



SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 18, 2013

Meeting Location: SRFACS Library

Recorded By: Jennifer Jimenez

ATTENDANCE

Pascal Stricher

Jennifer Jimenez

Brian Benefield

Jennifer Schwinn

Gwenaelle Peyret

Cindy Beurtheret

Kathleen Helleskov

Sheila Moore

Jason Davis

Roy Miller

Jon Custer-Topai

MEETING START

Meeting Schedule Start: 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Actual Start: 5:10 p.m.

Meeting Scribe: Jennifer Jimenez

Meeting Timekeeper: C. Beurtheret



APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Some feedback was given regarding spelling changes. J. Davis asked if the minutes could be shared with SAB members as a document that can be edited and turned into more of a narrative format, but the consensus was to leave the current process for sharing, feedback, and approval in place. C. Beurtheret motioned to approve and B. Benefield seconded. Unanimous approval

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

J. Schwinn motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of the marquee follow up.
Unanimous approval.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

P. Stricher stated the regional representative for the French Ministry accreditation process, Miriam Fournier Dulac, visited the school on November 6. She is responsible for oversight of 42 schools in the US and the purpose of her visit was to gather information and make observations to include in her report for accreditation. She came with the new pedagogical coordinator for the region, Christine Paugam. They toured the school and conducted class visits in kindergarten, first, and second grade classes. The recommendation at this point is to seek accreditation for cycle one and two, which covers TK, K, and grades 1-3. P. Stricher shared that usually schools do not get accreditation right away for the upper grades.

M. Dulac gave the following immediate feedback for the school:

SRFACS has a unique public school open access program that has only one equivalent in the accreditation region, which is a charter school in LA. Almost all of the other schools are private.

She was impressed with the number of faculty from France along with the quality and amount of French curriculum resources. She was also impressed with the amount of support resources available at the school, such as speech therapy, psychology, and hearing assessment.

She noted the impressive growth of the school from year one to year two and asked what the faculty and staff believe is attracting students given that 90% of the school population is not Francophone.

P. Stricher shared that the school held its first of the year open house for prospective families on November 15. Only 10 families signed up ahead of time, but 24 families attended on the day of the event and most were TK and K, with one Francophone family. There are 6 planned open house events for the current school year: 2 in December, 2 in January and 1 in February with



one possibly added in March.

A new copy machine was purchased and will arrive Friday, November 22. 30 new computers were donated to the school and P. Stricher hopes to have two per classroom installed by December. Teachers have been busy completing first trimester report cards.

There was a meeting between the lunch committee, P. Stricher, English teacher:R. Cooper, and lunch supervisor Betty Malfati concerning the improvement of lunch culture. A plan was created to implement a positive reinforcement program focusing on grades 1-3 to improve lunchroom behavior. R. Cooper will visit classrooms to introduce the program and posters will be made with positive messages. 7th grade ambassadors will visit classes during lunch to provide support, guidance, and feedback on behavior to younger students.

P. Stricher also shared that he will hold a 2nd Cup of Coffee meeting during the second week of December.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jon Custer Topai commented first that there seems to be a very positive impression developing about the school in the community. He also stated that he has communicated with parents who are interested in more community building programs at the school and possibly a rewards program as well to encourage positive behavior amongst students during the in-between times at school such as at lunch and recess. He suggested creating a community white board with a question of the week that students could respond to, regular spirit days, school dances for older students, etc.

J. Custer Topai shared that parents have also expressed interest in ASB programs and that Zoe Miller has said that she would like to volunteer as a parent coordinator of ASB programs. K. Helleskov also suggested that student leaders can develop different types of community building activities.

J. Schwinn asked if ASB could be developed as an after school club. P. Stricher expressed concern that an ASB type student council may not be inclusive enough for broad based participation. He suggested a French model of class councils that meet monthly in each class to facilitate discussion and idea generation for school wide community building.

G. Peyret stated that some teachers implemented the classroom based council model in their individual classes last year and that it is student led with adult support.

J. Custer Topai stated that students seem to really want school activities such as dances, sports, school community events. J. Schwinn suggested partnering with other small charters for some of these activities. J. Schwinn also suggested that 7th grade ambassadors could bring the question of the week to tables at lunch to encourage focused discussion. J. Schwinn shared that her school is organized into tribes and each month there is a spirit day focused on a



theme that can address a school value or desired habit, such as responsibility.

P. Stricher stated that the school plans to have a monthly spirit day connected to some community action, such as the spirit day that took place last Friday : Crazy Hair Day/Food Drive kick off. C. Beurtheret suggested that each grade level could be in charge of a public display bulletin board that focuses on a theme or question of the month.

