

MINUTES FOR ROBERT E. WILLETT ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL AND POSITIVE CLIMATE
COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Public notice having been duly posted as required, the third meeting of the 2009-2010 school year was called to order at 4:02pm in the Staff Room at Robert E. Willett Elementary School.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Heidi Perry, Tracy Kaplan, Christine Firpo, Jaana Remes, Leora Gershenzon, Chris Weber-Johnson, Mike Nolan, Laura Averett, Kim Mann, Rick Blacker and Michele Parker. A quorum was present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by T. Kaplan at 4:02pm. Roll was taken.

2. Public Comment

Jessica Suey and Karen Stiedler attended today's meeting to address the achievement gap in the DJUSD. They were on the agenda during the Climate Committee portion of the meeting, but instead were offered the opportunity to present during public comment out of respect for their time. They presented the mission of the Instructional Leadership Team (ISLT). Its mission is to continuously evaluate, align and update site-based, district-wide and community-supported efforts to close the achievement gap. ISLT has created the Targeted Assistance Group (TAG). TAG's mission is to design and implement an ongoing, collaborative structure to close the achievement gap within the DJUSD. Jessica suggested Mel Lewis, District Climate Coordinator, as contact if any would like to attend future ISLT meetings.

3. Approval of Minutes

The council was asked to review the minutes from October 21, 2009. Two errors were addressed and edited. C. Firpo moved to approve the minutes as edited. J. Remes seconded. All were in favor.

4. Committee Reports

C. Firpo and T. Kaplan attended the district wide Site Council meeting. Highlights: discussion of President Obama's speech on education; Kitty Cawley's response to budget questions; detailed

information on Site Plan timeline; status of librarians as “staff” on Site Councils; new state law to allow transparency between teachers and student’s scores on STAR testing; principals held accountable for their school’s test numbers.

It was noted the NCLB program was absent from President Obama’s education agenda. Silence on this may indicate the Obama administration plans to change parts of NCLB; student achievement and transparency likely to still be focus. Conducting the meeting, Kitty Cawley addressed frustration over the lack of a clear budget. Last year at DHS, for example, no money materialized after plans were made for an agenda to close the achievement gap. K. Cawley said to consider site plans more of a wish list.

C. Firpo noted two key points from the meeting: Compliance with the Education Code for Site Council members. In it, librarians are classified as staff and not teachers. H. Perry said this will be addressed during today’s meeting. The second point C. Firpo covered: The decision at the district level to extend current site plans through the 2010 academic year. The State looks at Site Plans every 4 years; it is our district’s turn to be reviewed this year. T. Kaplan and H. Perry have met regarding this. Willett Elementary already has an approved Site Plan for 2010.

5. Site Update

K. Doty and M. Cook piloted the new Zangle report card. All teachers have the option to use it. H. Perry wants to ease teachers into its use. Next academic year all teachers will be using the new Zangle report card.

The Willett PTA raised enough money to charter buses for Outdoor Education. Dana Welch organized this endeavor. The PTA also raised money with the Tri Tip sale. It was very well received and successful, although Barbara Archer had to deliver some orders that were not picked up at the MPR.

Willett Wear t-shirt and sweatshirt sales have begun. Kids sizes sold well. C. Weber-Johnson hopes to bring back Willett t-shirt Fridays for teachers/staff.

On Oct. 24 a “fabulous” math para educator, Karen Yount, was hired. Students started with her Dec. 1. Some students were reported saying, “we loved that”. As long as there is money, she will meet with the lowest performing 3rd-6th graders Mon., Tues., Thurs.

and Fri. from 1:00-3:00. H. Perry is thrilled and noted that this schedule does not interfere with the reading program, as it occurs in the afternoons.

April 24, 2010 has been chosen for "Casino Night". North Davis Elementary put on a good auction and Willett parents helped to learn how they organize their program. North Davis parents will assist with Willett's April 24th auction.

Candice Hansen has been hired as an additional para-educator. She will be working one hour a day, four hours per week to help with Reading Counts and reading intervention. She also works at Patwin Elementary.

6. Council Configuration

a. Kurth and Weber-Johnson and Parker

Per the state, the Site Council configuration must be 3 teachers, 1 staff member, 5 parents and alternates. L. Kurth will hold the staff member spot with C. Weber-Johnson as alternate. Michele Parker will change from teacher alternate to councilmember along with R. Blacker and K. Mann. T. Kaplan expressed her hope that C. Weber-Johnson could still attend meetings, saying "we lose your perspective" without C. Weber-Johnson in the meetings.

