

ACEC Board Meeting
April 26, 2021
Start time: 7:00pm

Board Members Present: Ashley Bath, Shari Hanneman, Bryan Engelhardt, Deanna Standorf, Erika Gregorius, Gina Connor, Nicole Valencic, Dana Patel, Liz Bradley, Ashay Desai

Others Attending: Becky Allen, Jill Mach, Mindy Gries, Courtney Ascher, Sara Klawikowski

Meeting started at 7:00 pm

Welcome (Engelhardt):

- Minutes from last month's meeting were approved

Principal Report (Bath):

- Regarding the end of school year activities: Wednesday, May 26th, will be the field day activity day
 - This will take place in the afternoon and Ms Bath wanted (virtual) parent input whether they would be interested in having their virtual students participate with the in-school students (otherwise, a different time/opportunity could be arranged)
 - The same safety precautions that have been put in place during the school year would still be in place during the field day - for example, cohorts would be grouped as they have been through the year, masks, etc
 - More information will be coming soon

Teacher Report (Connor, Standorf):

- Connor: Almost all of the Heckrodt groups have met at this point - they have been going very well
 - Per Ms Bath - the school hopes to continue this next year, perhaps at Heckrodt rather than at the school - but it would be a similar set up as this year where a different classes would go during different weeks
- Standorf: teachers have been looking at what classroom supplies will be necessary for next year; they have also been looking over the curriculum for the upcoming year (such as incorporating the virtues - this year they took a break to focus on PBIS; next year, they want to incorporate the virtues with PBIS)
- Mrs Wunrow is looking for volunteers for the garden this summer; please email her, Ms Bath, or your classroom teacher if you are interested
- Leukemia/Lymphoma Fundraising Challenge - all the elementary schools are competing with each other to raise money for the cause
- Mrs Wunrow's class is selling pickles and beefsticks to raise money as well

Music (Allen):

- The school (and district) are in planning mode so this is a discussion for what we will potentially go back to next year (and thoughts for the future, if we possibly expand Alliance)
- The Music Moving Forward [document](#) was shared which had the following information:
 - The keyboards we have are starting to wear out
 - New keyboarding lab is \$23,017 (this needs to be within 4 years or the price will jump)
 - Price breakdown for one row- \$3900 (keyboard only), \$744 for stands, \$288 for seats, plus a few misc total of \$5000
 - We need at least 5-6 adult volunteers to set up two times a week and 3 to help take it down
 - Need 2 volunteers for each morning (2 mornings a week) to help run the classes
 - One keyboard coordinator/parent volunteer
 - Another option is to try some other instruments instead of teaching keyboards but there will still be a cost to this (example: recorders, ukulele, bells)
 - Ukuleles are \$40 apiece, would encourage families to have one at home but it would not be required, library has some that are available to borrow (for grades 1/2/3 and 4/5)
 - Bells (already purchased) for K and 1/2/3, \$50/set and Mrs Allen already has access to 5 sets
 - Boom wackers
 - Recorders (for grades 4/5)
 - Misc Instruments that are in the room
 - Mrs Allen was able to form a stronger connection with students this year and students made a greater connection with music and it seemed more enjoyable for them with the curriculum taught (which was still less than a typical general music year due to COVID restrictions)
- At least one row of keyboards would need to be purchased by next year if we choose to continue with keyboards next year (there is approximately \$7000 set aside for this in the budget)
- Discussion regarding the other options:
 - When the school was initially founded, there was more funding for the program and there were more volunteers to help during class time
 - As the years have progressed, it has become more difficult to find parents who volunteer during class time
 - This is a class that ideally has 2-3 volunteers during class time to help with checking student work
 - During the last keyboarding year (2019-2020), there were days when Mrs Allen was the only adult in the room and students were often waiting for their turn to practice their song for her. She needs to spend at least 2-5 minutes with each child so some students would not get their work checked due to lack of time.

- Even if we say keyboards are a go for next year, the district will still have a say in how that will look so it may not be the program that we have had in pre-Covid
- Per Mrs Allen - she enjoys teaching keyboards but the keyboards are a very narrow skill set; if you add in singing or ukulele, you are expanding what the students are exposed to and there is the ability to capture the interest of different students. This year has also provided her the ability to interact more with the students and students seem to enjoy the change from keyboards
- A survey will be sent to parents to get their input before a final decision will be made (created by the ACE teachers and Mrs Bath)
 - We should try to provide a lot of context so that families know the ins and outs of the decision (ie - the cost, the educational value, the parent commitment necessary to volunteering) so it's an educated choice
 - Maybe have a different weight for younger grades than older grades (since they won't be in the program for more than another year)
 - If we want to move forward with keyboarding, we need more volunteers in the music class to help, especially if we expand our school
 - The outcome of the survey will be considered, but the decision has to be one that is sustainable to the program
- Sara K - we may have to be prepared to move ahead and potentially amend the charter so perhaps a committee should be formed (the charter is up in 2023 and there is a 2 year process of discussing it)
 - Ad Hoc Committee to explore a change in the bylaws related to changing the music program: Sara Klawikowski, Erika G, Gina Connor
 - In May, we can come back and make a more definitive decision
- Parent comment: it is useful to hear this background discussion, otherwise parents may stick with what they are use to (i.e. keeping keyboards)
 - Per Bryan, this is something that is in the wheelhouse of the parent reps
 - they should reach out in the discussion with other parents to help explain the situation
 - If parents want to keep keyboarding program, then we should add a "Then We Need" volunteers, money, etc
- It was also noted that previously a parent had volunteered to pay for a classroom volunteer (not keyboarding) but it was not approved by the school district since there are a lot more costs involved in having an employee and the person would need a position as an NJSD employee
- Moving forward, the teachers will put together a survey (the hope is to have the results by the next meeting so that we can make decisions at that time)

Treasurer (Ondresky):

- Jeremy was unable to attend this meeting due to unforeseen circumstances
 - Per his email - he has received the classroom supply request from the teachers, reimbursements, and the training request and we are good on the budget end of things

- Doesn't think any more fundraising is required this year
- Per Liz B: it will be difficult to vote on the budget without an updated budget
- Per Ashay D: is it too late to start a fundraising initiative?
 - The goal would be similar to what was done in the fall: an email stating what we need
- It was decided to delay the vote until next month

Teacher Appreciation Committee (Gregorius):

- Liz, Jill, and Erika are working with RO for teacher appreciation week (next week)
 - Some activities were put together for students to do
 - Put together some things for the teachers
 - Erika: Parents, please watch your emails so that your child can celebrate their awesome teachers

Call for next year's board meetings (Engelhardt):

- We need volunteers to fill the board for next year, please send an email to Bryan or your parent rep if you are interested in one of the positions for next year
 - This includes co chair, secretary, parent rep (for grades K, 1/2/3, or 4/5), or education coordinator

Summary: Check in with virtual parents regarding end-of-year field day, teachers are coming up with supply lists for the classrooms, Mrs Wunrow is asking for parent volunteers to help with the garden this summer, discussion regarding the future of the keyboarding program at Alliance, voting on the budget will be delayed until next month, the teacher appreciation committee will be sending information to parents soon

Meeting ended at 8:01 pm