



Cooper Landing School Parent Advisory Committee

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Cooper Landing School PAC/Site Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

The mission of Cooper Landing School is to provide a positive learning atmosphere, placing the highest emphasis on academic achievement and service to the community, while maintaining a balance between school, family and community activities. This will be accomplished by meaningful communication and collaboration to utilize all available talents and resources.

Called to order at 12:30pm

Roll Call

Tommy Gossard, Jessica Larsen, Virginia Morgan, Douglas Hayman, DeAnna Hoy, Kathy Recken, Heather Harrison, Tanisha Walters, Rachel Sullivan

Approval of Agenda

Kathy Recken was interested in having us discuss the status of the School Discipline Plan, it was added to unfinished business.

The agenda as amended was approved.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Action items from the previous minutes were reviewed. All the outstanding action items will be discussed later in the meeting.

The minutes were approved as written.

Addition of New Members

Heather described some PAC roles to the new faces in the room, no new requests for membership were made at this time.

Principal's Report

Mr. Hayman wanted to open a discussion about field trips and where we are as a PAC with regard to priorities on field trips. He feels from his outside perspective that one of the things that makes Cooper Landing stand out is the caliber and frequency of field trips that our school has. He attributes a lot of that to Mr. Gossard, who is always looking out for grants and opportunities. He advocates that we continue that as part of our school identity and as a benefit of being in school in this community. He sees that we are a highly successful school, due to many things, in part possibly our field trips. He acknowledged that field trips take a lot of commitment. He recognizes that parents hold most of the responsibility for transportation, and this can be a challenge. He offered that maybe we can better rotate driving duties, rotate big trips every few years, do other things to disperse the transportation burden.

Heather indicated that she finds the field trips our school takes to be valuable. It gives our students more opportunity to explore than just the classroom. Most of our field trips are educational, learning from other professionals out in the field. They provide tremendous experience.

Virginia commented that being in a small school the students lose a lot of opportunities they would get in a bigger school, but those lost opportunities are made up for with other experiences like field trips. It is a lot of work for some of the staff to make field trips happen, particularly the school secretary, but it is a positive part of the student experience and has always been really valuable, with no detriment to their learning and performance, rather a benefit.

Jessica asked Mr. Hayman if he was seeing a concerning trend in a reduced focus on field trips at Cooper Landing School. In some prior PAC meetings we had decided against a focus on field trips, so he did want to make sure that we were clear in our priorities for or against field trips.

Some comments were made about making sure there is a focus on learning that ties in to the classroom, maybe doing trips that are a little more new or fresh (perhaps swimming instead of gymnastics?), and that doing some locally based field trips would cut down on driving time (such as a horse-riding program at Alaska Horseman Trail Adventures like Samantha Butler spear-headed a couple years ago).

Jessica pointed out how good it is to have some parents of new students in the meeting, so they can express their preferences for field trips that the more seasoned parents may not be as prone to promoting.

We discussed that some of our prior hesitations about field trips this fall hinged on the facts that: Polycom classes can be difficult to manage with field trip schedules, if we do a field trip in which the older students do not participate then we only have one teacher who cannot be in two places, and the strain of transportation commitments for parents.

AI: Mr. Hayman agreed to research the costs of bussing for field trips in case we decided that expense would be worthwhile at times, and also the policies around having a certified teacher in the school with older students if Mr. Gossard is gone on a field trip with younger students.

Mr. Hayman also pointed out that for the teachers on the other end of the Polycom classes, having a student missing for a class period is nothing out of the ordinary, as many students travel for sports competitions, etc. Having a student gone for a field trip can be worked around, the teachers know how to help them catch up on material and still be prepared for assessments.

Mr. Hayman also updated us on the implementation of the Personalized Learning strategies. As a lot of the strategies and models are small-school models, we won't immediately see a lot of changes from our current schooling. The last week of November (28th or 29th), he and Mr. Gossard will be attending a formal training on personalized learning, basically learning how to fit a lesson to the personalities of the students and help them retain knowledge better.