7. Site Plan Review and Approval

- L. Gershenzon asked if money from SLIB grant may be used in another program.
- C. Firpo asked if all complete dates are still June 10th, H. Perry answered that she will "have to do some editing" at year end. T. Kaplan noted that we will revisit the program ending June 11, 2010.
- M. Nolan asked about email addresses. H. Perry explained the complete address "shows on the computer".
- On pg. 15, asked by ELAC, corrections were made.
- H. Perry was told by the district that there isn't enough money for the staffing numbers on the budget page (pg 13). So, site money was used to fund a portion of this.
- Plan not yet reviewed by Special Education Advisory Committee.
- GATE Advisory Committee is part of our staff, and will be presented with the plan at the staff meeting.

It was determined that all bench marks are being met. H. Perry checked with K. Cawley and learned that the staff does not

need to review Site Plan. M. Nolan feels H. Perry is doing an outstanding job on the Site Plan. He feels it is very transparent vs. earlier years. All are impressed with plan. R. Blacker moved to approve the plan as edited. L. Gershenzon seconded. All were in favor of approving 2009-2010 Site Plan.

8. School Climate

a. Healthy Kids (2009) student survey

Only 31 of 93 5th graders at Willett returned the Healthy Kids questionnaire. H. Perry noted she can electronically remind parents when the questionnaire has been handed out. The district wide survey was issued to 5th, 7th and 9th grades. C. Weber-Johnson noted the results are skewed since so few students opted in. T. Kaplan wondered if participation would improve if parents were more involved. J. Remes found pg. 16 very moving, that kids feel someone at school cares, "Teachers are doing a good job." She wondered why ask "Do you feel too skinny, about right or too fat?"

The committee learned that West Ed provides the survey for California. M. Parker would like to write to West Ed about displeasure with weight questions. J. Remes feels kids are harder on themselves than they are on their school. She suggests questions like "what would *you* do as a student to solve this problem?" T. Kaplan asked how does West Ed go about choosing questions and how they are worded?

L. Gershenzon asked, regarding indicators of performance on pg. 22, which questions does this data come from?" T. Kaplan asked how the conclusion was drawn. Was West Ed averaging answers? L. Gershenzon doesn't feel she trusts the results/numbers regarding school connectedness. T. Kaplan, C. Weber-Johnson, L. Gershenzon and J. Remes all wonder how the numbers are determined.

H. Perry will ask Mel Lewis how the percentages are reached. T. Kaplan asked how this information will be used. H. Perry answered she will use this to see where Willett Elementary may improve.

H. Perry wants to be careful how new version of Climate Survey is worded. She would like to use Likert-type scale, not exceed one page and give students an opportunity to express themselves in writing. Kindergarten and 1st grade using pictures, with 4th-6th grades getting more general questions.

H. Perry asked the committee to consider topics, keeping in mind the Healthy Kids survey from 2008-09. What main topics should be included? R. Blacker feels questions should be kept open-ended to keep students from answering to please.

Suggestions: Recess, teachers, safety; "where do you feel safe on campus?" Should questions be location based or relationship based? H. Perry would like to take "bully" out of the vocabulary and be more specific to get more specific behaviors. J. Remes found good questions on pg. 8 of the West Ed survey and asked if we may use some. Per T. Kaplan, survey's questions are copyright protected. H. Perry said we can change the wording.

Other ideas for questions: "Do you always let everyone play?," "Are you always allowed to play?," "Are you treated fairly?" It was suggested that rather than be questions, these be written as statements, then students could use the Likert scale to respond.

J. Remes feels students should definitely be invited to make recommendations. L. Gershenzon would like to continue to ask about lunch/yard duty personnel. C. Firpo asked who are yard duties(?). Morning and afternoon recess is covered by teachers, lunch table and yard duties are hired or are parent volunteers. H. Perry explained she does training with them.

H. Perry asked for about 20 sample questions to review at the next meeting. T. Kaplan suggested they be shared via email. R. Blacker, L. Gershenzon and H. Perry agreed to meet to come up with a draft version to be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Adjournment

At 5:25pm R. Blacker moved to adjourn the meeting. M. Parker seconded. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned.