

**Hillview PTO Executive Committee Meeting
Hillview Conference Room
January 7, 2016**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Katie Angioletti, Michelle Box, Jody Buckley, Naed de la Vega, Erica Galles, Willy Haug, Michael Kaelin, Kate Kennedy, Joan Lambert, Carolyn Lynch, Cara Magliaro, Julie Nelson, Sara Richter, Beth Shvodian, Gina Skinner, and Ken Wang

Call to Order

- Kate Kennedy called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

Board of Education Report – Joan Lambert

New Laurel School

- Construction on the new Laurel school is in progress.

Parcel Tax

- The School Board parcel tax subcommittee is moving forward. There are already two focus groups to help refine the message. The Board of Education has a special meeting the week after next; and the final vote will occur in February about whether to put it on the ballot. Joan encouraged feedback. As the Board has heard the rationale behind the parcel tax and has heard the presentation, there was small discussion about the parcel tax.
- Joan mentioned that from a personal perspective, other parents from other states were impressed with what our public schools and community are doing. The Board recognized how appreciative and grateful we should be.
- There were questions regarding foreign language choices. Willy said that the school does plan to reoffer the current languages with the addition of Latin and Mandarin, although he explained that in the elective signup process, if at least 15 students request a specific choice, then the school would choose the winner of those selected and offer those as foreign language choices.

Approval of Minutes – Gina Skinner

- Kate made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2015 Executive Board meeting.
- The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Teacher Update - Michael Kaelin

- A note went out to the teaching community about whether they had anything to share. Many expressed their thanks and also provided anecdotes.
- There was a discussion about the book that the 7th graders are reading about Anne Frank. The Diary of Anne Frank had been taught before, so the thought was that this would be a nice, dynamic change. There was extensive planning, including consultation with Willy, about how to teach this subject in a developmentally appropriate manner. Mr. Kaelin discussed how the students are learning how to talk about various groups of people and are sharing their personal stories and mementos as a result of this subject. This is also ties into the themes of GRIT and growth mindset.
- The Board discussed what other classes at Hillview are doing, such as visualizing what 6 million paper clips looks like, and other sources for the topic of the Holocaust.
- Mr. Kaelin discussed the many tie-ins to the topic that would be introduced and mentioned that the BBC production of Anne Frank would be shown to introduce the students to the vocabulary.

Principal's Update – Willy Haug

Sound Grading Practices

- Willy discussed the issue of sound grading practices. He mentioned the team of 14 from MPCSD (not including administrators) who we sent to Portland in December. The team attended this bi-annual conference with others to address the topic and there was a wide range of people. We are hoping to send more in the next conference in the summer.
- Some teachers have changed practices and implemented changes due to the conference. Mr. Kaelin is one example of this. There is also a group who is tasked with focusing on sound grading practices and even if not all teachers have made changes in their practices, the information is out there for them to use. As an example, Willy discussed how teachers could use a scale of 1-4 instead of a %-based grading system. Mr. Kaelin sent a letter to the parent community and the school gave him the opportunity to try this different system out.
- The conference was great to get teachers to think about new methods to shift to a more mastery-based mindset, although we are not quite there yet to have a mastery-based report card. There is a shift to avoid the focus on points and grades.

New Website

- On Monday the new website will be revised. It is scheduled to go live by tomorrow, but just depends on its readiness. The website should appear more visually attractive and provide more functionality. Some revisions took time, but were required, such as making sure that all students depicted provided approvals.

Honor Roll

- Willy discussed the First Trimester Honor Roll letters that go out to the families with a message of congratulations. These are sent with a ribbon to the parents of those students with a trimester GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Honor Shelf

- There will be a new honor shelf in the library. This was an idea that the library heard about from Palo Alto and other volunteers. It specifically focuses on the subject of gender spectrum and allows students to borrow books from the shelf on their honor. Currently, Hillview has some students on the gender spectrum. The new honor shelf will be announced on HawkTalk.

Independent Study Plan

- This year, Independent Study Plans (“ISPs”) are being used to reduce the number of students who technically meet the truancy requirements. This year, the “P” code was eliminated; absences under the “P” code would technically be considered unexcused absences this year.
- The data shows that last year, 244 students met the minimum criteria for truancy. This translates into 1,258 missed days of school. This year, only 58 students met the truancy requirements, which translates into only 274 days of missed school.
- To date, 26 ISPs have been signed off on, which results in 61 days that the school can now classify as excused.
- The data has not been fully analyzed yet, but as we are about halfway through the year, it appears that about half of the kids and number of days met the truancy requirements as compared with last year.
- Willy mentioned that the best practice is to notify the school office a week before an absence. ISPs can be submitted for one day and there is no minimum or maximum number of days required. The burden is on the students to record assignments and get the requisite signatures. A discussion began about ISPs and it was thought that Oak Knoll had no minimum or maximum number of days required for an ISP and Laurel and Encinal might require a minimum of 3 days.
- The goal is to keep students doing the work and having teachers signing off, although it has not been confirmed whether the paperwork submitted so far is perfect.