Mr. Hayman just sent some links to Mr. Gossard that give a vision of where we are going in this Personalized Learning approach – specifically there is a documentary movie out now called “Most Likely To Succeed” which shows the far-out vision of where we are going with individualized learning. He recommends we watch the trailer, research some of the people in the movie and see what they are doing with project-based learning helping students develop problem solving skills. There is a long way to go between here and there, but that is the destination. Mr. Hayman noted that Mr. Gossard is already way ahead on much of this.

Mr. Hayman also informed us of a virtual classroom Tustumena Elementary is creating that we can participate in, called Parent University. It contains links of videos about concepts the teachers are using, explaining the bridge between how we used to learn and how students are now learning. The links are on the Tustumena Elementary Facebook page and are also sent out by Mr. Hayman occasionally in his weekly newsletters. Basically, students now learn the why of the learning process, not just how to get the right answer. So when parents get frustrated by not understanding the work their children are doing, there will be resources in Parent University to help them understand the way their children are being taught. Mr. Gossard and Susanna always get his newsletters, parents may request from Susanna to have the newsletter forwarded to them also.

Jessica inquired about how the staff meetings between Hope School, Moose Pass Elementary, and Cooper Landing School are going. He reported that the meetings are set up, but they are not required. The staff at all the schools now know each other, they are communicating occasionally, and as needs come up the meeting will probably become more regular.

Teacher's Report

We have three dates to consider for an Alaska Sealife Center overnight field trip: Jan 11-12, 18-19, or 25-26. The night-time programs will be Bioluminescence and Cephalopods, we can still

choose which additional program we want for the morning. After discussion, we decided to request the Jan 18-19 dates. In case it is no longer available, our second choice is Jan 11-12.

Mr. Gossard also spoke with the museum at the library in Seward, and we can do that after the ASLC. Free admission in winter. After the museum we can either eat lunch in Seward or return to Cooper Landing to eat lunch here.

For the older students who will have Polycom classes on Friday morning of the field trip, they may be able to do their classes from Seward High School or Middle School, or perhaps even from ASLC. Heather Harrison commented that she does want her older children to do the ASLC program, and if they have to miss a Polycom class and make up for it later, she supports that if the Polycom classes can't be accessed.

Ski lesson dates have been scheduled: February 20, 27, March 6, 20, 27, and April 3. April 10 is the makeup day. Thursdays are too busy with Girdwood School doing classes then, so we have Tuesdays again. As is usual, we expect there will be discounted tickets for parents who also want to ski.

Everything else is on the school calendar, accessible on the school website. Parents can link the school calendar to their own Google calendar to have it populated with all the school dates.

Treasurer's Report

Account balance is \$6164.77. No changes since last meeting.

Holiday Market

Waiting on four applications to be finalized still, but beyond that the vendor spots are all filled. There is a good variety of vendors this year, including family portraits and pictures with Santa.

The Market listing did make it in Alaska Dispatch News and we even got a vendor call from it. Virginia should get reimbursed for the expense of listing the market there.

Heather Harrison called everyone about jobs with the exception of one. She will continue to follow up. DeAnna will not be there, but Heather Pearson will take her place at the swag selling table.

The soups are almost lined up, but we have a long way to go to get enough baked goods for both the bake sale and cake walk. Those in charge will keep making calls and getting commitments.

Discipline Plan

Kathy Recken pointed out that having a written, clear set of behavioral expectations that kids, parents and teachers know, stops problems. She recommended approaching it from a positive angle. **AI:** The PAC again requested that before Feb 21 the school staff provide a discipline plan in writing for us to review.

Miscellaneous add-ons

CLES T-Shirt Designing

Rachel Sullivan had received a message about the school children being involved in designing a new T-Shirt for Cooper Landing Emergency Services to sell for fund-raising. It was recommended she forward the information to Mr. Gossard for consideration.

After-School Library Hours

Heather Pearson reminded everyone that the library is open after school on Wednesdays specifically for students to be able to come to the library then.

Next Meeting

February 21, 2017 @ 12:30pm

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:40pm