

Henry Elementary School Site Council

Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Members Present:

Kim MacAllister, Parent
Kim Bachenheimer, Certified
Susan Allard, Certified
Diane Holzman, Certified
Jon Ben-Asher, Administration
Gary Fowler, Parent
Christy Canovas, ESP
Lorrie Baker, ESP
Michelle Ward, Parent

Members Absent: Jacob Lancaster, ESP; BJ Cordova, Community

Guests: Julie Versluis and Jodi Lesch, Student Finance
Eleanor Fowler, parent, SCPC contact

1. Call Meeting to Order: 3:45 p.m.
2. Review and Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

Copies of minutes from 9.15.09, current agenda and “Introduction to School Council” paper were handed out

Ben-Asher had a correction to the minutes: Title 1 funds for after school tutoring to go for math and reading, but not science

Minutes were approved by consensus with this correction

3. Guest – Tax Credit Speaker(s)

Julie Versluis and Jodi Lesch were introduced. Julie is the “director” of student finance and Jodi is the staff member covering Henry.

Julie shared a handout of general Tax Credit guidelines for our perusal and opened up the forum for questions. Points covered included:

- Tax credit funds are supplemental to the regular curriculum
- They can be used during, before or after school
- Participation fee, \$1 per child
 - For ‘any extra curricular activity’
 - The funds are not deducted out until spent on an activity

- A blanket payment may be made for all students to cover all activities for the year
- Tax Credit determination chart – signed off with requisitions
- Discussed the audit that's taking place now
- Items cannot be designated to a specific teacher, but can be designated to a specific grade level
 - Ex – third grade field trip is ok, a donation to Room X
 - If a donation is made to a specific teacher, we contact them and let the donor know that this can't be done, but we can accept it for the grade level.
 - If they are donated to a specific teacher trip, it should be categorized for that grade level
 - Grade level donations are tracked/recorded by sites, not SF dept
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- A grade may not be issued for activities, and students who miss out cannot be penalized
- Funds designated to a program that no longer exists can be spent.
 - Find the donors and contact them to seek permission to spend the money on something else
 - Funds may be spent on a related activity: ex, funds were donated for an expired music program; they could be used for another activity involving music, such as a field trip to see the symphony
- A teacher could be paid with tax credit money for something like a fine arts after school program... it must be open to all kids (there can be a limit to participants as long as the activity was offered to everyone)
- Expenses on Ex Ed students must cover activities that are NOT on their IEP
- A "character education program" can be funded but must be board approved
 - Julie will email Mr. Ben-Asher a document identifying six traits for this program
- Join fundraisers – PTA/Student Council can work together GB Policy 1241 and principal decides what percentage goes to Student Council (at least 10%); PTA writes SC a check for that amount
- Student council expenses have to benefit the students at that school
 - The can't be expenses that TUSD "should be" paying for
 - Student council "should be" raising funds
 - You can't other clubs if you don't have a student council

Their presentation lasted about 45 minutes

MacAllister – let the community know what we are using the tax credit funds for
 Ben-Asher – that would be great for us to do with the November newsletter

4. Discussion Items

Ben-Asher presented on the draft of the School Accountability Plan, with points being made about how the intention of these plans is different this year. He talked about

the development of a reading goal for the school (see draft plan for details). Teachers have been working on the plan together and will finalize it on Wednesday. The plan may be approved by the Council tonight in draft form, anticipating some minor changes to be made by the staff, or the Council can wait to approve it next week.

Fowler asked if the reading benchmarks would be a national-level type of instrument. In summary, this might be a possibility but will probably include a standard type of tool as well as something specific to Henry.

5. Reports

Facilitator – I gave out a handout at the start of the meeting about the roles of the school council; an overview of what the responsibilities are of a council, what our function is. Several of the same questions came up at the Facilitator’s training along these lines. What is the specific job or function of the Council? The School Board decides this. We saw that responsibility happen last year with the budget resource allocation process.

