

ACCESS PTA General Meeting 3/11/14

7 p.m. call to order

Treasurer's report- Abbie Rankin provided the updated budget, which is attached below. The 8th graders raised \$1,475 at the fundraiser for their 8th grade trip. The 4/5 class is on the waiting list for the Oregon Trail trip. We have not made money yet on the school t-shirts, but will sell them again at the talent show. The chess club has requested \$500 reimbursement for some of their tournament fees for 3 tournaments. It was noted that only a small group of students who participate in chess actually go to the tournaments, and that there was no request made in advance of the tournaments, which have already happened. Heather K. and Abbie will follow up with the chess club to get more information about this before a decision is made. Abbie requests that in the future with fundraisers money raised be counted by 2 people and kept in the lockbox. It was noted that there have been few requests from low-income families for assistance with paying for school activities, and that there is money available for both field trips and after school enrichment activities. Mr. Wood notes that for field trips many families give more money to help cover lower income families, and that has generally covered the cost of the field trips. We brainstormed ideas for making it easier for families who needed assistance, including automatically covering part of the cost for families on free and reduced lunch, having families indicate on the free and reduced lunch disclosure forms at the beginning of the year that they would like assistance, etc. No decision was made, but it was agreed that it would be helpful to make it an easier process for families who need assistance.

Principal's report- David Wood.

We are receiving a lot of applications this year. About 200 letters were mailed out this week to families who had scored in the 99% percentile on PPS TAG testing, and those should have arrived today. We sent those directly to families along with a letter from the ACCESS PTA, giving them an overview of ACCESS and the application process with Judy Berck and Heather Kent's phone numbers. Heather and Judy can connect families who contact them with ACCESS families who live in their neighborhoods.

Last week Mr. Wood met with TAG coordinators from schools across the district at their meeting. The TAG coordinators have a list of all of the students at their schools who tested at the 99th percentile and they have been asked to talk with those families about options, including ACCESS. Test scores have not yet gone out to all families, and we have only received information about students from 30 schools, but the remainder should be out in the next week or two. The deadline for application is 14 days after families receive a letter from ACCESS that they are eligible. We will not likely have all applications until early April, with decisions by late April. David, the Dean of Students, the counselor, the SPED teacher, one middle school teacher, and one elementary school teacher are on the admissions committee. David and Judy Berck also met with the Black Parent Initiative last week about ACCESS as part of the ongoing effort to increase awareness of ACCESS throughout the district.

David was told on Friday that ACCESS will not be able to have a room divided for next year, because other schools are over budget, and PPS have chosen to prioritize schools who are already overcrowded. Monday David was told that we need to make plans based on the space that we have. He met with

Terri Geist, and they may use Mr. Harkness' class as a small classroom, for classes such as Chinese, which has fewer students. They may choose to accept a smaller number of 6th graders, such as 10 instead of 25, and have one class be a small section. They may also try some other creative juggling of space in order to fit all the students that we hope to admit. ACCESS is still staffed for the full growth plan. A couple solutions might impact Beverly Cleary as well. Hopefully in the next 2 weeks a decision will be made, and David will work with facilities and BC administration on this.

Monday night the staffing budget was approved. We will have a full time counselor for just ACCESS next year, a half-time EA, half time art, and the teacher staffing ratio has improved slightly, by about 8%. We need some additional staffing compared to other schools, specifically for math, where we need 2/3 FTE in math more than is budgeted by the district. David asked the district for an additional 0.5 FTE math teacher. He hasn't heard back yet, but there is a reasonable chance it will be approved. We clearly have enough staffing for the additional 4/5 classroom and the existing 6th graders. The additional math support is very important, and David will also talk to the foundation for support. We may get an additional 0.5 SPED teacher (1.5 total next year). Outdoor school will be a full week next year as opposed to 3 days this year. We also may have 4 days a week with the speech specialist as opposed to 3 this year. David hopes to get feedback from teachers and families about specials. With the extra elementary class it will make scheduling specials more complicated. There is a staffing meeting on 3/18 that may bring more clarity. Other K-8 schools have been allotted funding for 2 secretaries and we have only been given one. David will ask if we can have additional funding for an EA since we didn't get a second secretary.

B.C. was allocated a full time administrator for this building for next year, whereas David Holm was ½ time ACCESS and ½ time BC this year. David will meet with David to discuss whether we need a full time dean of students next year versus ½ time plus teaching.

