

**Hillview PTO Executive Committee Meeting  
Hillview Conference Room  
November 5, 2015**

**Meeting Minutes**

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

**Call to Order**

- Kate Kennedy called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

**Approval of Minutes – Gina Skinner**

- Jody made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 1, 2015 Executive Board meeting with the caveat that the starting time be included in the recorded minutes going forward.
- Naed seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Treasurer’s Report - Naed de la Vega**

- There is not much to report this month. The budget that the Board approved last month was approved at the Hillview General Meeting on October 22, 2015.
- Looking at the income to date, the line item for Total Donations is down about \$4,000, although this will change as donations are still coming in. Overall, we are generally on track.

**Principal’s Report - Willy Haug**

**Mini-Course Registration**

- Mini course registration has begun, with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders registering on Friday. There was some difficulty with the registration, so the log-in registration requirement for 6<sup>th</sup> graders has been waived and students will be able to register in the office.
- Everyone is excited about the new Yosemite mini course that is being offered to 7<sup>th</sup> graders. This is the 7<sup>th</sup> grade version of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Washington DC trip. In response to the high demand, the number of students going on the trip was increased and a teacher was added.
- Scholarships were initially not offered, but now they are. This is a great opportunity for some students to be able to take this mini course who might never had had a chance to go given the cost.
- There was discussion about the Yosemite mini course cost. The vendor is providing the transportation and there are costs associated with requiring chaperones.

**School Play**

- The fall school play, The Tempest, will be performed today after school with the “pizza and a show” price for students. The students have done a good job with the play, which has provided great opportunities for the actors with a double cast and many roles. The Music Man will be produced in the spring with the help of Bill Hairston.

**Strategic Directions Update**

- An update on the Strategic Directions effort was provided. It is an interesting process as it involves input from multiple stakeholder groups. There was discussion of the tree and branches metaphor and some of the components of the metaphor: technology; the wellness of students, parents and teachers; education and how we teach and how kids learn; talent and how we recruit, retain and grow teachers so that they have the tools that they need to be outstanding; the vertical experience and how to interact with the high school district and all the way down to the preschool level, such as by identifying opportunities for all kindergartners to enter on a level playing field.
- Such categories represent the branches in the Strategic Directions tree metaphor and the various stakeholders were asked to populate the branches with leaves representing their ideas and

suggestions. There will be a study session to talk about the pruning process and how to develop the strategic brand.

- The state has identified areas that all school districts should focus on. The goal is to have the tree and these LCAP areas be in alignment.

#### Apple Distinguished School Designation

- Hillview has been designated an Apple Distinguished School for the years 2015-2017 as part of Apple's educational recognition program (ERP).
- At the end of last year, Hillview was asked to submit an application. A tech team from Hillview was sent to Apple in June and after the submission, Apple believed that Hillview met the criteria to qualify as an Apple Distinguished School. We have just learned recently that Hillview received this recognition.
- Hillview will be making the announcement, but must follow Apple's rules and obtain certain approvals from Apple. There are many restrictions on publicity, such as not being allowed to claim that we are the first school in a certain area to be an Apple Distinguished School.
- We have gone to other recognized schools and we hope to also plan on hosting similar visits here at Hillview.
- The designation applies for two years and after that, we can apply for a new level of distinction. We are proud to be an Apple Distinguished School and recognition of how we are using iPads here at Hillview.
- The Board discussed the benefits that Hillview gains from this distinction from Apple. We do not get discounts, but there is an entire branch at Apple devoted to education and their rubric is a solid lens through which we can evaluate Hillview's structure. Willy noted that the Board had many good questions, which were discussed.

#### Volunteers - EPA Parent Conferences

- Thank you to Beth who helped coordinate volunteers to help at the EPA parent conferences.

