

Whittier International IB School

Site Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 21, 2017, 6:30-7:30 pm in the Media Center

Introductions

Present: Norma Gibbs, Deborah Brooks Golden, Edie McDonald, Terri Haberman, Lizz Callaghan Done, Mary Daub, Ashley Rudolph, Kenji Okumori, Jeff Carlson, Bob Walser, Libby Dominguez

Discussion around recruiting new parents for Site Council. Need to reach out to new families and also to last year's families. We have had full agendas and it will be critical to robust family involvement prior to budget discussions.

Principal Gibbs gave an overview of the role of site council, outlining several of the roles that the site council plays.

- Marketing and communication
- Community outreach
- Needs assessment
- Parent engagement in academics and language.
- Social Emotional Learning
- Advising principal on budget

Mary Daub asked about bylaws. She served on the committee in earlier years. Kenji suggested that the bylaws be sent out to the committee and we could review them individually. Bylaws require that the Site Council have at least one community member from outside the school. Discussion ensued about how to recruit a community member followed by continued discussion around recruiting diverse parents. Minerva Cotorra will continue to serve. She couldn't make it tonight because of a sick child. Committee will work to recruit new members.

Discussion followed around community partnerships. Isuroon is a Somali advocacy organization that has offered to partner on-site with Whittier. Kenji articulated the need for the district to facilitate this partnership, especially given tight budgets. This partner could bring some of their own resources to the table. Board Member Walser echoed that sentiment – the district is seeking to build partnerships of this sort. Board Member Walser agreed to follow up on this with Kenji.

The council then returned to the goal of recruiting for the next meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>. We compiled a list of all of the organizations that are working with Whittier in some capacity. Kenji asserted the need for us to have "talking points" about the Site Council as we approach potential partners. Lizz asked that we come up with some key incentives to share with partners, eg...why it is in their interest to be engaged with their local school.

Mary Daub asked about agendas. Is there a set agenda? Discussion around last year's meeting protocols and some of the key items that were addressed. The group remembered talking about a lot of different topics ranging from IB visit, "crises that parents were buzzing about", safety and security, ILT share-outs. Kenji asked Dr. Brooks about how Site Council has been handled at other schools.

Principal Gibbs advocates for a collective co-constructed decision making model. Administration listens to staff and parents and first, and then takes those voices into account when moving forward with decisions. Dr. Brooks stated that at other sites the decision making processes are more top-down. Principal Gibbs would like the standing agenda to not include a “Principal’s Report”, but rather that parents, staff and community take the lead.

Mary Daub asked whether an agenda will be sent out prior to meetings. Administration affirms that this group will indeed have access to the agenda ahead of time. Principal Gibbs is building the agenda for 12/19 right now here at this meeting. Question about fairness – does each department have the same access to the table when it comes to budget decision making.

Concerns were presented that this group does not fully represent our school. It is very heavily tilted toward staff – not many parents present. Kenji responded that he is not worried about the Site Council being able to recruit families, and remembered that last year’s committee did have plenty of families present. “It’s not at the point of panic yet.” Suggestion to make a list of families that would be great for Site Council. What qualities, what groups are we targeting. Bylaws do have very specific rules around participation in Site Council, namely how many of each group are at the table. Principal Gibbs asserted that strict adherence to bylaws can be a deterrent to family involvement. Mary Daubs then asked the committee: “why do we have bylaws if we don’t follow them? Let’s rewrite them so that they reflect what we want.” It was agreed that the bylaws would be available for all to view and that the committee would make recommendations.

The meeting closed with more discussion about recruiting families. Who does this? After a brainstorm of ideas, consensus emerged around the idea that we all work to recruit the families that we know. Each person can use their own contacts to build the capacity of this group. Start with recruiting people that were here last year. The last suggestion of the evening was for snacks to be provided.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Jeff Carlson