

**Hillview PTO Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Hillview Conference Room**  
**February 4, 2016**

**Meeting Minutes**

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

**Call to Order**

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

**Approval of Minutes – Gina Skinner**

- After brief discussion regarding revisions to the minutes from the January 7, 2016 Executive Board meeting regarding the upcoming parcel tax, Jody made a motion to approve the minutes with such revisions.
- Naed seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Teacher Update - Michael Kaelin**

- The usual common kudos to the Board from the teachers. The teachers and staff are working on mini-courses and instruction.
- The Board thanked Mr. Kaelin and Willy for their work on implementing and trying out some of the new grading practices. There was discussion and comment regarding how such practices are affecting their students and that the communication regarding the new grading practices has been great, very clear and sends a great message to the parents. It was noted that such practices should involve training the students, but also the parents. Mr. Kaelin thanked everyone for their patience.
- Powerschool will have more tools that cater to the new grading practices.

**MPAEF Update – Flavia Herrod**

- Flavia talked about the work being done for the upcoming MPAEF spring auction, which will be held on April 30, 2016. The online auction will open about ten days prior to the auction and will be advertised in school newsletters and at schools. If you have any questions or need support, please contact Flavia.
- Flavia mentioned that the Hillview-sponsored events that were offered last year were great, unless there are other suggestions or innovative ideas, which are definitely welcome.

**Board of Education Report - Maria Hilton**

- Maria reported that the board has primarily been focused on evaluation of the financial plan and the parcel tax that is due to expire.

**Parcel Tax**

- On Monday night there was a vote taken pursuant to California law to call an election to renew the expiring Measure W parcel tax, and to introduce a second parcel tax to enable our district to accommodate future enrollment.
- The math supporting the numbers regarding enrollment and the amount of the tax is fairly straightforward and is based on past and projected enrollment.
- Maria discussed some of the rationale supporting the need for an election to not only renew the parcel tax, but also move forward. The renewal will allow the district to keep pace with enrollment and within the five-year time frame, this seems reasonable. Maria explained that the additional revenue would not be required unless the cap of 213 students is reached. If this cap is not reached, no taxes would be levied.

- Pursuant to California law, the tax must be voted upon. There is a citizens' committee that will be led by two very qualified and excellent members of our community, Jody Buckley and Scott Hinshaw, and they and the committee are enthusiastic. Maria discussed that there are clear guidelines and parameters for the district and board roles in communicating and advocating for the parcel tax. Generally the process is fairly quick, but there will still be many board meetings and processes in place for the community to get engaged; so far, there has been good engagement and many sound questions being asked with a general positive response. Factually, in May there will be a mail-in ballot. Pursuant to county law, all elections are through mail-in ballot.
- There was a question about public comment during the Special Meeting. Maria discussed the nature of the parcel tax given that there was a question of exemptions, in particular for senior citizens. Maria explained that different counties have different exemptions. There was also a question about the unfairness of differently-sized parcels not paying different levels of taxes (i.e., Facebook versus a small Santa Cruz Avenue shop). Maria explained that the laws do not support tiered taxing. This law was tested in Alameda county, whose constituents passed a law allowing residential and commercial properties to be assessed different levels of taxes. The law was challenged in court and overturned.
- The Board then asked questions about the ability to levy a development fee, which Maria said is not allowed per se and also whether we have talked to Facebook about support. Maria explained that Facebook does support local communities and its students, but is technically not in our district.

#### Strategic Directions

- Maria discussed that the other topic for board discussion has been strategic directions, which Willy has done a great job of outlining in prior meetings. The board has committed to implementing some of the great suggestions and for next year, the question is how to roll everything out. There will likely be more analysis and then a timeline will be created for the roll-out.

#### Other Items

- District-wide site council elections will commence and conclude in March. District-wide there will be meetings to discuss LCAP, which now has a component about parent engagement. The goal is to align those structures in place currently within our district with the accountability plan. The goals each year are being laid out and the intent is to stay aligned with these goals. At the site level, support is for not only district goals, but also specific interests that will likely feed into the bigger picture goals.
- Michelle inquired about the district calendar being approved and whether the first day of the 2016-17 school year was set yet. Maria confirmed that Thursday, September 1, 2016 would be the first day of school for the school district.

#### Principal's Update – Willy Haug

##### District and Hillview Calendar for 2016-17

- Discussion continued regarding the Hillview calendar. Given that the first day of school is set as Thursday, September 1, 2016, the Board discussed the days to be set for Camp Hillview for the 6<sup>th</sup> graders and the Hillview luau. Camp Hillview would likely be spread out over that week on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. There was discussion of the pros and cons about holding the luau on the Monday of the week that school started or the Friday prior. There will be discussion with the Camp Hillview team whether the traditional pool outing will continue or whether something else can be planned that is as fun and effective.
- Willy discussed the concept of scheduling collaboration days to coincide with the end of the trimester. There is data to analyze and maybe down the road, but as of now, not sure if they coincide.