#### Report Cards and Grading Practices

- We are getting close to November 20<sup>th</sup>, which is the end of the first trimester and reports cards.
- We are sending a team, which includes many Hillview staff, to Portland to assess sound grading practices on December 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>.
- New ways to communicate grades are being evaluated. Concern is that grades may not reflect mastery of the subject; they may reflect the fact that some students may do well just to get a good grade and do not focus on the material.
- The intent is not to revamp grading or to implement changes school-wide. There are about 15-20 teachers who are interested in the topic. Erik Burmeister is helping to lead this effort.
- Discussion about the limitations of Powerschool in reporting and recording scores that may not count toward final grades were discussed. A discussion also began about appropriate incentives to encourage learning the material, such as whether a teacher should allow late work and whether full or partial credit should be given.

#### **Board of Education Report - Maria Hilton**

##### Strategic Directions

- The movement around the strategic direction effort is going well and Willy has done a great job providing an update. The discussion focuses on some important areas. Coordination of the vertical experience is important and being explored. The middle school guidance program is important as students learn valuable life skills in middle school.
- At next week's board meeting, enrollment will be discussed. The good news is that the master plan forecasted 3,300 students. With the opening of the Laurel upper campus, the hope is to get elementary school enrollment back in line and everyone will be able to attend their local community schools. Hillview will be able to take the enrollment it was built for, but it would mean looking at long-term finances and other considerations.

- We are looking into whether we have the right instructional system in place. Instructional leadership includes counseling, which may involve principals and assistant principals more engaged in teaching and learning.

#### Measure C Parcel Tax

- There will be various community meetings to discuss enrollment projections and financial and strategic plans in connection with the potential renewal and/or enhancing of the parcel tax. As with measures in the past, there will be options for voters to continue with the current parcel tax or approve it with enhancements. The school board will make decisions based on the direction of the district and the electorate, although renewal of the parcel tax seems obvious given current finances.
- The new approaches to grading are exciting and this is an exciting time. The school board is confident that it can help create a system where kids can enjoy a place to spend their childhood, despite increased enrollment.
- The Board discussed the status of district enrollment and that it is within range, but only for over the next five years or so. Staffing will not stay at this level.
- The community needs to determine what programs at our schools are nonnegotiable and from a government perspective, we need to determine what we need to build into a system as it grows to provide for instructional leadership, teachers, counselors, and enrichment programs, such as music, PE and library.
- The Board discussed the vertical experience and the development of more relationships with Sequoia. The question is how quickly we can move on opportunities once they are identified. The work at Hillview is encouraging since it s evidence that many shifts can occur. It is great to see more systems and structure that allow sharing of information to go on and allow shifts to occur. The good news is that we also have really strong players in place. It just takes time.

#### Teacher's Report – Michael Kaelin

- No major concerns from the staff. The number one email to share is that the staff thanks everyone for feeding them yesterday. The teachers and staff are working so hard and appreciate being treated so well and for all that the PTO does for them.
- Re-evaluating the grading process was discussed. Any changes required much thoughtful analysis and what is appropriate is not cut and dried, but there are many things to figure out. Different teachers are doing different things and there is a need to play devil's advocate for what is being done currently, not to determine what is wrong, but what is the best way to go forward.
- The goal is to find the best way to assess students. It is a complicated process to figure this out, but this is not a reason to avoid it.

#### MPAEF Update - Laura Paul

- The MPAEF Annual Parent Campaign ends tomorrow. It is doing well and is on track. A countdown is planned for the Hillview driveway and on Santa Cruz listing how many donors are needed to date to achieve their goal. Technically, 407 additional donors are needed, although this is a bit misleading since the goal cannot be fully met until the spring, and so the number of outstanding donors could not be 0 at this time.
- Therefore, tomorrow the celebration will be more focused on some other benchmark, such as participation (60% participation is above where we were last year) or reaching a certain percentage of our goal. Laura asked for any PTO help tomorrow to help with the celebration.
- The Holiday Boutique is the next MPAEF event and will be next week on Thursday and Friday.
- Bookmarks were distributed to students during English classes. Magnets will be mailed to donors.

#### Membership/Joint Campaign Update - Kate Kennedy

- Although total donations to date are about \$4k less that what was budgeted, about \$3k has been donated recently and funds are coning in from corporate matching donations.

