center regarding a possible collaboration with DCS.
- Cameron:** Will explore what it would take to support a foreign language program by looking at existing programs cost and characteristics.
- Sara:** Put together a form for use by Community to submit proposals on how to spend the budget surplus.
- Mark** Investigate digital camera types on the district list and assist the teachers with purchase.

VOLUNTEER REPORT

Anne

Anne reviewed what positions still are vacant on the Org chart. An Art Docent and Tech docent are needed for the Olders. It was clarified that the November Learning Celebration will be coordinated by Hospitality. The Youngers need a snack calendar volunteer;

Cameron volunteered. Paulette volunteered to work with Parent Organizer and will need training for this. There are openings for Spring Camp Chair, and Camp Coordinators for food, activities, registration, housing and volunteers. Facilities has an opening for Building. It was clarified that this role does not involve care of the school building, but rather actual building projects such as bookshelves for the classrooms. This position has not been filled over the past few years. It might be better named "Handyperson Coordinator" and be served by a list of volunteers who are willing to be contacted should a need arise for building projects.

There was a discussion about the Bulletin Board outside of the classrooms. It was suggested that the board might be used as a recruiting tool and also as a news site with pictures of recent activities such as field trips. Pictures from the website could be printed out and posted. It was also suggested that the Org chart might be simplified on the board by enlarging the chart and putting wallet sized head shots next to titles. The idea of posting a family picture of all DCS families was also suggested. Stuart offered to take pictures of Steering members at tonight's meeting.

Action Items

Shannon Communicate with Mark and Heather regarding org chart.

Mark Ba Talk to Heather to coordinate working on bulletin board.

FINANCE/GRANTS Cameron

Grants explored last year included environments (received), arts, and foreign language.

COMMUNICATION

No report.

FACILITIES Denise

Denise reported that the school grounds were prepared successfully prior to the opening of school. The efforts of those who participated in the work session were acknowledged. The night custodian also assisted with the care of the grounds and is willing partner with us on gardening. Additional tools are needed for the care of the grounds.

Action item:

Denise Put together a handyperson list.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Susan

Planned activities for Community Outreach this year include Food Lifeline, possible UNICEF donations at Halloween, and the Homeless Women's Luncheon (Nancy to coordinate).

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Pauline/Nadine

Pauline reported that the new parent potluck in late summer was beneficial. Pauline plans to share ideas with Explorer Community School Community Building chair. A concern was raised regarding a communication gap in disseminating information regarding allergies. The issue of handling allergies at school was discussed. District policy is that a letter goes out to parents informing them of allergies in their child's class. It was voiced that it is key is to assure that parents are informed of allergies prior to the start of school. Parents also should be proactive in informing the teacher and class especially regarding serious allergies. The ultimate responsibility for handling known allergies is the teacher's. A suggestion was made to discontinue Community Snack, but it is a tradition enjoyed by the Youngers. No conclusion was reached about changing the Community Snack. A suggestion was made include allergy information on the DCS enrollment form to assure timely acquisition of this information.

It was also noted that Parent Organizer is confusing to new parents. Pauline would like to have a demonstration of how to complete a field trip form on PO at Community Meeting. It was suggested that new parents could be assisted to sign up on PO en masse possibly during a Community Meeting. Optimally, this would take place in August next year.

Action Item:

Diane

Talk with staff about sending out an email communication to each class regarding allergies.

Mark BL

Look into putting allergy information onto the enrollment form and communicate with Janet regarding this.

Dawn

DONE

Send Pauline link to PO sign up.

FALL EVENT

Diane

Fall Camp is planned for October 12 with square and line dancing instruction at St Edwards gym. Nancy will come up with games and mixers.

ENRICHMENT

Jill

Jill described the plan for Friday specials this year which would include 3 sessions, similar to last year. The following are proposed dates and options:

Fall Session: October 10,17, 24, November 7

Proposed/possible offerings:

Old and New Games/ ancient civilizations

Food

Collage Art

Chinese Dance

Winter Session: 2 – 3 sessions with the possible dates of January 16, 23, 30, or February 6.

This may be taught by the Tlingit Tribe First Nation Dance group. They could include art, dance and music in their sessions. To be confirmed.

Spring Session: April 10,17, 24, May 1

Proposed offerings:

Sign Language/Singing

Guitar

The Play/Drama

The Spring Session could culminate with performances by all three groups in a combined fashion.

Jill welcomes more ideas from teachers and the Community.

OTHER BUSINESS

A suggestion was made to meet regarding Information Night.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

ACTION ITEMS FROM THE SEPTEMBER STEERING MEETING

Pete Organize a meeting for information night and invite the Community.

Mark Bl DONE Add links from Sandburg website to DCS and vice versa.

Dawn Contact Laurie at LWSD about Google analytics to track use of the website.

Dawn/Mark B Look into website calendar sign-up for parents vs parent organizer vs email lists.

Mark Bl: Look into school finance/public funds/donation rules.

Pauline: Investigate 501c3 organization rules.

Jill: Approach the St Edwards environmental learning center regarding a possible collaboration with DCS.

Cameron:		Will explore what it would take to support a foreign language program by looking at existing programs cost and characteristics.
Sara		Put together a form for use by Community to submit proposals on how to spend the budget surplus.
Mark Ba		Investigate digital camera types on the district list and assist the teachers with purchase.
Shannon		Communicate with Mark and Heather regarding org chart.
Mark Ba		Talk to Heather to coordinate working on bulletin board.
Denise		Put together a handyperson list.
Diane		Talk with staff about sending out an email communication to each class regarding allergies.
Mark Bl		Look into putting allergy information onto the enrollment form and communicate with Janet regarding this.
Dawn	DONE	Send Pauline link to PO sign-up.