

DOUGLASS PTO/SIT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 17, 2003

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Traci Hoops, Chair
Christa Tourault, Co-Chair
Carole Carroll, Secretary
Vicky Mayfield, Treasurer
Laura Burke, Volunteer Coordinator
Lorraine Trezek, Volunteer Coordinator

Kelley King, Principal
Nancy Chiu, Faculty Member
Elaine Schwenker, Faculty Member
Lisa Sobieniak, Faculty Member
Lynn Tweitmeyer, Faculty Member

ABSENT:

None

GUESTS:

Vicki Hankey, Grant Writing Chair; Becky Gamble, Goal Committee; Liz Kois, Goal Committee; Sue Inslee, DPC Rep; Molly Waterman, Goal Committee; Cyndy Lakowske; Lisa Pellman; Cindy Rinaldi; Kim Payes; Josie Black; Janice Baker; Lynne Jones, Goal Committee; Cara Daniels; Chitra Seshan, Goal Committee; PJ Lahn

PARENT INPUT/QUESTIONS:

No specific questions were broached from the audience at this time. Traci shared with the parents information regarding school board policy which prohibits PTO dollars from paying "volunteers" e.g. tech assistants & paras because historically, PTOs have not been allowed to be "employers". There is a Douglass parent named Tom Tompkins who is spearheading an effort to get the school board to change their position on this. Their goal is to change the policy so that PTOs can specify in their budget that monies are being used to cover such things as literacy tutors or computer tech assistants. Other schools, specifically, Mesa, Eisenhower, Bear Creek, & Heatherwood, are getting involved in this effort also. Traci would like any parent interested in helping Tom Tompkins to contact her.

CSAP PRESENTATION BY KELLEY:

Kelley stated that she asked parents on the goal committees to be present today. She expressed the opinion that parent input is very important when developing school improvement goals. She informed us that CSAP data aren't the only tools used when setting goals. These data are broken out in many different ways and they use it to look for trends over time. She reminded us of two types of subject groups; non cohort, which looks at different groups of kids taking the same test, and cohort, which is the same group of kids taking tests over time. The cohort data is most meaningful to staff because you can measure growth from year to year. She expects more and more cohort data starting from 3rd grade. This type of data can have a strong impact on instructional goals and trends. Kelley provided the group with a written summary of test data. She shared pertinent findings using a slide show presentation. She especially likes to look at the % of kids performing at proficient level, who might be able to perform higher. She discussed a new way of looking at data called Weighted Index Scores. This is based on reading scores for the whole school (3rd, 4th, & 5th) and gives you credit for getting kids to the advanced level. It is more stable over time because it looks at larger numbers of students.

Kelley reminded us that we have accreditation renewal coming up in October. One thing that will be looked at is adequate yearly progress. Kelley showed charts of our gain scores, explaining that what we want to see is a gain score of zero. Anything higher is excellent. Our score was 16.

Kelley handed out a detailed analysis and discussion about school data. She also handed out forms showing our templates for goal setting. She reminded us that if we choose to work on a school goal committee, the choices are writing, math, or school climate.

FOUNDATION FOR BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOLS:

Traci introduced Vickey Hankey as the chair of our grant writing committee. She then introduced Christina Suarez from the Foundation for Boulder Valley Schools. Christina spoke to us today about grants, which are available through the Foundation. The Foundation has been around for 20 years. Their goal is to raise money to distribute to schools through grant proposals. Christina's job is to make sure schools are aware of these grants and to teach/help interested parties know how to apply for them. She passed around a handout that described all of the grants. The classroom mini-grant is their flagship program and is designed to enhance the BVSD curriculum. The Connect grant is for parents. It's designed to help deal with pre and adolescent issues. It's also designed to enhance community, so you could collaborate with parents from another school. Tech 21 grants are applied for in the spring and are not only about computers. One school received a grant for heart rate monitoring equipment to teach their students what happens to their bodies when they choose a healthy lifestyle. After describing each grant, Christina informed us that she could teach a grant writing class as part of her job. She is seeing more and more parents becoming involved in assisting teachers with the grant writing process. She said filling out applications or writing the grant, administering the grant, and writing the end of grant reports, can take up a lot of time for teachers. If parents can help, it will ease their burden. Vicki H. stated that she is definitely interested in setting up a workshop and will contact Christina about possible times. Christina ended her presentation by encouraging anyone with questions about grants or the Foundation to please call her.