- Final participation is about 67% as of the end of the campaign. Katie mentioned that this percentage does not usually exceed 70%.
- Although 85% participation is a standard goal, the PTO is in good financial position as its financial goals have been met.

### **After School Programs/Sports Update – Erica Galles**

#### Winter Programs

- Preparations are being made to launch the winter programs. Most of the program offerings will be staying the same. Everything is generally going pretty well.
- Stella would like to continue the Cross Country program, but cannot coach the next few weeks, so will start up in January; it will not compete with the track and field sports program during April and May. Lacrosse will be offered through January until their spring season begins. Fencing will be starting a new session, although enrollment has been inconsistent; the fall enrollment was high, but currently low. During the fall, the Bookopolis program came together for a group of 6-8 girls who are friends and meet every other week.
- Other courses will be offered, such as Coding, Wizbots, Speech and Debate, Writing, Junior Chefs,...

#### New Programs

- A vendor has approached Erica regarding a tennis clinic. The vendor would bring pop-up tents and rackets to place on the blacktop areas. The field is not an option as Hillview is only allotted a specified number of hours to use the field.
- Discussion ensued regarding the feasibility and pros and cons of offering the tennis clinic. Winter is a busy time, so hesitant to offer it during the winter. Maybe it can be offered during the spring and possibly next fall. The vendor is from Southern California and maybe it is advisable to use vendors with proven experience and track records, as well as support local vendors.

#### Other Discussion

- The Board discussed the safety considerations regarding the turf installed at Hillview. Maria confirmed that there were many conversations and quite a bit of research done before the turf was installed.
- There has been thought about whether the potential safety hazards could be mitigated by trading out the current infill with other options, such as bamboo or cork, although it is not certain to what degree such mitigation might be helpful.
- It was mentioned that any such projects would need to be raised with the city given its joint use. It would also likely have a financial obligation to help in the costs, although it is unlikely that the current turf will be torn up.
- Maria said that she would pass along the Board's concerns to Ahmed Sheikholeslami, including the comment regarding the lack of facilities to wash hands despite posted signs directing people to wash their hands if they are on the turf.

### **Volunteer Update – Beth Shvodian**

- Beth discussed the need for more volunteers. There seem to be more students and parents, but fewer people willing to volunteer their time. The same people are being asked and volunteering repeatedly.
- Next year the hope is to get the message to parents early and often that the school needs volunteers to help it continue to be as successful as it has been. It was suggested to ask families to help for 5 hours during the school year, which seemed reasonable, and to provide examples of what opportunities there were to help (i.e., hot lunch)
- The goal is to make the volunteering inclusive and not exclusive; volunteers should not feel that it is necessary to be like some volunteers who are "super-volunteers."
- Some explanations were offered for the fewer volunteers, such as the school being larger, which enables anonymity; families being busier; and the active recruiting efforts by those involved with the school plays.

### **Communications Update – Sara Richter**

- Sara announced that Lise Olson has volunteered to be a newsletter co-editor. Everyone was excited to have her on board and discussed how she is very qualified for the position.
- Sara mentioned that over 500 recipients are reading the newsletter, which seems to be a high read rate when considering that more than one person in a household is often signed up to receive the newsletter.
- Sara asked the Board to let her know if there was anything to update on the website.

### **Other Business**

#### **Special Recognition – Kate Kennedy**

- To continue the tradition of recognizing certain board members for their contributions and efforts, Kate presented a thank you gift to Erica Galles for all of her help with Afterschool Programs/Sports and the Board also extended their thanks.

#### **Nominating Committee – Katie Angioletti**

- Katie asked the Board for advice regarding who should be on the nominating committee for the Hillview Board. The nominating committee is assembled before January and then come together to meet several times to help assemble a slate of recommendations for the Board.
- Deanna, Jody, Gina and other current Board members have been on the nominating committee in the past. A discussion occurred about the various positions on the Board and the fact that being on the nominating committee does not preclude one from being on the Board. It was noted that the Communications Chair typically needs to be involved with the Board before summer as the first newsletter goes out prior to school starting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.