#### Grading Practices

- Willy wanted to follow up on Mr. Kaelin's comments regarding grading practices. The movement is purposely grass roots as some teachers are excited and some are worried about whether the proposed grading practices are sufficiently motivating to students in the absence of letter grades.

- The concept of allowing students to turn in late work, retake assessments, and be accountable allows them to continue to develop and master the subject, which is a good thing. However, it does place a burden on teachers to manage students' work, but administrative support could be provided by allowing a place for students to come in at lunch.
- An attempt is being made to be strategic with like-minded teachers and providing administrative support. However, given the grass roots, rather than top-down approach, Hillview is sending more teachers in early July to the conference that some teachers previously attended. The hope is that eventually these new grading practices will be brought to the entire staff, but currently, we are being strategic in getting the idea out to teachers to get their attention and also show them what other teachers are doing. However, there are great conversations being conducted about model instructional practices at staff meetings and the grading practices team is exploring next steps.
- Comments were made about how great the process has been to communicate to parents the implementation of some of these new grading practices. Willy confirmed that there is a database and other collaborative structures in place to facilitate the sharing of grading practice information among teachers.
- Katie brought up questions and the Board discussed grading practices for foreign language electives. Willy mentioned that the guiding principles state that electives are part of the core program experience, so we will continue to explore grading options.

#### Master scheduling process

- Willy discussed the focus and concerns about 6<sup>th</sup> grade projections. Taking into account expected movement to private schools and other moves, the size of the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade class is approximately 337. Our 7<sup>th</sup> grade class that is moving to 8<sup>th</sup> grade is 309 students. The current 8<sup>th</sup> grade class is at 266, so that means that there will be more students here next year. There will be some adjustments made to account for the increase and to keep class sizes similar.
- Erica asked about whether that increase would come down the following year. Willy discussed that the class size is plateauing, but we are still on that higher portion of the plateau. With three classes, at some point there will be close to 1,000 students.

#### California Healthy Kids Survey

- Willy announced that the survey would be administered next week. For 6<sup>th</sup> graders, an active permission slip was sent home; for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, a passive permission slip was sent to parents.
- Previously, the metric was used only for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, but now we can use it for 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The survey measures school climate and culture. Hillview has taken steps to increase the interaction of students with adults. The staff has been asked also to evaluate students who might have no or little adult relationships and increase their student/adult connections.
- In the LCAP, one of the factors in the new formula involved how students feel about their school. We will use data from this survey to fit into the larger formula about how our school measures up, although the process and analysis is complicated.

#### 2/9/16 Board Meeting

- At the 2/9/16 School Board meeting, Apple will present Hillview's Distinguished School award.
- It is Hillview's month to present its student spotlight. Students from Hillview will come to speak about Makers Space and the Coding elective. These are great STEM and STEAM-based initiatives that Mrs. Olson and Mr. Lera are leading.

#### CHC Breakfast

- On Tuesday, CHC hosted a breakfast and panel to focus on teens in crisis and ways to help them. Willy attended, as did some members of the School Board. The mood was very somber as it dealt with such issues as teen anxiety, depression, and suicide.
- The panel was very impressive, including such panelists as Julie Lythcott-Haims, who wrote the book *How to Raise an Adult* and will be speaking at Hillview on 2/24/16 as part of the parent education series; Denise Pope, a cofounder of Challenge Success; Chris Harris, the director of the Esther B.

Clark school at CHC; and Jenny Jaffe, a comedy writer who herself suffered emotional issues. The most heartbreaking panelist was Stacy Drazen, whose daughter was among a cluster of students who committed suicide.

- Willy mentioned that the panel was talked about in the asset team meeting. They discussed removing the stigma about mental health, making it public and having more conversations about the topic. Willy talked about how we need to evaluate what we do at Hillview to work with students who need support, and how we publicize the message that mental health should be discussed openly.
- The School Board discussed how the stigma needs to be removed not only for students, but also for parents, who may not want to ask for help or seek support. This is cause for reflection on what we can do, as good programs may be in place, but as was pointed out, sometimes students do not know how to ask for help and cannot utilize such support.

#### Dance and Spirit Week

- Willy announced that the next week would be Color for Causes week. Each day of the week students will dress in colors that represent support for various causes. A student who is a girl scout and working on her silver award coordinated with Club 41 and ASB to promote gender equity, and various colored items will be sold to show spirit. Each day has a different color: Orange will be worn for Coppers Green, red for St. Jude Childrens' Hospital, pink for Make a Wish Foundation, and blue for The Thirst Project. This will raise awareness for these causes, increase school spirit, and create a fun mood.
- The 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade Valentine's dance is this Friday.

#### MPAEF Jeanie Ritchie Grants

- Three Hillview Jeanie Ritchie grant submissions were approved. Two were renewed. Two were science-related and one was related to math. Willy mentioned that the school is thrilled with this funding.
- One grant for 6<sup>th</sup> graders relates to a STEM-based engineering project; one was for another new watershed project; the third grant is the renewal of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Three Little Pigs project.

