

Parent Board Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting, Dec 7th, Monday, 2018

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Conference Room, C-129, Judd Building

List of Attendees in no particular order: Saima Sufi, Archana Dharanipragada, Farah Noor Cheema, Zainab Baig, Rupert Vaughn, Michael Norwood, Christy Tate, Amelia Klein, Abundio Rodriguez, Barbara Kern, Lauren Polite, Ann Grissom, Monica Hughson, Amelia Klein, Kevin Tan, Samantha Morales, Jelani Frazer, Tiffany Flowers, Meggan Freidman, Catherine Rosenberg, Angela Cobb, Mariana Ingersoll, Patty Jones, Melissa McHill

All council members would be addressed with their initials in this document. We will follow the notation as Archana Dharanipragada (AD). No surnames would be used.

AGENDA

- 7 p.m. –
1. Introduction and Announcements: Barbara Kern announcements
 2. Individual Council Reports
 3. Update on Spirit Council, Tiffany Flowers
 4. Holiday Gift Policy
 5. Preferred methods of conversations with teachers
 6. Volunteer Mapping
 7. Closing Remarks and Reminders
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– 8:39 p.m. Adjourn and Disperse

1) 7.04 pm: Sharing & Brief Announcements: SS mentioned that sign up for “Restaurant Week” is coming shortly. There was suggestion that we should reach out to previous PA Board members to host for Restaurant Week for increased participation.

2) Individual Council Reports and Updates:

- **ESH:** ESH mentioned that SpiritWear this coming Wednesday, and on the upcoming Wednesday. Their winter P2P was on social and emotional well-being, and the next upcoming P2P is in January 2019. They are in the middle of grant proposals. They have three grant requests, and the grants will be decided after their meeting with finance committee would take place. They are also planning for their room parent night venues. There was short discussion between LP, BK and AK
- **LS:** LS mentioned that they had a quite month with no major events scheduled for the month. They decorated the lobbies for holiday season. They had their Principal Chat this month. Their P2P was on bullying in lower school, and received a lukewarm response from parents. LS felt more parents need to come to their P2P events. They had one grant request.

- **MS:** Giant Gym Night attendance was great, about 85% of the forms were turned in the last 36 to 48 hours of the Giant Gym Night. They had about 200 students for GGN, and they had a good amount of volunteers for help with the event. There are four grant requests, and only three would be granted. MS created a rubric ranked them according to the score to check to see who would be eligible for allotment of the grants based on the criterion on the rubric. LS mentioned they are willing share their rubric if it would be of interest to other schools,
- **HS:** HS had a busy month; PA speaker series attendance was good. The dinner with the authors was well attended. The informal setting of having a dinner was liked by all. The Teacher Appreciation Lunch went over budget. Information about Summer Link/Summer Lab/Civic Engagement to go out soon in the E-news. There was one grant request for the Art's Fest and two grants from the history department. There was a small discussion on the cost for Art's Fest: the costs are distributed between the school, the PA, and some money is raised through food sales. They are planning to use a rubric similar to MS rubric for grants award. U-High Principal, Stephanie Weber had announced that she is leaving in June 2019. SW worked diligently towards improving curriculum, had a good rapport with teachers and PA relationships at UCLS. PA is working with administration to find a suitable replacement by the end of school session. AD remarked that top-tier administration has been fluctuating a little from past three or four years, losing SW would be another major setback.
- **Communications:** E-news running smoothly and everything is up-to-date, the next E-news is coming up shortly with pickup details for the orders placed on SpritWear website. Sales from were good and amounted to a \$7000, with ESH being the major contributor for the sales. The PA website is getting updated
- **Finance Committee:** SS mentioned grants proposals have been received, and award letters are going to go out On Dec 15th.

3) 7.39 p.m : Update on Spirit Council, Tiffany Flowers(TF): The idea is to generate and create support the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools with focus on athletic teams and all celebratory activities that generate enthusiasm around the accomplishments of our student body. They want to create awareness on branding, confirmed logos and approved logos and create excitement in the student body. They are working in conjunction with ARD Department too. Fall events had a good kick-start, and they are hoping the same from Winter and Spring seasons. To do this, they would target already well-established events, create guidelines for these events. They need team parents/co-ordinators for organizing their events and would like to involve Student Council too. They have consistent support from both Gail Poole and Dave Ribbens. They want to target their sales at not only athletic, but Choir Nights, Model UN meetings, Jazz Band nights and other kinds of special nights. TF mentioned that sports are good way to mix and mingle and can be competitive and involve the entire school student population, for example bring MS to a UH game to cheer them on. They are looking for some additional help for facility branding. TF mentioned that UCLS families could together for a game on Friday evenings cheer the teams.

