

## **DISTRICTWIDE PARENT' ORGANIZATION MEETING**

**At Grant Wood Elementary in Iowa City**

**IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

[http://www.edline.net/pages/ICCSD/parents/District\\_Parents\\_Organization](http://www.edline.net/pages/ICCSD/parents/District_Parents_Organization)

### **Meeting Minutes**

**December 12, 2018**

#### **Attendees Included:**

Beatrice Tannows (Horn), Brooke Engler (Wood), Stacey Hackert Sherlock (Hoover), Miriam Timmer Hackert (NWJH, Central, DPO), Ben Brozene (Shimek), Laura Broffitt (Horn), Renata Owens (Hoover), Shawn Eyestone (ICCSD Board), Chad Meacham (Penn), Traci Olson (Central), Noor Miller (Borlaug, DPO), Ashley Shields (Mann), Liz Erb Firmstone (Lemme/City), Marla Swesey (Transitions), Tea Ho (SEJH, Lincoln), Jamie Shaw (Central), Jackie Marquardt (NCJH, Van Allen), Julie Eisele (City), Phil Hemingway (ICCSD Board), Steve Murley (ESC), Matt Degner (ESC), Jenni Mettemeyer (Shimek, SEJH, DPO), Eric Johnson (DPO, SEJH), Mary Murphy (SEJH, City, DPO), Stevie Toomey (Lincoln, DPO), Brad Kelly (SEJH, DPO), Tara Sterba (Hills, DPO), Cynthia Crossett-Powell (Central, DPO)

#### **Representing:**

**ICCSD Elementaries:** Borlaug, Coralville Central, Hills, Hoover, Horn, Kirkwood, Lemme, Lincoln, Mann, Penn, Shimek, Twain, Van Allen, Wood, and Wickham

**ICCSD Junior Highs:** North Central (NCJH), Northwest (NWJH), and Southeast Junior (SEJH)

**ICCSD High Schools:** City, Liberty

**Other Groups:** ESC (Executive Services Center), ICCSD Board of Directors, ICCSD Foundation Transitions/CAPSTO, Coralville Public Library (CVPL)

#### **I. Gathering time (an opportunity to socialize) (11:30)**

- A. Attendees started gathering and socializing at 11:30 at Grant Wood Elementary in Iowa City

#### **II. Call to Order (11:45)**

- A. **Introductions -**

- B. **Principal Welcome** – Principal Joe Divoky welcomed the DPO to Grant Wood Elementary. He shared that the district is now designing a renovation and addition for Wood including putting art and music by the gym, making safety and security more of a priority, and having a consistent HVAC system. He shared that the Wood student body represents society as a whole, is very diverse, has students from 17 different countries, and 20 languages spoken. The school has seen gains in proficiency, but they are still not satisfied--with the FAST screener, they are making academic progress and want to make more. They launched the AVID program at the school this year, and he feels it has been a huge success so far. AVID helps prepare students for college-- they tell the kids it's “not IF you go to college, it’s when” and “it’s not because you can’t go, you have the skills to do it.” Grades K-2 is piloting the Super Kids curriculum, and they are are very positive about it.

III. **Announcements (11:55)** [No announcements]

IV. **DPO Officer Reports (12:05)**

- A. **President** – DPO Co-President Miriam Timmer-Hackert shared that the January DPO meeting will be an evening meeting at Hills Elementary at 6:30 on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The meeting topic is “Legislative Update” and DPO members are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the meeting.
- B. **Secretary & approve minutes** - Jenni apologized for the late submittal of the November minutes and suggested they be approved at the January meeting to give everyone a chance to review before approving. Mary Murphy reminded attendees that index cards are available to use to ask questions. They will be collected after the meeting, and optional as to whether to put names on them.
- C. **Treasurer** - [no report]
- D. **President Elect** - [no report]
- E. **Past President.** Co-Past President, Brad Kelly, shared that they have shared information regarding the DPO scholarship application, money for the scholarship is raised by honoree donations, all information should be included in the email, applications are due February 28, 2019. Volunteers will be needed, as well as generous donations, in order to feed the recipients and honorees. DPO Co-President Eric Johnson encouraged attendees to cast the net wide when considering nominees, not just for retiring teachers.

V. **Iowa City Community School District Reports (12:20)**

- A. **Foundation Representative** – Susan Brennan [<https://iccsdfoundation.org/>] thanked everyone and appreciates everyone spreading the word about what the Foundation does. They've had a tremendous start to the year. The Foundation is doing a staff campaign now, and she thanked staff. Run for the Schools raised over \$23,000, it was the 20<sup>th</sup> year, and there were about 1,400 runners. [<http://runfortheschools.com/>]
- B. **School Board Representative** – Shawn Eyestone reported that many board members and staff attended the IASB conference. The keynote speaker resonated with him, he spoke about the generational divide regarding utilizing technology in education. There have not been nearly as many meetings now that the boundaries were approved at the last meeting. Budget update illustrated that times are tough, we need more money, when you have to cut, you have to cut. Many of the annual reports were presented at last night's meeting, had been pushed back due to focus on boundary work. He further added....
- i. Board received an equity update.
  - ii. LA & Library curriculum reviews going on.
  - iii. Annual Progress Report – not new information, but all compiled together.
  - iv. SIAC Committee is doing more this year,
  - v. Board also received updates on Technology, Grounds, Wellness, and Substitute Staffing.
  - vi. Discussed the PERL levy as a potential funding source for playgrounds may apply to a few other things.
  - vii. Also received an FMP update. Legislative forum coming up on Friday, 4:00 at the ESC.
- C. **Administration Representative** – Superintendent Steve Murley explained that the PERL levy [property tax] would require a community vote, rate would be 13.5 cent per \$1,000 [assessed property valuation], and would raise about \$800,000 annually. It could help district upgrade playground surfaces--they are looking for an optimal surface. Parent Ben Brozene asked if this would also include the new surface at Shimek Elementary and Steve said yes. He also shared that they might be able to use it for preschool. It would require 51% approval to pass, will be discussed more at the upcoming work session. New state reporting required under the Every Child Succeeds Act [ESSA law] will go live next week. Some schools in the district were identified as Targeted, but none identified as Comprehensive. The individual school results will be released to press. He wants us to “focus on the glass half full.” There is a legislative forum on Friday, he wants to organize a trip as he has been hearing SSA might come up early in the session, he is looking

for dates in January and February, and will let us know when. Ben Brozene raised concerns about “potential fresh wounds being poked after the bond division”. Steve said this will be discussed at the work session. No one wants a repeat, he hopes that the language will be very specific as to what the dollars will be used for. Parent Laura Brofitt asked about open houses for students attending new schools as a result of boundary changes, should PTO’s organize? Steve replied that principals should communicate with each other, working with Amy to roll this information out. Steve clarified the Equity Transfer – the district average is 40%. Enrolling school must be higher or lower, transfer must help with demographics. [ <https://www.iowacityschools.org/VoluntaryTransfers>] Sean Eystone added that the District hired a new Equity Director, Jeremy Tabor. He is leaving the Burlington School District where he worked in HR, previous experience includes HR in public sector. His wife is a teacher, has a freshman, 7<sup>th</sup> grader and a 2 year old. Will start January 7<sup>th</sup>. Jenni Mettemeyer asked for more information about the Preschool Center Task Force and if PERL money could be used for this.

Diane Schumacher added that they are some barriers and they are considering whether a preschool center with all-day care be beneficial.

Mary Murphy said some of what PERL pays for overlaps with what PPEL and SAVE can be used for, such as making playgrounds more accessible and asked “will the district have a specific plan for any PERL money if voters pass it?” Steve said this is what will be discussed at the work session and in the committee. Is it the right thing to do? What would we use it for? What would be different than PPEL and SAVE is a “great question.” Ben Brozene shared he is confused – he was just told it would be targeted but now hearing it is open for them to choose how to use it.

Mary also asked Superintendent Murley whether the district would put a new Revenue Purpose Statement before the voters if a new penny school sales tax goes into effect so voters would have a say in how the money is spent? Steve replied that it depends on how the legislature words the statute.