California Healthy Kids Survey

- The California Healthy Kids Survey will be conducted soon. Students in the 5th grade also take this. Last year, all three grades (6th, 7th, and 8th) took the survey; in prior years only the 7th graders took the survey. This will be one of the factors in the API equation. Students will be taking the survey in their PE classes.
- Parent and teacher surveys will also be conducted. Last year, not many parents responded to the survey and the hope is that this year more parents will respond.

Technology Issues

- We had struggled with some issues in the fall, but now the wireless is better than we have ever had. The new network resulted in unreliable access in the classrooms, lack of Internet access, and resurrected old proxy issues at home. The Ipad and Internet were not reliable. These concerns have since been resolved and the wireless is fast and reliable and it is now safe for teachers to make plans using the Internet.

Student Data Privacy

- Yesterday a team met to discuss student data privacy. In California, we need to stay abreast of the guidelines provided under the Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (“SOPIPA”) and make sure that we are compliant. We need an as-is analysis and probably need to do a better job of disclosing to parents about proper notifications and authorizations needed surrounding student data.
- As of 1/1/16, SOPIPA puts the onus on a vendor not to trade on student information. There is a pledge than many organizations have signed to not share student data. Hillview uses some of the services provided by these organizations (although Edmodo is not one of the organizations).
- The first big deadline will be the Infosnap re-enrollment process

Grading Practices Revisited

- The Board began a discussion about sound grading practices. Willy commented on why people might be interested in these efforts and the benefits. After the conference, more than a couple of teachers because utilizing mastery-based methods. Maybe if we reach critical mass with this momentum, there will be more uniformity, as it is hard with students on one system and others that are not. Also better for more uniformity in all of the grades. The question is what should the rubric be?
- There was discussed about whether students merely translate the new system into an equivalent letter grade, GPAs, and parent community support.
- The Board discussed the success of “flipped” classrooms. Willy explained the basketball free throw analogy and that the idea is that flipped classrooms help to foster self-directed learning. This tool is available to teachers if they are interested. There were questions about whether flipped classrooms were effective, particularly in preparing our students for private school math.
- How much influence these efforts will have might require consistency at some point. Right now, just allowing the grass roots to grow, and they are growing here.

Other Items

- On Monday there will be a meeting about mini-courses.

Treasurer’s Report – Naed de la Vega

- Not much to report this month. Donations were higher than what we had expected and more PTO donations are coming in. There is about \$3k in our Paypal account. We will have some cash carryover for the next year, so should think about what we might want to spend this on.
- Other than a bill of about \$20k from the district, there are still remaining funds in Academic Enrichment. There was discussion about what Willy could spend some of the funds on and whether it was required to be in certain expense categories. Naed reminded everyone that we are already halfway through the year and given the expected expenses, probably have some funds to spend.

Volunteers – Beth Shvodian

- Volunteers have been helping with Hillview's Character Development Education. The next round of instruction will be on Empathy and Communication and the final topic will be Bullying.
- Kate mentioned that we could use some volunteers to coordinate various Coffee Cart and teacher lunches.

Afterschool Programs – Erica Galles

- Afterschool Programs for the winter session start next week.
- Historically, winter is the hardest season to fill. The only programs that were able to continue with enough students were the running and conditioning class that meets twice a week and the cooking program. Erica has not yet heard from Wizbots. Even the coding class does not have as many sign-ups, maybe due to the cost. There was discussion about how the coding class addressed students with varying levels of expertise.

Communications – Sara Richter

- With two newsletter editors again, things are moving along with such a strong team. Initially, the job might seem a bit overwhelming, but it gets easier and they have been getting more strict with late submissions.
- A question was raised about whether every submission should generate a confirmation acknowledging that the newsletter staff had received the newsletter submission.

Other Business

Nominating Committee – Katie Angioletti

- The Hillview Board Nominating Committee will be formed this month and ready to meet in February. It is comprised of three members from the "west side" and three members from the "east side." The goal is to include members from all of the elementary schools. The committee is seeking people who are well connected to the community and understand how the PTO works.
- There will be a newsletter submission to get recommendations for potential committee members. Katie asked the Board to provide names of potential nominating committee members.
- The timeline involves forming the committee in January, meeting as a committee and working with Willy to have conversations about potential Board members in February and March, approving the slate for the Hillview board in April or May, and then having the PTO members vote on the slate at the May 2016 General Meeting.

Water Bottle Refilling Stations

- The issue of having the district install a water bottle refilling station was raised and will be discussed at a later date.

Team Uniforms

- There was a discussion about the tournament teams' uniforms being replaced, but although duly noted, it will be part of a larger discussion about the tournament teams.

Special Recognition – Kate Kennedy

- In the spirit of the Hillview luau, Kate extended a huge mahalo to Naed de la Vega for all of her help. Naed was very busy in December and works tirelessly and with such a high level of dedication. She does a great job of keeping the budget where it needs to be and is a great communicator. Thank you, Naed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 am.