

Present: C. Hayes-Lattin, S. Templeman, J Wilf, J Cowal, B Frank, K Mountain, L Mason, R Belcher, L Eby, A Beer, A Rueegger, H Boime, R Stewart, G Dursch, J Laden, G Goldfarb, S Campbell, C Raak, J Montagne, M Bell, A Keny-Guyer, C. Ramirez, R Tucker

School and District Updates (Chris Gutierrez):

- Atkinson is viewed by the district as having strong parent involvement. Because of this, the district wanted a parent from Atkinson on the district parent involvement committee. We will send someone next month.
- Testing: Rob will discuss more; he is taking the lead on this.

Reading Curriculum Adoption (Rob Stewart):

The new curriculum is titled, "Avenues." Many teachers here are long term teachers and were anxious about getting a new curriculum (standardized, pre-packaged). But in reality, there is still room for the teachers' own successful curriculum. The program will be used differently in different classes. There are several in-service days for training and some of our own teachers are helping with training. The program seems to be a good program and it gives the district some standardization (between schools). Ruth Tucker acknowledges that there are no serious complaints from the teachers.

Testing at Atkinson (Rob Stewart):

Testing has just begun. Many of the 3/4/5 kids have been tested in reading. All will be tested online in math and reading. The test levels itself based on the accuracy of the kid's answers. The score is available immediately. The majority have already made benchmark. They can take the test 3 times. The limiting factor is the capacity of the computer room. Generally, only half of the class is tested at a time. Teachers can opt to have the class take social studies and science tests as well. There are also other assessments. For instance paper and pencil testing of writing for 4th graders will occur in late February; it takes 3 days, one hour a day. Last year, our writing scores improved dramatically. There are also work samples collected for 3rd, 4th and 5th: reading, writing, speech and math. They are scored collaboratively by teachers and turned into the district in May. In the immersion program, several of these are scored in both languages. K-2 does "literacy profiles" instead of testing (3 times a year). The elements of reading acquisition are each evaluated. This has driven some change in expectations in kindergarten. In addition, the new curriculum is a bit more evaluation-based.

Some parents expressed concerns about the intensity of kindergarten testing. Carmen Rodriguez added: Immersion teachers have discussed how testing takes a lot of time away from classroom teaching, especially for the individual assessments. In addition, immersion teachers are learning to assess the oral language. We need this data to show how immersion is working. Rob concurred that the assessments take an intense amount of teacher/support person time – this disrupts a significant amount of the reading instruction. Teachers try to have the other children doing quality activities while they are testing one-on-one. Rob suggested parents contact the district with concerns about the time taken for testing.

Announcements:

- Move Program (Kate Mountain): Currently, students can participate in running club and basketball, but more students need to be encouraged to make movement part of their lives. She developed a take home "Move journal" to be used by teachers in their homework packets. See handout.
- Stand for Children (Angie Beer): Stand is a nonprofit organization formed to provide organized people power to advocate for children. Schools and related ballot measures are often their focus. If you would like to join or help coordinate the local Mt. Tabor team of Stand, please contact Angie or check www.stand.org.

- Community and Language Enhancement thru Arts Resources (Janet Cowal): The school will pilot a PSU-funded program where children learn language through an nature/art project for 4 weeks, starting Feb 11. An Atkinson artist/parent will work with children to make accordion books with block prints made from Styrofoam. Each book will contain a child's interview with a significant older person about his/her experience in nature, as well as the child's own experience in nature. The classroom language time will change from 4 x 30 min/week, to 2 x 1 hour. They are seeking volunteers (esp. native speaking parents) to help 1:55-2:55 M-Th from Feb 11 for 4 weeks. Jan 29th from 9-11 there will workshop for parents to learn how to help, or a truncated version on the Jan 30th from 2-3pm. PSU students will do an assessment to help establish future funding. Their assessment tool may involve parents, so please participate if asked.
- Carnival (Julie Montagne) is in April. We are seeking non-parent volunteers (5th graders and Warner pacific students) for the event night. If interested, contact Julie at julie@aafiglobal.com.
- The Magic Garden: The new garden area in the front of the school (under construction) is to honor Sarah Creswell. It will have special rocks, lavender, and a sitting wall. If you have any ideas for this area, we need help. This Saturday we have a work party (skilled labor!).

Covered Playground (Gabriela Goldfarb): The committee had a productive meeting with the district. Due to cost and permitting, it was decided to research prefab structures. A brochure was passed around with different design options. They will be getting 4 bids for these pre-fabricated steel structures of 50 by 100 feet, 50 by 75, and 50 by 50. The cost range is \$112 – 135K. We need input: cover the play structure or not? Cover the asphalt or not? etc. If you can help, please contact Gabriela at aborhood@comcast.net.

Auction (Jim Laden): Major planning is going well. We need lots of the small level volunteers (i.e. – during the event!) and donations. Contact Jim at j_laden@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Meetings (Sheri Campbell): One of the next 2 mtgs will have the district nutrition person. Stay tuned for the exact date. She is also researching a speaker on self-esteem.

Lunar New Year: Wed, Feb 13th. More info later.

Immersion Parent Night mtg will be coming soon.

Transfer Deadlines: March 7th!

Pool Party: March 16th