K. Helleskov suggested that a rewards program could utilize simple, yet high impact rewards such as a lunch with the principal. She also suggested a wall of fame or wall of inspiration in a public area of the school where inspiring ideas and people could be highlighted along with student work. P. Stricher emphasized that it is important to give students the choice and voice in such activities. J. Jimenez suggested that there could be a phase in of these types of community building activities and programs over the course of the year rather than trying to do everything at once. C. Beurtheret and G. Peyret concurred that a phase in approach would more likely be supported by the faculty and that faculty will be less responsive if they feel overloaded .

P. Stricher asked if J. Custer Topai could come to a faculty meeting to discuss these ideas with faculty. P. Stricher suggested that a discussion about the following could take place in a January faculty meeting:

- Inspiration Wall
- Theme based Community Bulletin Board
- School wide events: dances, movie nights, etc.
- Overnight student trips: costs, fundraising

SAB follow up: January meeting

There was more discussion about possibilities for overnight trips for students.

J. Schwinn suggested looking into organized outdoor education camps because of lower costs with more responsibility taken on by the camp staff vs faculty. G. Peyret expressed an interest in the programs at Sugar Loaf Park. J. Schwinn shared that those programs are a lot more work for the teachers. P. Stricher expressed support for organizing overnight trips for students but not if it is cost prohibitive to some students.

ACTION ITEMS

BUDGET REPORT



P. Stricher passed out a budget report with a record of donations and expenditures as well as a report of lottery money allocated to the school. He stated that Lottery money can only be used to purchase textbooks and learning materials. J. Schwinn shared that there may be some more flexibility with lottery money. A fiscal report was also passed out that shows how much money is available at this stage of the year. At this point there is \$ 42,000 left which is more than last year because there are more students this year and a higher ADA (96% attendance rate) along with an additional donation from the Legion of Honor.

P. Stricher highlighted some expenditures: head phones, speakers (for computer lab) I pads for teacher use, etc. Follow up from the October SAB meeting: The school signed and paid for the Media Contract with SCOE so that the teachers may now order materials from the SCOE library.

J. Schwinn proposed adding a teacher budget for \$100/teacher. R. Miller also commented that the Foundation has asked what the district is contributing financially. B. Benefield also acknowledged that parents have asked about what money the school and district have allocated for school materials, resources, etc. G. Peyret commented that teachers each have a budget to buy materials from the foundation and at this point it is sufficient for current needs.

P. Stricher expressed a desire for the faculty to spend their current budgets first before approaching the district for more money. J. Davis asked if the amount of money allocated by the district is fixed or if there is more available if it is asked for during the year. There was some concern expressed that the school should not have to rely so much on the Foundation for basic budgetary needs if the school is entitled to more district money. P. Stricher shared that the district has financially supported the school and that the teachers are very satisfied with the amount of materials they have been able to order from France such as textbooks, book series, and cahiers.

R. Miller shared that the Foundation is concerned about middle school resources, such as a science lab. He stated that the Foundation chair has a meeting planned with a district representative. There was a discussion about how to coordinate approaching the district about these issues between school administration, SAB, and Foundation representatives. P. Stricher shared that he will meet with the K-6 coordinator from the district to get clarification about district funds given to the school.

C. Beutheret shared that we should make this an ongoing action item under the SAB responsibility for fiscal oversight.

J. Schwinn moved to vote that a meeting be set up between SRFACS administration, SAB members, and Doug Bower at the district office to discuss budget allocation and questions concerning any shortfall between the current school budget and the budget approved by the



school board when the school's charter was approved. J. Davis seconded. J. Schwinn and J. Davis volunteered to participate. J. Schwinn asked P. Stricher to set up this meeting sometime in the next month.

MASCOT LOGO SELECTION PROCESS

P. Stricher shared that teachers have not had a chance to meet regarding the logo selection process and he will address it in the next faculty meeting to relaunch the process.

POTENTIAL SAB SUBCOMMITTEE FORMATION: LONG TERM CURRICULUM PLANNING FOCUS

G. Peyret and C. Beurtheret shared that when they addressed this question with the teachers, teachers questioned the need for this type of committee and were unsupportive. They both also shared that teachers are doing a tremendous amount of work around developing curriculum for the implementation of the Common Core standards as well as aligning Common Core with the French Ministry standards. J. Davis shared that such a group can be made up of SAB members and not be a separate committee. P. Stricher shared that the current priority is to focus on solidifying the French immersion curriculum for the teachers, the district, and for the accreditation process. He also shared that the alignment of subject area curriculum between Common Core and the French Ministry of Education standards is the top priority and is a long term process.

P. Stricher shared that teachers meet in teams every Wednesday and twice a month those meetings focus on common planning time. C. Beurethet and G. Peyret shared that the earlier release time is helpful for more meeting time between teachers on a daily basis as opposed to trying to take care of all meetings on one early Wednesday a week. J. Schwinn asked if the teachers feel that there is sufficient collaboration time and C. Beurtheret and G. Peyret shared that while they are all working long days they are generally satisfied with the collaboration between teachers. P. Stricher expressed that all faculty and staff are working diligently to implement and develop rigorous and high quality curriculum.

