TOPS Site Council Meeting Minutes
10/15/08


Review and approve minutes from September meeting: Moved (Ms. Eick), seconded (Ms. Scott) and unanimously approved.

Principal’s Report (Ms. Scott)
- Ms. Scott mentioned picture day finished, upcoming parent conferences which will be on a new schedule for Middle School, Chess Club, after-school bus, Kindergarten field trip and 5th grade buddies, Middle School play auditions for “Our Town,” and early dismissal 10/29. She reported on the State of School which was held twice in conjunction with curriculum night. The first night it was extremely well attended, the second night there was a smaller group but it was better than recent years. The coaches (e.g., math, reading) had sessions at curriculum night that were well received. Ms. Scott received some positive emails from parents about inclusion of the State of the School in curriculum night.
- Writers in the school, published writers, are working in the 5-8 grade classrooms. T.A. Barron, a published author, was at TOPS for an assembly. Todd Moore is the playwright for Young Playwrights. The first Planting the Seeds parent meeting will be October 23rd from 7-8 in the lunchroom. 8th graders will begin preparation for Planting the Seeds by attending a photography exhibit called “Outsiders,” an exhibit of photos of homeless people.

Special Report – Middle School Special Education Classroom (Judy Holben)
- The Middle School Special Education class is a self contained classroom (reading, writing, math in one class) with students with many different disabilities (generic). “Self contained” means that students don’t rotate into a variety of classrooms but stay together for most of their academics. Many of the students in the program first enter TOPS at Middle School. In addition to basic academic skills building, socialization is a big part of the program. The classroom is staffed by Judy and an assistant. With one IA it is sometimes difficult to support students going into other regular classrooms. Students get mainstreamed to P.E., health, art, and field trips, including things such as September experience.
- Discussion from Site Council members included the need to have clear communication to special needs families coming to the school about the nature of the program. Possible venues for this communication are the website and new family orientation. The importance of family-to-family outreach to include these families in the school community was also discussed. The importance of having a special education parent on the Site Council was discussed. Dan Hurley’s sub-group will take up these issues.

Volunteer Coordinator Report (Maureen)
- Maureen has had a busy month sending, receiving and processing back-to-school packets went out. Most are back. She is currently working on assigning volunteers where most immediately needed, e.g., No Bake, classroom. She is trying to do a better job of linking...
parent tutors to opportunities to tutor and is working with Patty Moffit on scheduling. The communication workgroup, led by Tamara Kincaid may be able to help work on ways to make the volunteer system more efficient, i.e., how to better match when parents are available to needs for volunteers. Go Home is moving toward electronic opt out, to begin toward the end of November. Maureen is also working on volunteer name tags, and the directory and mailing lists.

- Subscription to Survey Monkey is paid for by FoT. Gerrit paid for it on his credit card and will need reimbursement.
- Ellen Levi and Wayne Duncan are applying for a grant from Lowe’s to put toward the memorial tree and bench. They can apply for up to $5,000.
- Maureen mentioned a need for a room rep. meeting to talk about inclusion, translation, etc., i.e., keeping room reps aware of how to reach out to families in the community.

Coalition for Social Justice Report  (Karen)
- Karen Stuhldreher is the new chair of the CSJ and will represent CSJ on the Site Council. A successful first music and ice cream social was held on Sunday, October 5th. The “No Bake” fundraiser was kicked off at this event and raised $5,000. The first CSJ movie night, October 17th, will feature “Including Samuel”. The film raises questions and issues about inclusion of special needs kids; it connects to anti-bullying and Care programs.. The event begins at 6:00 and the film starts at 6:30. Food will be served. To accommodate Jewish families and others not available on Fridays, some CSJ movie nights will be held on nights other than Friday this year.

Treasurer’s Report (Cliff)
- Friends of TOPS convened.
- A resolution to approve check signers Cliff Shettler, Clara Scott, and Romany Surla for the 2008-09 school year was proposed, seconded and unanimously approved.
- Funding for “Brain Dance” was discussed. Funding for this ($1,325) is going to be drawn from the teacher excellence fund.
- Presentation of this year’s budget. Corrections to project managers were given to Cliff. The Balance Sheet shows equity equal to budget for this year. Discussion of the fact that there is a line item for scholarships.

Chairperson’s Report (Susan)
- Parents from the Seattle Schools Central Cluster meet to talk about topics of common interest. Susan asked for a volunteer to attend the meeting, but no one at Site Council was available. Susan will ask Maureen to help find a parent to do this.
- Wayne Duncan sent a notice about a Seattle Schools community meeting re the assignment plan for schools: October 23, 6:30-8:30 at Ingraham.
- There was not time for discussion of the three Core Objectives workgroups. Susan suggested that these three groups (Communication – Tamara Kincaid, Special Education – Dan Hurley, and Financial Resources – Betsy Wells) convene prior to the November meeting and bring plans to that meeting. Barbara Rockey volunteered to be added to the Communications group, Cliff Shettler to the Resources group, and Clara Scott to the Special Education group.