Indian Hills Elementary—School Community Council (SCC)
Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2020
7:30 a.m. on Zoom

In attendance:

SCC Committee Members: Tom Luthy, Keli Beard, Kim Johnson, Katie Moore, Roshawn Starr, Barb Dahl Fassl, Elliot Lof, Robyn Rudge

Others: Kimberlee Caine, Candace’s iPhone

1. Approve Minutes: Kim moved to approve the November 4, 2020 minutes; Roshawn seconded the motion and members unanimously approved.

2. Katie confirmed that the SCC may change the dates of the meetings as long as the website is up to date.

3. SIC Report: The SIC wants to make sure that when kids are back in school, the workers have appropriate PPE and the school is doing what it can to minimize risks with respect to COVID-19. They are looking at procedures followed by schools holding in-person classes for lunchroom protocols. Tom indicated later than a group from IHE was scheduled to visit a few other schools to learn about their lunchroom protocols during COVID.

4. Discussion about the problems of having some kids in the class and some in isolation and working from home.
   a. Roshawn ran a test to determine if it was feasible, using Canvas/Zoom, to instruct kids in the classroom while at the same time instructing kids through Zoom. She noted that it was nearly impossible. The 6th grade teachers ended up splitting the grade between online and in class and one teacher took only one group. Zoom works well when a teacher is facing the computer monitor and speaking directly to the camera. But, if the teacher is on Zoom, that does not work well for the kids in the classroom. Similarly, if the teacher teaches to the classroom, the kids on Zoom can’t see or hear the instructions.
   b. Barb suggested, with Katie’s support, having a broadcast for kids in quarantine to keep them up to date on what’s happening in the classroom, although Barb noted that if the online option was simply a broadcast, the kids would lose the valuable interactive nature of the Zoom class.
   c. Elliot indicated that he liked the broadcast option the most, but that IHE currently does not have the necessary equipment to create a good broadcast. The teachers only have the cameras built into the laptops. A class needs multiple cameras or cameras that will move with the teacher.
   d. Roshawn bought some cameras ($200 worth) but indicated that they were low quality and didn’t work well. The schools would need higher end equipment to make this work.
e. Elliot/Roshawn stated that there are pre-recorded videos, but they require a little digging to find and kids have trouble finding them. For the class to be effective, the technology needs to work nearly all of the time.

f. Robyn asked whether the teachers intend to continue with Canvas after returning to the class for turning assignments in.

g. Elliott liked idea of having a non-paper option to turn things in but was hesitant about creating assignments in Canvas and also managing a class. Roshawn thought it would be very burdensome.

h. Tom would like to keep up Lexia/ST Math.

i. Katie asked if there was anything the SCC could do to help and expressed gratitude to the teachers for their efforts.

5. PTA Update (Kim)

a. The PTA is still coming up with ideas to get more families involved in the school community. The PTA held a food drive in November, which was successful, and will be holding a holiday service fair in December. The goal is one spirit day and one in-person event per month.

b. Kim noted that neighborhood schools are a hub in the community and that families are struggling without it.

6. Principal’s Report (Tom)

a. Safety is the biggest concern in bringing kids back to the classroom. IHE is putting together procedures to keep the teachers and kids safe and is working with other schools on an explanatory video.

7. Land Trust Plan

a. Keli presented on the ways in which a few other schools similar to IHE are using their land trust monies. For the most part, the schools used the money in very similar ways and the reports were not updated to show how other schools were using the money during the pandemic.

b. At Meadowlark, where Tom taught 5th grade, they had Playworks (which was one of the ways that a few other schools used the land trust monies), which involves training teachers and coaches to help kids come up with strategies to settle disputes, i.e., rock/paper/scissors. He thought it was a great program and was part of that school’s culture. While Playworks is geared toward Title I schools, it’s also about physical activity, taking turns, and problem solving, all of which the kids will need when they come back to school. Tom is going to get more information on this program.

c. Keli indicated support for a program like this.
d. Roshawn was concerned that using money for Playworks would take away money from tutoring. The training costs about $7,000 and would need to come from somewhere.

e. Katie stated that using the trust land money for Playworks would be a nice way to benefit the entire school.

f. Katie also noted that IHE’s art funds come from BOOT and would not be impacted by using the land trust funds for Playworks.

g. Tom noted that IHE is one of the only schools he’s taught at without a full-time certified PE teacher. Because the PE coach is only part-time work and relatively low-paid, IHE goes through a lot of PE teachers. It might be possible to use the land trust money to support the PE coach.

8. Katie noted that the land trust plan is due May 4.

9. Discussion on the North gate

   a. A parent recently requested that the North gate off of Nottingham be removed during the pandemic to make driving to the school easier. The gate can be unlocked and has been opened 3 times since Tom started, i.e., during fire drills and during a snow storm.

   b. Because the meeting was at its end, the SCC will take this issue up at the next meeting.