J. Custer-Topai shared that the issue seems to be twofold: long term planning around curriculum promises of the Charter and current curriculum development work and that upper grade parents are beginning to express concerns and questions about middle school curriculum.

C. Beurtheret asked why the SAB can't function in this capacity in its current form and G. Peyret agreed with this idea. C. Beurtheret expressed concern about the role of such a curriculum focused subcommittee and what responsibility it might have for oversight and how



that might overlap with an administrator's responsibility for faculty oversight. C. Beurtheret also shared that the new Common Core standards in science have not yet been released or fully developed.

J. Jimenez asked if this idea of a sub committee that looks at long term curriculum planning for the school could be folded into the group that is trying to look at the budget more closely with the district.

B. Benefield asked if we can incorporate an action item into SAB agendas about long term curriculum implementation connected to the founding charter. K. Helleskov suggested that we use #6 of the SAB oversight responsibility as stated on the agenda: *Progress toward goals as outlined in the Charter*. J. Jimenez moved that we add a regular agenda item that falls into this area. J. Davis seconded. There was some discussion about what curriculum question to put on the agenda for future meetings. Unanimous approval.

J. Schwinn suggested having a science focus for the next agenda to look at where the school is regarding science curriculum. Debate continued about what role SAB can and/or should take in this area. J. Jimenez added that in addition to questions about science curriculum and the addition of a third language to the curriculum, some parents have raised questions about the development of the English Language Arts curriculum.

B. Benefield moved to address the question of science curriculum and STEM focus as it is written in the original SRFACS charter in December and the question of when to add a third language to the curriculum for the January meeting. J. Davis offered to go through the charter and pull out sections related to curriculum. J. Jimenez seconded. Approved by vote.

POSSIBLE FORMATION OF SCHOOLWIDE DIRECTORY

J. Davis shared that parents discussed the possibility of a school wide directory in a recent class representative meeting. He stated that P. Stricher had expressed some concern about how such a directory might be used but that it should be initiated by the parent representatives if it were created. The class representatives voted not to move forward in order to be in alignment with the principal, but J. Davis stated that some parents asked what position SAB takes on the question of a schoolwide directory.

P. Stricher shared that the district policy is not to support such a directory because of possible abuse. He shared that some schools he has worked in have had one and others have not. P. Stricher expressed concern about the possibility that someone could use the emails inappropriately. J. Custer Topai expressed support for such a directory and that it could be set up as completely voluntary and parents could opt out of sharing certain information. J. Schwinn



shared that in her experience such a directory is more beneficial than detrimental. C. Beurtheret shared that it should be in a paper form only. J. Jimenez suggested that this may not be in SAB's purview and parent representatives should make the decision. J. Davis asked whether there was a consensus among SAB members that was generally supportive of a parent-organized school-wide directory. The response of other members was that some members supported the directory, while others had concerns, so there was no clear consensus either for or against.

TRACKING OF VOLUNTEER HOURS

B. Benefield shared that he contacted the Arts Charter about their system. They use an online system for tracking volunteer hours but have previously used a binder. The Accelerated Charter uses a binder. J. Davis shared an online site for tracking hours and B. Benefield and P. Stricher expressed interest. P. Stricher asked how we would use the tracking information. B. Benefield and C. Beurtheret stated that it would be useful to have the data and just to reinforce the charter expectation that parents volunteer. P. Stricher will check to see if the school can facilitate the tracking of volunteers or if it has to come from a parent group. J. Jimenez shared that it might be prudent to wait to ask for a monetary donation in lieu of volunteering hours given the amount of requests already made of the parents at this point in the year. B. Benefield shared that specific hours of each person should not be visible on the site. J. Schwinn suggested having a volunteer luncheon at the end of the year for all volunteers. The web site will allow parents to enter their own hours. P. Stricher expressed support for a volunteer tea at the end of the year. P. Stricher shared that there is a new member of the office staff that can help facilitate data entries.

MARQUEE

J. Davis noted that he had worked with the facilities manager to remove from the marquee the names of previous schools that had been located at our facility, as well as the brown paper that the district had installed to cover them. He stated that the marquee appeared to be in poor condition and would likely be difficult to use, and that rather than leaving it standing there empty, a decision should be taken as to whether to begin using it (which would require ordering and installing the school's name and logo), or whether to take the district up on its earlier offer to remove the marquee altogether. P. Stricher recommended that he and J. Davis consult with Randy in maintenance to determine the best way forward.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

No additional comments

MEETING END



Meeting Scheduled End: 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Actual End: 9:00 p.m.

Next meeting

Next Meeting Location: SRFACS Library

Next Meeting Date: December 16, 2013

Next Meeting Time: 5 PM