Principal – Renovation has begun! Plan is to put up a construction yard on playground instead of the front parking lot. How long will it take? Expect work to be going on for at least 12 months, but hopeful we’ll be able to open the new office by the start of the year. He also handed out the 14% budget scenario again for a vote later in the meeting.

Site Council Treasurer – This is the regular report of what we’ve spent this year. So far it’s just money for the art program. She shared a print out of how the designated money is broken down. She said that when teachers leave, if there were funds designated to them, they went to the grade level. She went through some of the various designations – orchestra, science and math, grade level, etc. These were distributed. Ben-Asher acknowledged Lorrie’s work on the printouts and appreciation for the detail hand out, and asked for a presentation next month on how it all comes together. She said if you add up all the balances of designated and undesignated funds, that is what we see on the general balance sheets.

6. Study/Action Items

- 14% Budget – A motion was made by Lorrie Baker to approve the budget allocation as distributed. It was seconded by Kim Bachenheimer. Discussion and questions were offered. Vote was unanimous to approve the budget.
- School Accountability Plan – A motion was made to accept the SAP as presented by Kim MacAllister and seconded by Lorrie Baker. Discussion and questions were offered. Question: so this is a blanket acceptance? Response: this is a motion that we would accept this plan and 301 goals and some explanation. Clarification was made that the question is if we are approving the general plan or going to accept some changes? The response was that if there were minor changes it would be approved, but if there were major changes those would need to be voted. The discussion was that a major change would include changing a goal, something significant such as the benchmarks, or a change to the 301 goal. Request was made to inform the council of the group’s work tomorrow and if there were major

or minor changes. Question was asked how will we know what the benchmarks are going to be or how will the Council be involved? Council will be updated through the process through sharing portfolio development, results of products such as curriculum maps and benchmarks will be shared. The question was called – vote taken and passed unanimously.

7. Announcements? None

8. Call to the Audience

- Eleanor Fowler, serving as the SCPC rep from the school to the District *and* the District to the school. She talked about the first meeting, an orientation that had a good turnout. Dr. Fagen spoke eloquently as she always does. Discussion was had about how the District divides up into smaller groups for ‘regional’ type meetings. Announcements for these meetings should be posted. Our area is called RUSS – Rincon, University, Sahuaro, Sabino. Meetings are at Magee Middle School. Many of the topics requested are budget-oriented and site council-oriented. Any parent, teacher or community member within the area are welcome to attend the sessions and “they truly address the topics.” Dr. Fagen’s message of school identity is consistent about ‘who we are’ and what we learn in our buildings. Introductions of various central office administration were made. Event though we’re in the meat of the year, this is the beginning of the process and the first regional meetings will start now.

As a parent, I have been concerned about the role of the Site Council in general as they move forward, from changing from a ‘rubber stamp’ type body into one that is more involved, so I am glad to hear the thoughtfulness that takes place at these meetings.

Mr. Fowler talked about the focus of the meeting almost entirely on site council roles, but also about discipline and TUSD being in the national spotlight for this. It was discussed that the School Board would lay out some general guidelines about this and the sites would develop them further. This is in the starting phases. The question becomes how do you fairly discipline the children? One person, a group of teachers, the site council... a large part of the discussion was the topic of a community discipline board. What do you mean by a community member? Pick one! Someone like BJ Cordova, someone who has shown an interest in the school. He expects we’ll hear more about these kinds of things. The lady who did most of the talking on this was Dr. Garcia, and this initiative will include elementary as well as the other levels.

Ms. Baker – every few years the District reviews the Rights and Responsibilities and there are new guidelines in place. They are very different and I wonder if everyone is familiar now.

Mr. Fowler .. but I think it's going farther than that. They're also aiming at the level of, example, Henry has the Four Bs. What does it mean to Be Respectful, and what happens when you're not?

Further discussion ensued. We will wait to see what comes out of this initiative.

9. Set agenda:

SAP follow up
Renovation Update
Treasurer Report on how the two budget reports come together

10. Adjournment

Motion made to adjourn by Kim Bachenheimer, seconded by Lorrie Baker.
Motion passed. 5:45 p.m.