

Equity Working Group
Tuesday, April 30, 2019
Angier School, Principal's Office
10 – 11:30am

Present: Christine Dutt, Maggie Schmidt, Orla Higgins Averill, Andrea Steenstrup, Kerry Prasad, Kathleen Smith

Call-in: Kathy Shields,
Call-in Guest: Bridget Ray-Canada; left meeting at 10:30

Recap of SC meeting on 4/24/19

Our focus has been shifted, we were looking for direction from the SC, they wanted us to make a recommendation;

2 pieces of feedback/guidance from SC

1. They approve of our definition of equity – we can decide if we will adopt Matthew Miller's recommendation
2. They approve of our proceeding with a limited number of options

Family/Community Poll

Do we focus on a number of scenarios?

What info do we need now to get us to the next step? We have so many questions—

Do we want the community to help us figure out what the fund will be used to pay for?

Our 3 questions- where do we want to get the answers from?

Is this poll a litmus test

It comes down to the community; community needs to support it

Feedback from Board leaders was very varied, even within schools

We have to be thoughtful and deliberate about what we are asking

The survey must be in a format such that we can digest survey answers

Bridget Ray-Canada idea: In terms of the 3 ideas (One Newton, Raise the Bar and Flat Percentage) have a question where respondent can rank top three ideas, plus space for "other" idea

What are we hoping to learn from the community survey?

NOT how it will operate logistically

Options people may be willing to contribute toward

We need a very good intro; gather info from participants- demographic info? Language? Do you feel like you are part of the community?

There is a suspicion among some in the community that some schools are not fundraising to their fullest capacity; that idea must be dispelled, EWG can use the data we collected to dispel that idea

Bridget Ray-Canada- Instead of having everything in an intro (people might not read it if it is long) include a short intro in each section; respondents can lose attention quickly, breaking into sections will help them focus

Bridget Ray-Canada - Make a survey for your selves and take it bc surveys are difficult

Sections for the Family Survey

Section 1: Demographic information-

- School and grade(s) of child(ren)
- We should **not** ask about income level—what would that information give us? Would it inform anything? How would we use that? Is it necessary? Would that inform us about about?- Not necessary
- Placeholder

Who should receive the survey? Elementary families only? If it is a One Newton fund, should it go to ALL families, or is filling those people in part of our rollout; Kathleen has found in other work that bringing families in afterwards is challenging- should we include families of older children now?

- PTOC has not historically collected spending data from HSs, from MSs, spending difference seems significantly smaller; PTOC is collecting data from them moving forward
- Our goal is to get a sense of people's appetite for a central fund
- PTO is not the biggest ask in HS, it is usually Boosters or theater
- Families of MS and HS students have a perspective that might be useful; We would ask them the same questions
- At SC meeting, Ruth Goldman suggested limiting the survey to elementary school families

Section 2: Respondent's relationship with their school's PTO

Do you donate money to your school's PTO? y/n/ If no, why?

We should know how many respondents currently give or currently don't give bc if we get people who don't currently give, we are getting info from a group we are trying to reach.

How actively are you engaged with your school community? (check all that apply)

I volunteer

Board Member

CA&S

UOD

I attend events with my families

I attend adult-only events

I attend meetings

I donate financially

I serve on Afterschool Board

Other_____

At Cabot there is a group of after-school parents who have their own events and fundraising; afterschool programs do some fundraising so they have money for scholarship; at UW they do a trivia night

How much to you usually give to your PTO? (Give respondents "buckets;" highest = "More than \$250")

If you do not give to your PTO, why?

3-4 choices and "other"

How included do you feel (1-5 scale; included--- excluded)

Do fundraising efforts make you feel included or excluded?

Do you feel your PTO does too much fundraising?

[Interesting dichotomy we noticed in our research:

PTO Board Survey- People felt they are fr just enough

Focus groups- people felt there was too much fr; it feels like a full-time

Maybe both of those things can be true- if we don't do it, our kids will not get something that other schools have]

General comments section

Section 3: Central Fund

Would you contribute to a community-wide fundraiser like One Newton Fund y/n/other

If it paid for CA&S? Tech? Teacher classroom support?

Would your contribution to your PTO change if you knew your PTO was giving to a central fund?

--Would such a question might be expecting too much understanding?

Organization?

Organize by type?

Organize by purpose (what it would pay for)

Maybe suggesting Raise the Bar or Flat Percentage is too much in the weeds for the average person who is not aware of these issues

How to frame the issue

Survey needs a good intro to equity policy-- Maybe at the beginning?

The way we frame the problem impacts how we ask the questions; if we have some of the "why" in the question, it will make a big difference

Explain to respondents why we are asking peoples' opinions on central funds

To create equitable access across all elementary schools

does it matter the way that we ask it

Will people get behind it more if the thing it pays for is defined

Should we start with the thing the fund will pay for, rather than an explanation of how the fund will work; telling respondents what it is for might give them more of an understanding, appetite to fill out survey

Based on feedback we have so far:

NPS and PTO should pay for: CAS, library, teacher classroom support, field trips

- CAS and teacher classroom support are top spending items across the board)

NPS should pay for: tech, playgrounds, teacher professional development

- "We are taking tech off table bc SC is moving toward NPS paying for tech"

Raise the Bar-

- Is RtB workable? Running the numbers, does not look feasible unless the percentage is very high
- If we recommend a combination of things, it might not be the case that Raise the Bar would not have to raise all the money; what's nice about Raise the Bar is that it is voluntary, schools can choose to go above bar
- Philosophically, does RtB incentivize and possibly encourage inequity?

Logistics of the Family Survey

We are going to need someone who is very skilled at spreadsheets to assist in this

Translation

Countryside ELL Committee

Send via Aspen; Link to each language- Kathy will ask Steve if he can organize this

Next meeting time:

Tuesday, May 7; 9am

Underwood School

Agenda:

Establish a timeline for our work

Work on survey questions

What should we dig into the data for?

How does MLB Luxury Tax work and how could it work in a PTO scenario? Maggie

Start thinking about timeline-

SC meetings 6/10 and 6/17; it seems realistic to get surveys back this summer and crunch numbers by fall