It was asked how it has been working with cooperative space sharing with BC, and Mr. Wood stated that they have worked well together. Because BC will have 8 rooms of elementary school students next year their space needs are pretty non-negotiable. Our middle school teachers teach 5 out of 6 periods, so rooms have been used all 6 periods with some teachers "pushing in to" other teachers' rooms when not needed by students. This has been less than ideal and challenging, but they have made it work. Parents expressed concerns about kids who get hot lunch not having time to eat and David is aware of that issue. Students have been told that they can raise their hands to request more time to eat, but students typically want to get outside to play with friends. Next year they may add a little more time for lunch than the current 20 minutes, but it's not possible to do much more.

David will ask for feedback about specials and enrichment after he knows more specifics about his budget.

The Confucius Classroom status was renewed for next year, so we will continue to have a full time Mandarin teacher.

Site Council- Kelly Cutler. The Site Council discussed how to communicate with families of potential ACCESS students. They discussed having multiple points of access, including the TAG office,

counselors, teachers, etc. They also discussed sibling preference and reviewed the survey results. The decision was made to give equal weight to preference for siblings as for students from underrepresented schools, on free and reduced lunch, and underrepresented minorities. Feedback from families was mostly positive, although some families would have preferred giving greater weight to siblings. No fixed weight was given for sibling preference, and the admissions committee will have to make difficult decisions.

Old Business: minutes from the February will be posted and approved at the next meeting.

New Business:

Recruitment for PTA Board members for next year is starting. We are supposed to have a nominating committee of 3 members from the general membership. Many member of the board are willing to continue, but some positions will need to be filled. We also discussed having a president-elect position on the board, either an additional board member or having the VP be the president-elect. Models from other schools were discussed: at BC there was an additional president elect position, and at Skyline the president-elect also served as the volunteer coordinator. Mr. Wood suggests considering having a board member from a new family. Heather K. will send out an email blast to all families asking for people to let us know if they are interested in serving on the board. In April we will revisit this and see if there are any positions for which we don't have anyone running, and try to nominate people for those positions if this is the case.

Run For The Arts will need more leadership next year. We will also need more parents to help with the mid-summer picnic for all families. Judy Berck has saved space at Normendale Park for this on Sunday August 2nd but isn't able to do this project all on her own this year as it has grown so much. She would like to pass it off or at least get substantial help in doing it this year. Also, the Ice Cream Social will need more planning for next year for better flow, especially as the school is growing. The earlier start of the school this year may add to the challenge.

There will be a discussion at the April meeting about next year's budget, including things that should be added.

There are two parent forums planned for April and May:

* April 6 Mr. Harkness will present on Internet Porn (repeats Friday April 10 8:40-9:25am)

* May 6th Mr. Diltz will discuss Cyber Bullying (repeats Friday May 8th 8:40-9:25am)

May 4-8th is Teacher Appreciation week, and Julia Breda has been organizing this. Julia is the parent who has been doing the monthly teacher appreciation lunches this year, and will likely organize a lunch for Teacher Appreciation week as well. It was suggested that the teacher lunch be Tuesday May 5th (parents bring food to show appreciation for teachers and staff).

It was suggested that spirit week be done jointly with Beverly Cleary this year, and also that teacher appreciation lunches be joint next year. We tried to do joint teacher appreciation lunches this year and

it didn't work for several reasons, but we will try again next year.

The TAGAC committee meeting was last week. They got a board response to their requests a couple hours before the meeting, and it was felt that they didn't really address any of the recommendations by TAGAC, so people were disappointed. They plan to discuss this further. There are 4 school board positions opening up and there is going to be an upcoming forum for potential board members, and TAGAC is hoping to get some TAG specific questions asked of potential candidates.

Pam Kislack is on the DEBRAC committee and plans to come to the April meeting to update us. Their deadline for decision-making is December 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Category	Budget	Income	Expense	Actual	Remaining
Administrative Expenses					
Social Activities	\$1,000				
Science Lab needs					
Administrative Expenses					
Training Needs	\$1,500		\$134	\$384	\$1,116
Field Trips	\$1,000	\$0	\$178	\$178	\$822
Insurance	\$124	\$0	\$124	\$124	\$0
Office Supplies/Copies	\$100	\$0	\$191	\$191	-\$91
Networking Campaigns - Events	\$0	\$10,141	\$5,737	\$4,404	\$5,737
AV Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$410	\$410	-\$410
Other	\$0	\$0	\$45	\$45	-\$45
Total	\$3,624	\$10,141	\$6,891	\$4,850	\$5,291

Category	Budget	Income	Expense	Actual	Remaining
General Campaign					
Fundraising Campaigns - Events	\$1,000	\$10,141	\$5,737	\$4,404	\$5,737
Machine Contributions	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grant Labels	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total	\$2,000	\$11,141	\$6,937	\$6,404	\$4,204