

ACCESS PTA Board Meeting

12/10/14

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. Welcome and introductions.

Principal's report - Mr. Wood (7:10 – 7:30 p.m.)

A committee will review ACCESS funds around February 1st to identify unspent money and will create a plan so the school can put it to use for all students in the best way possible.

Run for the Arts (RFTA): We can spend RFTA earnings on a wide variety of things – they can be activities listed on the Young Audiences roster or off the roster and can include transportation costs. If parents have suggestions on how to use the money, give them to homeroom teachers first if they are suggestions for grade levels. If suggestions are for the entire school, give them to Mr. Wood. Expectations are that the kids should have more performances and will be getting out of the school more so hopefully they will be even more excited about asking for donations and running this spring. Review of RFTA goals, challenges, and proposal - see attached sheet for more information.

Val Aitchison – RFTA continued. Current RFTA leaders would like to pass the torch to a group of parents with younger kids – the current leaders have older kids who will be leaving ACCESS soon. RFTA is a fun event to manage with friends so please reach out to Val if you are at all interested. Opportunities to shadow the current leaders are here so act now!

RFTA Proposal: one idea is to do a run for the arts type event without utilizing Young Audiences (YA). YA takes a large cut for their work. If you have experience with managing events and/or tracking funds, please get in touch with Mr. Wood or Val Aitchison.

Update on after school programming – see flyer. Over 90 responses to the survey – about 30 responses said the main barrier is transportation. Good news – about 50 parents said they would be willing to carpool. Dana Ticker will coordinate families.

Successful schools survey – PPS is doing a district wide survey for 5th, 7th, and 10th grades. PPS' goal is to have at least a 40% response rate but Mr. Wood is hoping for a 100% response at ACCESS. He is looking for ways to help ACCESS families complete the survey. If our answers look different from the general PPS population, it might encourage PPS to look at our program more thoughtfully. Survey will come out in January. Although the survey can only be offered to 5th and 7th graders at ACCESS, it brings up good topics for discussion in every home. The district will desegregate the information in many different ways. This is a precursor to a second survey that will come out in the spring. The district will finalize the spring survey after reviewing the first survey. Mr. Wood is hoping that the ACCESS surveys will show that our program is reaching children in a way that the neighborhood schools aren't, e.g. emotional needs, safe feeling, etc. ACCESS' site council and staff are very interested in reviewing the responses to see how ACCESS is doing.

Demographics review. Mr. Wood is wondering how to bring in a diverse group of girls currently in 5th grade because data shows that we are not as equally divided between boys and girls in middle school. David is increasing outreach in poorer, more diverse schools with the desired goal of increasing the school's diversity in all grades. We have not asked our applicants to identify but that might change in the future. This year, 29% of ACCESS students are non-white. ACCESS has a higher percentage of white students than the PPS average. See attached memo for more information.

D-BRAC: meets tomorrow, December 11th. It's Mr. Wood's understanding that nothing will be done regarding ACCESS or Beverly Cleary until D-BRAC has more information about both schools' needs before creating a plan. D-BRAC is looking for a stop-gap measure to help the schools until a longer term plan can be created. The hope is that D-BRAC will keep PPS' word on ACCESS growth goals for 2015-2016 and beyond. David was asked to create scenarios for D-BRAC to consider – ACCESS site council and David are promoting scenario A (see attached). Facilities says that it is possible and most efficient to divide some of our larger classrooms rather than adding portables. Scenario A only works if we get more space in RCP. David has a reasonable degree of confidence that we will get support for this plan. Bottom line is that the decision makers are Karl Logan, Sascha Perrins and the Superintendent – they won't make a decision until D-BRAC says that it will not make a decision. There is a possibility that ACCESS will continue to be located in RCP long term, but it depends on the district boundary review.

ACCESS doesn't need to be co-located with another program but there aren't other EMPTY schools that would house 365 students except for Kellogg. The opportunity to move is an opportunity to have a conversation with the district about what our program looks like – do we have a 9-12 program? Do we get to continue to grow to accommodate more students who qualify? Is there a possibility of growing 1st and 2nd grades so they could be stand alone classes? (Not for next year because of space issues but perhaps in the future.)

Is there a need for advocacy? Yes. It would be helpful to remind Karl and Sasha that there were certain district commitments made to ACCESS regarding growth and location. The reminder could include that we are good neighbors and have made strong efforts in sharing the building with Beverly Cleary.

Site Council: The site council is looking at ACCESS' growth plans in two phases, the short term and then the long term. A few issues being considered are: configuration, space, West side v. East side, high school, etc. We'd like a united front moving forward so hope to survey the community in the future. The site council is interested in capturing information from the general population so please attend meetings and provide input to site council members.

Treasurer Report, Abbie Rankin: Give! Campaign is about \$5,000 under budget. Laurelwood and apple sales went well. We still have several t-shirts to sell! Scrip is half way to budget. We still have large outstanding expenses, e.g. teacher requests, etc. For instance, Mr. Diltz recently purchased a lot of books for an amazing price. The garden funds are being used. The 4/5 team would like to bring their classes on an Oregon Trail Overnight and has asked for assistance with fees for students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program (the total request will be made at a future PTA meeting). 3rd grade teachers want money to purchase Rose Parade supplies.

Mr. Wood has asked teachers to ask families to pay what they can when field trips so one teacher or grade level doesn't wipe out the entire PTA field trip fund (it is usually first come, first served). Is there a specific form that teachers or others to use when asking the PTA for funds? No, there is only a reimbursement form. The foundation has one that could be adapted for the PTA. If we proceed with that, anything outside of the approved funds would need a request form.

Are there identified building needs (or expected needs)? Water cooler for staff (\$40) per month.

Old Business: Motion to approve the November meeting minutes was made and seconded. Motion passed.

New Business: Proposal to authorize a letter from the ACCESS PTA to the PPS School Board was made and a discussion ensued. Is there support or approval for a letter from the PTA in general? YES. There are a few corrections to be made – review of those. Primary message in letter is about the growth plan rather than the SACET recommendations, in particular regarding the sibling preference issue. There doesn't seem to be as much of a PTA consensus about the sibling preference proposal. However, there is a high, objective bar for siblings applying to ACCESS so our situation is substantially different than other schools so consensus is that it's important to note that difference. For many families, ACCESS is not a choice, it's the only option. If we do not address the sibling preference policy at ACCESS, it might be perceived that we accept the current proposals. At the least, we should demonstrate our commitment to equity by including specific numbers/data. Our support of equity and sibling preference shouldn't be a contradiction – all PPS students who are eligible should be accepted at ACCESS. Perhaps add in the number of PPS students who would qualify for ACCESS. We should bolster our argument with data. All in all, sibling preference is different at ACCESS because all siblings must qualify before they can apply. We're not taking a position on sibling preference – just stating it is different at ACCESS.

Motion to approve the letter from the PTA with above corrections was made and approved. Motion passed.

There was a question regarding the status of Mr. Diltz next year, when Ms. Tini Maier returns. Mr. Wood pointed out that half of Mr. Diltz's position this year is technology. Mr. Wood would like to increase the technology position next year so there might be a possibility of keeping both.

Announcements. We need wine donations for the Atomic Cabaret Talent Show. There will be childcare in the basement, \$7 per child. We need more adult talent!

The PTA is still accepting donations to the GIVE! campaign so please donate.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.