

BCSIS Ed Council Meeting November 2018-2019 School Year

Mindfulness regarding participation during meeting (Meaghan)

- We want to try to practice what we are doing in our classrooms to help facilitate a more balanced communication in our Ed Council meetings. Concepts to follow:
 - If you are the person that seems to makes an offer all the time, try to sit back and allow others to make an offer first. This will help honor those that are more shy or quiet and/or not apt to jump in first. That way, more voices will be heard.
 - On the flip side, if you are someone who tends to sit back, please make an offer more often.

Teacher update (Erin)

- 5th Grade
 - History unit on the founding of our country/American Revolution.
 - Election year, so we launched this with the history of voting rights, highlighting the idea of VOICE AS VOTE.
 - Women's suffrage, civil rights movement, current election habits in the USA, who actually votes.
 - Youngest voters don't vote, so...
 - What would we like to say to them. Use our voice for the vote for good for change.
 - The kids made signs and marched at CU.
- 4th Grade
 - Culmination of structure of life unit
 - Underlying mission: to interpret the world with ore depth
 - Lots of writing and projects that synthesize all of their thinking processes developing throughout the unit.
 - Processes of looking at any one thing and to consider its environment, its form and function, its adaptations
 - The intention is to cultivate ways of seeing thinking that you they can apply to anything they observe in the worlds.
- 3rd Grade
 - Finishing up their Greek Studies
 - Kids seem to be more interested in the Gods and Goddesses than the first democracy – but they are loving it!
- 2nd Grade
 - Jen's class has an opportunity through last year's intern, Ryan, who is teaching in Israel at the Tree of Life School.
 - Pen pal letters starting this week.
 - Initial focus: how we start our days, what we eat for breakfast, what we do in the mornings.
 - Purpose: to compare and contrast, to build awareness and connection.
- 1st Grade
 - In language arts, Suzanne is working with Rosey, using drama (character interviews) to develop reading comprehension.

- Emily is using the new reading program materials
- Both classes are focusing on the themes of respecting
 - nature, valuing community and cultivating generosity through their study of Native American Life.
- Kindergarten
 - One of the themes we explore in kindergarten are families, all different kind of families.
 - We read books about different kinds of families and celebrate them in all their differences. WE also ask children to bring in a family page that introduces their families to us and they take turns going over their page in front of the whole class.
 - This is a gentle way to bring in diversity as well as give the children an opportunity to practice their oral skills in public.

CGC Congrats and Thank you Update (Sabina)

- We are currently at \$73k with pledges.
 - What we did differently:
 - Had a parent speak at back to school night in the auditorium.
 - We were more pro-active that night in classrooms...we had a parent speak in each class to make it a bit more close to home and personal.
 - It was included as a feature in the news blast every week.
 - We sent all new parents a small packet of info before school started mentioning the CGC (had a form).
- Sabina will look to see if participation shifts by grade.
- Laurie had dinner with alumni parents, who suggested that they considered giving another donation just b/c they loved it here, maybe we consider reaching out to them and/or inviting them to Winter Festival?
- There are more recurring gifts happening this year than in the past.

Winter Festival Updates (Lisa wasn't there, updates via texts to Emily)

Sunday, December 2nd, 11am to 3pm

- We are struggling to get volunteers so far, but usually it spikes right after Thanksgiving break.
- Emily (teacher rep) posed the idea of passing out flyers parent to parent after school, and for all of us to directly spread the word to families.
- We all need to continue crafting and thinking about meals to bring.
- There was a question to make sure that all the classrooms are making a craft to sell – some teachers are on it, some not yet.
- Donation to the marketplace are low still, but usually come in last minute historically.
 - Crafting
 - Offers from local companies
 - Lisa is going after the list of companies that gave last year who have not yet been solicited
- Micha will do a focused blast and will ask Lisa for messaging.

- Laurie mentioned that this is a big fundraiser for us, we need it b/c grocery cards are down.
- Raffle – apparently it is illegal to do a raffle without a license, Laurie is working hard to get one in time.
- Emily H. and Laurie will work with Lisa to put together a list of To Do's that can be shared to Ed Council lists to get more help on board as needed.