#### Elder & Valparaiso – Traffic Accident

- Jody brought up the accident that occurred at the corner of Elder and Valparaiso. At the end of the day, a student was hit in the crosswalk by a vehicle driven by a parent. The Board discussed the safety at that corner and what could be done.
- Willy mentioned that eventually, the city would be installing pavement lighting there, like Sacred Heart has. This would cost somewhere near \$6k and in the meantime, perhaps a crossing guard could be stationed at this intersection.
- The Board discussed focusing on the educational aspects of teaching traffic safety. Although a rodeo format has traditionally been effective at the elementary school level, Safe Moves has come to Hillview before. The rodeo is a good suggestion with the Menlo Park police coming with specific scenarios.
- The Board discussed all of their concerns with the unsafe practices that they have seen students engaging in and it was suggested that parents should also be educated, but maybe in a humorous way. Board members reminded parents that we need to be defensive, make eye contact, and that our job is to watch out for the students.

#### Treasurer's Report – Naed de la Vega

- Nothing much to report. We have reached our goal since last month, although Ken mentioned that we seem to still be getting a little bit of money.
- The Board discussed that we do have some funds that we can spend and talked about whether we can offer Harry Bell some of the funds for After School Sports uniforms. The Board had initially declined his request at the beginning of the year, but now that we are certain that we have adequate funds, it was discussed whether we can provide approximately \$4,000 of PTO funds to replace the jerseys, which have holes and are very old. There was general approval for this.
- A question about the water refilling station was raised, but this is a district issue.

- Hillview's tax accountant has the files from the last fiscal year and is working on the files so that they can prepare and complete Hillview's tax returns.
- Naed mentioned that Carolyn will be getting the financial information necessary for her to prepare the required 6-month audit.

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

- Beth mentioned that there are few chaperone spots still open for the dance on Friday. She would love to get more responses when such requests are sent out.
- Sara asked about the volunteers for the Character Education program and the Board discussed the consistency of the volunteers and the effectiveness of the program. Query whether we should focus more on this program given the emphasis on the “3 Cs” and Beth and others were asked to help follow up.

#### **Afterschool Program Update – Erica Galles**

- Erica discussed the various winter sports and upcoming spring sports.
- The Mat Club, which is a wrestling program, will be starting in a few weeks, although not through Sportability. There has been much inquiry about wrestling and the coaches at MA have been working with Phil Eaton to come to the PE classes to give brief demonstrations. They would like students to know that it is a male and female coed sport. There are about 19-20 females on the M-A wrestling team and often, as was pointed out, there is no stereotype of a wrestler. The M-A coach is very excited; the program will be announced in the newsletter, and they are working out the gym schedule.
- All of the new programs that were introduced are in their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sessions, which is exciting news.
- Coding did not seem to work out, perhaps due to the cost issue, but it is hard to introduce a program for the first time in the winter. Coding will be offered in the fall, but maybe in May a survey can be sent out by Survey Monkey to evaluate the afterschool program and offerings. Questions can be asked about what programs students have participated in, what they would like to see, and specific questions about certain programs (are you interested in coding, what programs, what levels...). Maybe having coding as an elective and at lunch is enough, but we are not sure.
- Katie asked about the status of the afterschool tennis registration. Erica explained that the registration was handled by Sportability. There was a glitch in the system and registration was set to open at midnight, but something happened and it did not open when it was supposed to. The thought was to let everyone register for free, have tryouts and then students will make A, B and practice teams. All students will have instruction and play time, but maybe not all will get to play in matches or be on the official team.
- The basketball and volleyball tournament teams will continue next year and after that, Harry will not run them, so we will need parents to step up to run those. May Madness and Spring volleyball will continue to be sponsored this year.
- Track is PTO-sponsored, so no controversy regarding this sport.

#### **Communications Report – Sara Richter**

- Sara said that there was not really much to report. Everything is going well with the newsletter, website and calendar. The district's new website is up now, and if you notice anything that needs revision, please let Sara know.
- There was a question about the directory being online. Jody said that in conjunction with the new website, it will be online next year.

#### **Other Business**

- Katie discussed that the Nominating Committee for next year's Executive Board will meet next Tuesday with Willy. The committee is comprised of some great people from both Encinal and Oak Knoll. Katie mentioned that the Executive Board bylaws will need to be revised to reflect the changing composition of the elementary schools such that next year the Nominating Committee should include representatives from the Upper Laurel campus.

**Special Recognition – Kate Kennedy**

- This month's mahalo goes to Katie, for always keeping everyone on track, answering questions and stepping in to make last-minute blasts. Katie thanked the Board.

**Upcoming Events**

- Carolyn mentioned an event on February 18<sup>th</sup> at Stanford where Dr. Jackson Katz would be speaking.

10:46 am - adjourned