○ **Questions and Thoughts from Attendees:**

- ✚ ESH could come cheer for girls Volleyball game to show team support
- ✚ Pick dates for SpiritWear sales and organization
- ✚ Deciding on the mascot
- ✚ MN mentioned if ESH comes to cheer for a game, and it would be better if could arrange for some food before the game or even transportation for the game.

7.52 p. TF got off.

Holiday Gift Policy: An email sent out on Nov 14th, 2018 for the Lab Administration and the PA Co-Presidents had information about the School's gift policy and how parents could thank the teachers in thoughtful ways beyond monetary gifts. There was a thorough discussion between the PA and administration on what would be the most effective ways to thank the teachers. One outcome of the discussions is the creation of a working group for

reasonable and realistic guidelines moving forward. During the holiday season, PA co-presidents will be distributing treats and gift cards to custodial, security, and facility personnel as well as Lab Offices. BN and LP mentioned that there are many ways for individuals to show appreciation to Lab teachers and staff through non-monetary gifts such as giving homemade goodies, artwork and cards, or volunteering in the classroom. LP and BK requested that PA members could come up with some good suggestions on what would be the best policies for future and what we could as PA do to help the school.

Questions and Thoughts from Attendees:

- ✚ AK mentioned that at ESH parents pool money for the classroom in April as gift, and maybe we could do something similar for all teachers at holiday time too. Class Parents could collect all the donations and give a collective gift card in December for the teachers.
- ✚ Books fair for the classroom are great ways of giving back to teacher by providing with each classroom with the books they are planning to read for the rest of the year.
- ✚ For a gift, we could ask to specify a limit, specify a value that we could gift up to
- ✚ Teachers could create a Pinterest, with the items they would like to have for their classroom.
- ✚ There was a question if we could gift to UCLS employed support staff, custodians , security staff and other outside agencies, if the policy would extend to them
- ✚ There was a question if the teachers would have to report the gifts received to administration

4) 8.05 p.m: Preferred methods of conversations with teachers: LP said as parents we have concerns regarding homework, sleep, and other related topics, and lot of us do not know whom to go to, or what to talk regarding these Concerns. There should be clear communication, mutual understanding and a liaison for parents to reach out to people for help. Some parents feel overwhelmed with all of these, and some parents feel that often times responses from teachers are poor. To resolve these sensitive issues, parents should get together more often and discuss issues pertaining to school progress of child, both, amongst themselves and with school authorities.

Questions and Thoughts from Attendees:

- ✚ AD asked how we should approach a teacher, LP responded saying that we should email the teacher and let the teacher drive the conversation where it needs to go.
- ✚ ZB said that she gets questions from parents at the Open House, if the school has Wellness counselors who are trained to handle Wellness problems. There was small discussion on whom to approach, and which counselors are equipped with handling these issues. AD also mentioned she gets the same questions from prospective parents.
- ✚ If Learning and Counselling Department would cover social and emotional well-being, and to whom parents can reach out

5) 8.20 p.m Volunteer Mapping: There should a clear a volunteer mapping at all school events like ARD, admissions, and we gather all names in the beginning of the school year. BK said that we want to extend our understanding of volunteers beyond even the PA to get a full picture. AG mentioned they already made this list, with all the volunteers at the beginning of school on a form distributed to parents asking on which events they would like to volunteer. We should have past PA board members on a specific email list, to reach out to them for extra help. LP said that we should recognize all school volunteers in special way, and try to involve more parents in school activities.

5) 8.28 p.m Closing Remarks and Reminders: SS mentioned that the Wufoo submissions should be done by PA members of individual councils, not parents. She received few Wufoo submissions from parents, and she requested that PA members take charge of those submissions, and she would not authorize them unless done by a PA member. LP mentioned those request could be directed to either her or BK, and they could the Wufoo submission on behalf of the parents.

- Next board meeting on Monday, Jan. 7, 2019 7-8.30 p.m 2018, in C-129, Judd Hall
- Next E-news, Thursday, Dec. 13, Please submit by Sunday, Dec. 9. Note: This is the last E-News before Winter Break.

8.39 p. m Thanks and disperse

University of Chicago Laboratory Schools