New topic

- Emily will work with Micha to create a physical or online place where important docs can live at the school rather than with individuals. (Ex. 501C3 doc)

Communication (Phil, Meaghan, Emily)

- So many moving parts of communication:
 - Principal emails
 - Teacher emails
 - NewsBlast / Thursday eBlast
 - Parent to parent list
 - Website
 - Facebook
- Phil has been hearing comments for the last 6 to 7 years that people are overwhelmed by the number of emails that he sends, he's been told that they don't read them and they are too repetitive. In response, over the last three years there has been a communication team that has been working to put ideas together to streamline communication.
 - The first main step has been to streamline principal emails into the weekly NewsBlast.
 - At the same time we are making the news blast way more efficient and more connected to community (thank you Micha!)
- At staff meetings, the teachers have been saying that teacher emails can have the same problems, they feel they include repetitive info from the NewsBlast and are wanting to take that info out so that parents really read them.
- Phil wants to have this year finish with a really solid plan and matrix about communication moving forward.
- Personal thoughts from the team:
 - Amy says that there is a mixed message between having information repeated so often. Sometimes it helps remind us of events as needed, but sometimes it psychologically gives the impression that parents don't really need to pay attention the first few times we communicate.
 - Kristen is concerned that less emails might impact participation if people aren't reminded enough.
 - Emily says she doesn't think it can be known what impacts what – most people come to most of the major events and the other, smaller events usually just have smaller participation.
 - Erin feels we just need some transition time with this new system and that people will get used to it.
 - Kim reminded us that Google calendar synch helps.

Kim Golden 12/3/2018 5:27 PM
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- Emily H. mentioned that parents focusing on more social friendly reminders about events helps make sure everyone gets the info they need.
- Micha encourages everyone that when they have an event, they should make a plan to meet with her and the calendar, to pre-plan the communication around it for the whole year.
- Texting is highly discouraged as a possible form of communication by the district.

Tutor vote procedures and updates (Phil and Emily)

- Phil: we have posted the tutor positions and have gotten some promising candidates:
 - The teacher scheduling team will reorganize the para schedule with the new tutor schedule to meet the needs of the teachers and students, while focusing on the strengths and skillsets of the paras and tutors.
 - Interviewing starts tomorrow (11/15) and the plan is for them to start the week after thanksgiving break.
 - The teachers might do 2 tutors at 18 hours each, rather than 3 at 6 hours each, will assess after interviews.
 - Teachers are working together to plan for them and are all super excited.
- Phil wanted to reiterate about how it is totally ok for us to disagree when we have a decision requiring a vote as a governing body. According to our bylaws, we are a majority voting body and its fine to vote no.
- In addition, even though it was a first for us, according to our bylaws we can vote by email. Even though there was a bit of disruption in the email conversations, most people felt that the process yielded great feedback and responses, and b/c many people can't attend all Ed Council meetings, got more response.
- Just a reminder, that the reason the idea was even created was b/c the Finance Team had asked the teachers to think about how they wanted to spend the surplus from the Ed Council each year. Our para and academic support hours have been significantly reduced over the past 6 years; it has become apparent that more help in the classroom is needed. All children will have opportunities for small group support, this will have a positive impact on all students.
- Micha will include it in the NewsBlast when it is in place.

Budget Overview (Laurie)

- We used the surplus on the new tutor program
- Grocery cards are really down
 - \$10k 2 years ago
 - \$5-6 last year
 - Current trajectory is for \$3k this year
 - Ideas to increase participation:
 - Needs to be big in the NewsBlast: Kirsten used to say "you are going to make cranberry sauce next week, use your grocery card."
 - Donations table at winter festival will include Grocery Cards.
 - Grocery Cards possibly have its own table at the Winter Festival?
 - Great parent to parent email
 - Table at pick up?

- Kim to bring them to Kindy thanksgiving feast

Executive Committee/Finance Committee Update (Emily)

- We want to create a position on Ed Council of someone in charge of managing fundraising
- In addition, we are going to creating an Executive Committee team of people to meet in January. It will include:
 - Finance: Laurie and Josiah
 - Parent Head of Ed Council: Emily
 - Teacher representative: TBD
 - CGC: Sabina
 - Secretary - Kim
 - Person holding Fundraising – smarter fundraising and supporting efforts already in place. Someone who organizes and collects all the info about opportunities

CAP date reminders

- Teachers January 9th
- Parents: January 9th 5:30 to 7:30
- Classes: January 10th and 23rd
- Ideas for how to start introducing in the NewsBlast. Make it more a human interest focused on how this awesome program came to be:
 - Emily write from teacher's perspective
 - Kim (or Jenny) write from parent's perspective – our committee and interview process

Questions and Agenda topics

- Upcoming dates:
 - Next meeting: December 19th 3-4:30
 - Thanksgiving break: 11/19-23
 - Winter Festival. Dec 2nd 11-3
 - Book Fair. Dec 3rd through 7th
 - 5th Grade Instrumental Music Concert. Dec 12th 9:40 to 10:20
 - Spiral Garden. Dec 15th 4:30 to 7pm
 - 4th/5th Winter Gathering. Thursday, Dec 20th 6-7pm