

Explorer Elementary Charter School

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

2:00 p.m.

- Attendance: Cindy Borkum, Patti Bruffey, Al Fernandez, Gladys Garcia, Gretchen Gillingham, Kelly Gralewski, Jill Green, Wendy Hutchison, Anna Jimenez, Erica Lund-Anastasakis, Kathy Saucedo, Reita Sebert, Kimberly Weinstein, Tracy Wilkinson, Teresa Zucchet, and Margaret Egler

Agenda Item #1: Minutes Approval

1. Tracy Wilkinson moved and Wendy Hutchison seconded to approve the 9.22.09 Parent Council minutes. Approved.

Agenda Item # 2: Introduction of New Vice President of Communications

1. Kathy Saucedo was approved by the Executive Parent Council as the new VP of Communications.
2. Kathy's goals are to follow Explorer's mission of mindful communication.
 - a. With Cindy Borkum's help, she's updated and improved the bulletin boards outside the main entrance and coach's office.
 - b. She's working on enhancing emails and website communication.
3. Kathy has served Explorer in multiple positions and Parent Council is grateful for her willingness to take over the role of VP of Communications.

Agenda Item #3: Budget

Report by Tracy Wilkinson

1. Movie Night was successful although it didn't raise quite as much money as expected (\$200). It occurred during a week with a lot of other Village activities.
2. Classroom Funds are coming in. Many thanks to all who have contributed.
3. There are a couple of negative items in the budget report stemming from expenses incurred last year but paid out this year. Specifically, '09 graduation videos were mailed out this fall and there was an Art from the Heart refund.

Agenda Item #4: Art From the Heart

Report by Reita Sebert

1. Room Parents have met and are underway with planning classroom projects.
2. Event will be on Saturday, March 20th at 7:00. There will be heavy appetizers and drinks.
3. In celebration of Explorer's 10th Anniversary, grandparents and alumni will be invited.

4. The first AFTH Newsletter will be sent out this week.
 - a. There will be Teacher Outings
 - b. Student-created favors for purchase will be beaded bookmarks. Kathy Saucedo is donating beads and there will be a bead collection bin placed near the entrance for a bead drive.
5. Theme is “Past, Present and Future” and colors will be black, white and silver.
6. There will be a school-wide art project.
7. Auction donation drive -- “Just One” Campaign for every family to bring in one item.
8. Tim Niegocki is making a 10-year Anniversary retrospective video.

Agenda Item #5: Principal Update

Report by Jill Green

1. H1N1 Update
 - a. Teachers are emphasizing hand washing and purell use.
 - b. Encourage all sick children and staff to stay home.
 - c. Explorer investigating whether to be a vaccination site for H1N1.
2. Staff Development Day
 - a. Philip Yenawine, noted author and co-founder of Visual Thinking Strategies, presented training for teachers to help children become astute visual learners. The approach is initially through art and is then incorporated into the curriculum. He will return to follow up with the teachers.
3. Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - a. Thank you to the Meeder, Fortune and Ratcliff families for donating lunch to the teachers.
4. Board of Trustees Retreat
 - a. Thank you to Rosanne Holliday, Board President, for hosting the retreat at her ranch in Corte Madera.
 - i. Board engaged in “We are a Board who” exercise led by Zoltan Sarda. Results are posted in the hall.
 - ii. Board focused on “generative thinking” about the future of the school in 5-10 years. Some themes that emerged were:
 1. Diversity: Embracing the excitement of diversity and addressing the need for understanding the opportunities and challenges a diverse student population presents, which includes, but is not limited to, fundraising issues.
 2. Service Learning: Explorer wants the children to be personally aware, deep thinkers as well as able to give back to others.
 - a. Will partner with Excel Youth Zone and Tiveeda Stovall to incorporate service learning in the curriculum for each class.
5. Parent Education

- a. Jill has held her first talk
 - b. Zoltan will present on Parenting the Explorer Way
 - c. Teresa Zucchet will lead a discussion of “Everyday Blessings” by Jon Kabat-Zinn.
6. Dissemination
- a. School receives a steady stream of national and international visitors.
 - i. Recently hosted 10 educators from Seattle for the day.
 - ii. Will host 30 UCSD students on Thursday.
 - iii. Teachers from the Children’s School
 - iv. Visitors from Holland most recently
 - b. Always a pleasure to hear their reactions to the school and the students.

Agenda Item: #5: Parking and Traffic Control

Report by Anna Jimenez and Jill Green

1. **Issue:** Traffic and parking issues have worsened this year.
 - a. Young Explorer students have been walking alone across Truxton during drop-off.
 - b. Cars are parked all day in the “drop-off only” zone in front of the school on Truxton.
 - c. There seem to be fewer spaces this year.
 - d. Issue involves all three schools in our building as well as Rock Church.
2. **Resolved:** A committee will be formed to observe, review and recommend solutions.

Agenda Item #6: Development Update

Report by Jean Kluver

1. Annual Appeal is underway and we’ve raised \$50,000 so far. Goal is to exceed \$100,000.
2. Second appeal letter will go out before the end of the year.
3. Phone-a-thon tentatively set for late spring.

Agenda Item #7: Other Thoughts

1. **Solar Panels:** Jean Kluver reported on a proposal for adding solar panels to the roof of High Tech High Media Arts. There are new subsidies and loans available right now and electricity is expensive.
2. **Development Issues:** Kim Weinstein asked about Explorer requesting funding from banks under the Community Reinvestment Act. Jean replied that we’ve tried local community banks without success, but that we are always looking for any personal connections to banks. Banks can be more receptive to marketing/underwriting pitches. Also, Explorer does accept stock donations.

3. **Communications:**

- a. Email Erica Lund-Anastasakis with any changes or questions about the PCEE website. Email is on the pcee.info homepage. Erica has added a You Tube tutorial on the calendar to add Explorer dates to personal online calendars.
 - b. Big Tent is a secure method of coordinating the communications with parents. A pilot project is underway with the Room Parents. The Big Tent team is Al Fernandez, Kathy Saucedo, Rebecca Von Frazee and Erica.
4. **Square One Art Update:** Cindy Borkum reported that Square One order forms will be sent home on November 4th and due November 13th. The products will be in on December 8th. Explorer received 33% of the sales. Costs for products range from \$6 to \$24.
5. **Water Bottles:** Kelly Gralewski suggested encouraging the use of reusable water bottles in lieu of plastic bottles during the time the drinking fountains are shut down.
6. **Generator:** Jill notified Parent Council that there a generator on Historic Decatur Road is under investigation by the Air Pollution Control District as a possible air quality issue. Notice is available to parents in the office.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Margaret Egler

Recording Secretary

Anna Jimenez

President