

Explorer Elementary Charter School

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

2:00 p.m.

- Attendance: Jesse Brown, Patti Bruffey, Al Fernandez, Jana Fortune, Gladys Garcia, Gretchen Gillingham, Jill Green, Wendy Hutchison, Therese Hymer, Anna Jimenez, Erica Lund-Anastasakis, Zoltan Sarda, Reita Sebert, Tracy Wilkinson, Medy Wundrow, Teresa Zucchet, and Margaret Egler

Agenda Item #1: Minutes Approval

1. Wendy Hutchison moved to approve the 6.9.09 Parent Council Minutes; Erica Lund-Anastasakis seconded. Approved.

Agenda Item # 2: Fundraising

Report by Anna Jiminez

1. First Family Dinner Night at Souplantation on October 21st.

Agenda Item #3: Communications Update

Report by Erica Lund-Anastasakis

1. The new Parent Council website is www.pcee.info
2. All Executive Parent Council Officers and Committee Chairs have an email forward on the site.
3. All website information goes to Erica.
4. School messages go to Jan by Wednesday for the Friday email.
5. There's a vacancy for Communications VP. Ideal candidate would have regular school presence, but work can be done at any time.

Agenda Item #4: Principal Update

Report by Jill Green

1. Thank yous!
 - a. Erica Lund-Anastasakis for the beautiful website.
 - b. Jana Fortune and the wonderful families who helped her with the fun Back To School Picnic.
 - c. Jenna Price and Luisa Elizando for the lovely Everyone A Reader Tea.
2. Smooth start to year
 - a. There are 342 children.
 - b. Wonderful faculty development meeting focused on the wishes, hopes and dreams of the faculty. The faculty vision, "We are a Faculty who..." was shared with the children and families at the last Gathering.
 - c. On Wednesday, 9/30, parents will have an opportunity to participate in a "We are a Parent Body who..." exercise led by Zoltan Sarda.
3. An internal assessment committee will review conceptual math and writing instruction, where room for improvement has been shown. Reading is on target.
4. Zoltan, Teresa Zucchet and Jill established the Parent Education calendar.
5. Ashely Carrico and Christine Kuhl both had their babies.

6. School website is undergoing a major revision.
7. 10th Anniversary is incredible to fathom. School has thrived because of the teachers and parents working together from the beginning.
8. State budget cuts have resulted in \$1,000 reduction per child in ADA funding.
 - a. To compensate for the cuts, administrative costs have been reduced by \$70,000 and two children were added to each class in grades K-3.
9. Eliza Gordon is moving back east to be with her family. She's been at the school since the very beginning and will be sorely and deeply missed. Her last day will be in mid-October.
 - a. Paula Camarado, an instructional aide in 2nd grade, will work at the front desk from 7:30 to 12:30.

Agenda Item: #5: Board Update
Report by Therese Hymer

1. Independent Contracts
 - a. Auditors found technical noncompliance with five independent contracts (although teachers and parents had signed the contracts, students had not), which resulted in a forfeiture of \$50,000 of ADA funds.
 - b. Board adopted a new policy with new rules and stringent enforcement. Because it is onerous to implement this policy, contracts will be assigned for absences of 3 or more days.
 - c. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep vacation days to the established holidays.
2. Board passed a revised budget with additional cuts.
 - a. Parent Council was asked to donate an additional \$33,000.
 - b. Auditors also recommended Parent Council consider changing its legal status to a separate 501(c)(3). Board will get an outside legal opinion to consider the implications of this move.
3. Kay McElrath, CFO for High Tech High, was approved as CFO for Explorer. This vote gave Kay check-signing ability and liability insurance coverage.

Agenda Item #6: Budget
Report by Tracy Wilkinson

1. Parent Council budget is projected to have a \$51,000 deficit.
 - a. Additional donation to Explorer
 - b. Tight income projections
2. Explorer Wear – hope to raise additional funds this year through 10th Anniversary recognition.
3. Square One student art items projected to raise \$2,000.
4. SeaCamp scholarship fund has \$400 (raised by last year's 5th grade class video sales). 5th grade families will raise additional funds for scholarships through costume sales and other efforts.
5. **Motion to approve 2009-2010 Budget:** Wendy Hutchison moved; Therese Hymer seconded. Motion passed.

Agenda Item #7: Social Curriculum

Report by Zoltan Sarda

1. All entities at Explorer – faculty, parents, board – will or have participated in a “We Are” exercise that each class does.
2. Zoltan presented research on “Attributional Biases” or how we, as humans, explain behavior. There is a continuum between attributing behavior to inborn dispositions versus context. We usually make judgments using both attributions.

Agenda Item #8: Other Thoughts

1. Reita Sebert reported that Art From the Heart theme will be “Explorer: Past, Present and Future”
2. Web-based auction program was approved.
3. There may be changes to the Teacher Outing offerings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Margaret Egler
Recording Secretary

Anna Jimenez
President