Liz Kois asked her about a program called Girls Soar, which is a mentoring project for girls to give them something to aspire to and promote resiliency. Christina felt this could be applied for under the Safe Zone grant.

Vicki H. suggested that goal committee members bring up these grants at their meetings tomorrow so that staff can begin thinking of ideas.

Chitra Seshan asked if there were ways to address the issue of statistical data showing boys performing lower than girls on standardized tests. Christina recommended finding a speaker to address the issue with our parent group using the Connect grant.

Christina emphasized that her job is to spend the Foundation's money. She has a directory of grant ideas available. Vicki H. will talk to her about getting this directory.

OLD BUSINESS:

Traci passed out copies of last month's meeting minutes. Laura motioned to approve the minutes. Lorraine seconded. All approved.

At this point, Kelley introduced the new faculty board members. We welcome Lynn Tweitmeyer, 4th grade teacher, Elaine Schwenker, 1st grade teacher, and Lisa Sobieniak, Librarian.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Vicky M. handed out copies of the Profit & Loss Budget Vs Actual for 8/02 through 7/03 as well as for 8/03 through 9/03. She also included the current balance sheet. She pointed out that our pizza party profit wouldn't be as high this year since we used a new supplier. Gift Wrap amount of \$1,092.72 on page one of the current Profit & Loss sheet reflects internet sales from last year's fundraiser. On the balance sheet, the 1st Bank checking account listed will be closed once all the items have cleared. Any balance will go into our new checking account, which was opened when we became a PTO. It is listed as "Douglass Elem PTO/SIT, Inc." Vicky also commented on the fact that the Chile Teacher Exchange expense was slightly higher than was budgeted for. Kelley thought this was because of the cost of the airline ticket.

Nancy Chiu questioned why the district didn't pay for the extra computers needed for the bubble grade, since they were the ones responsible for the mistake. Kelley responded that the district doesn't buy or take away computers for little bumps and valleys. Schools in general are on an eight-year cycle for new technology.

DAC & DPC:

Traci explained that DAC stand for the District Accountability Committee, which is made up of parents and principals. They are responsible for conducting the school accreditation process.

She introduced Vicky Mayfield as the Douglass representative this year. Vicky has already started training sessions to learn how to do the accreditation process. Next year she will be able to be a part of an accreditation team. She is also on a budget subcommittee for DAC to assess the amount of savings that really happened with school consolidations/closures.

Traci then introduced Sue Inslee, a Douglass parent, who will be our representative on DPC. DPC stands for District Parent Council. Sue explained that DPC reps meet with the superintendent and board members to give parent information on education issues and get feedback. During the meetings there is a roundtable opportunity with Dr. Garcia. Sue offered to bring up the issue of "paid volunteers" at the next meeting, as this would be a great arena to introduce it. Traci suggested she talk to Tom Tompkins for ideas on what to say. Sue has attended one meeting so far, which was an introductory meeting. Christina Suarez presented at their meeting as well and comes highly recommended to teach grant writing skills. Sue shared that Amendment 32, which is coming up for vote in Nov. election, was discussed. This amendment would increase the taxable portion of residential property taxes to 8% beginning in 2005 and would also stop the requirement to decrease the % in the future. This would help stabilize district income from the state. DPC meeting minutes can be found on the school website: www.bvsd.k12.co.us/schools/dpc. The next meeting is on Sept. 24th at 7 p.m. in the boardroom at the Ed. Center. This meeting will include all the prospective candidates for the school board. School closures, class size, and teacher negotiations will most likely be discussed. Sue let us know that the meetings are open to anyone and she encourages our attendance.

ONGOING FUNDRAISING OPTIONS:

GROCERY CERTIFICATE PROGRAM:

Laura requested we address this issue now, as there were parents present specifically for this issue. A month ago we had no volunteer for chair and discussed dropping the program because the amount of profit didn't seem equitable for the amount of work involved. Since then, Laura has received double the number of volunteers for this program, compared to last year. She has 8 volunteers, three of whom are willing to chair and co-chair the program. For this reason she'd like to open discussion again. She understands it was an administrative burden on the front office, but the volunteers feel they can take it out of the office. She also heard it was a burden on the PTO treasurer. Vicky agreed that it was a lot of work on her part for a small profit. She processed \$104,000 worth of certificates to see a \$6,442 profit. We also currently have \$700 bad debt in the program from one person, which has been stressful to handle. Vicky also reported having talked to the bank regarding the \$60/month fee we are charged in order to have a credit card machine. She was told we could change our arrangement to an "as needed" one, where we only pay for the months when we need the machine (e.g. during Spring Auction). Lisa Pellman said we should be able to negotiate a better deal on our credit card rates. Traci requested that the parent volunteers investigate ways to run the program, draft a proposal and bring it to the next PTO/SIT meeting for approval. PJ Lahn and Lisa Pellman agreed to chair the program and will put together a proposal.

MERCHANDISE PROGRAM:

Traci reported that a Douglass parent named Jim Kavar approached her with a fundraising opportunity. He has a business in which he acts as a representative for companies that sell marketing promotion items, e.g. t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc. He would like to present a proposal to PTO/SIT and Traci wondered if we are interested. Everyone on the board would like to hear his proposal.

SCHOOL SURVEY:

In August, Laura & Lorraine suggested doing a survey to find out which volunteer/fundraising activities are most meaningful to Douglass parents. Traci requested that this survey be available before the November evening meeting. Laura, Lorraine, and Christa agreed to put together the survey. Lisa S. suggested putting the survey on the website and an announcement about it in the school newsletter.

KELLEY'S ACTION ITEMS:

Kelley reported that because of the new booster seat law, parent drivers could no longer take kindergartners on field trips. They will need to use a bus. Since we now have another round of

kindergarten, Kelley requested an additional \$200 in the kindergarten bus budget. Kelley shared some info about the new law. It's not written very clearly. The district's interpretation is that if you are 6 years old, you do not need a booster seat, but if less than six years of age, you must be in one. Kids 6 years and older must be in a combo seat belt, not a lap belt. Field trip forms have been modified. Carole motioned to approve the \$200 bus allowance. Traci seconded. All approved.

Kelley requested \$250 be added to the budget for classroom supplies for the new half time kindergarten teacher. Vicky motioned to approve. Carole seconded. All approved.

Kelley reported that kindergarten and 1st grade literacy assessments must now be done in January in addition to their usual times. These are fairly time consuming for the teachers. She requested \$800 be added to the budget for additional substitute coverage. Lorraine motioned to approve. Laura seconded. All approved.

Kelley requested approval to use PTO money to support TAG instruction and 11/2 hours/day of para time. All approved.

Kelley reported that our available open enrollments spots continue to dwindle. She requested that open enrolled families who have siblings entering kindergarten in 9/04 to please let her know about them. She's also interested in knowing about any attendance area families who have a kindergartner starting in 9/04.

Kelley informed the board that the law regarding the mandatory Pledge of Allegiance has been unclear. The teacher opt out was very restrictive; could only be done for religious reasons or non-citizenship. Judge Babcock has asked for further clarification because of the potential for discrimination. But, we won't hear until 7/04. The Douglass staff decided it was important to be consistent. So, the current policy is as follows: the Pledge is recited once/week on Monday mornings by a fifth grade student over the PA system. This way, teachers aren't put on the spot.

Lastly, Kelley informed the board that because of class size reduction mandates; we now have a 4th round of kindergarten. There are only 14 students in that class.

PTO NONPROFIT STATUS:

Traci was happy to report that we received our PTO nonprofit status approval last week. This is an advanced ruling, which means that in 2007 a form must be filled out to show we've been nonprofit. At that point we will be granted a final ruling. Traci is working out some kind of tracking system so that whoever is chair in 2007 will remember to do this. Traci also shared that the treasurer's binder with request forms is up and running and being kept in Vicky's box in the office.

GIVING TREE FOR I HAVE A DREAM:

Lorraine requested approval to once again set up bulletin board during the holiday season in order to collect donations for the "I Have a Dream Foundation". Carole motioned to approve. Laura seconded. All approved.

Kelley requested that board members email her with any changes or modifications and/or approval of the goal template drafts. She needs to hear from us within two weeks.

Carole motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lorraine seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