## **VI. Presentation: (12:30)**

**Topic: Ag Ed, Ethnic Studies and New Course Offerings**

**Speaker: Matt Degner, Assistant Superintendent and Diane Schumacher, Director of Curriculum**

Diane - There were two new programs approved in the fall focused on Ag Education and Ethnic Studies.

**Identity: Power and Privilege in Action.** Ethnic Studies was driven by students and they received input was received from students, including members of the group Students Against Hate and Discrimination. They looked at different curriculum, standards, and teaching tolerance. It will be a one trimester class offered to sophomores through seniors as a social studies elective credit. There will be three units--1) Identity, 2) Power and Privilege, and 3) Action Statement--"what power do I have to make action in my community." So there will be a community service component.

Matt - Students came to the board, it is good to offer this, the district has been engaging students and he wants it to be positive. Diane, it will be a social studies elective credit.

**Intro to Agricultural Education – Food and Natural Resources** Matt, this course will also be offered next fall. A steering committee met several times, representatives met with industry members, spoke to current AG Ed teachers, and visited Des Moines and Lone Tree Programs, which they brought back ideas to the entire committee. The board approved the programming. There will be a section offered at each school using the CASE curriculum and it has a great deal of community support. The program will grow as interest builds. The district will also offer students the opportunity to participate in FFA [Future Farmers of America] as an extracurricular activity. The course is open to 9-12 graders.

**AVID**

Diane, The AVID program [Advancement Via Individual Determination at <https://www.avid.org/>] will now be offered at the high school level as a course in an effort to create a "college-going" culture for students who don't typically go to college. Students must apply freshman year, the focus is on students who are under-represented but have potential for higher learning and students who will be the first family member to attend college.

Diane, there are five components to AVID--WICOR five strategies are 1) writing skills, 2) inquiry, 3) communication/collaborative, 4) organization, and 5) reading. Special tutoring can be offered. The district is teaching these 5 strategies – how to write effectively, how to build inquiry skills, how to communicate, collaborate, and organize. Students are told to take notes and stay

organized but they are not taught how to do it. Evidence-based research shows improvements are happening.

Matt, they can also talk about AVID in school-wide approach to impact all classes. It creates a common language for teachers and is long term work. AVID is its own independent organization. Laura Cottrell used this program when working in the Chicago Public School system and found it successful. AVID can help better diversify AP & Honors classes, develop skills and create opportunities. Is this something the AEA can help with? Matt replied no, AEA only works with special ed students.

Question from Parent...Sounds like this would be good for everyone, why not make it school-wide instead of an elective like elementary program? Matt/ Diane replied --There is a lengthy application process, essay required, attendance & behavior history considered, etc.

Another parent....How do kids apply? Diane, there are multiple criteria. Four elementary schools are participating thanks to the support of the Foundation and ACT – Kirkwood, Weber, Wood, Alexander. Susan explained after seeing great success at Kirkwood, the Foundation agree to partner and support pilot programs at the other schools. The Foundation has committed to support for the next three years.

Tea Ho asked what results they are seeing due to AVID. Matt, the evidence is in student data.

Miriam asked how much the cost would be for all schools to participate. Matt – it's very expensive. Diane added--the big cost is ongoing professional development, which is expensive, around \$3,000 for each teacher. However, AVID has helpful strategies for students. For example, parents know how back packs are organized. The district wants fidelity of implementation among teachers.

Parent question – How do you get a whole building to use the same strategies? How do you ensure consistency? They look at a lesson and how we can pump it up, students received binders and folders to help with organization.

Grant Wood principal - This is their first year of implementation and it's not fully implemented yet. They are working on systematic organization for students using binders. Diane said all K-6 all received binders to take home, at first they were skeptical kids might lose them but they haven't lost one yet. Grant Wood principal - 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders have a second binder that stays at school and is divided by subject. The Foundation helped buy the binders. There is color coding to

help the kids. They will be adding note taking strategies--e.g. two column note taking. They are doing this building wide across grade levels, and teachers received professional development on this topic. These are all things we work on, but this brings it all together. Professional development on the program started with a small number of participants, now more teachers attend. Schools have AVID celebrations--e.g. If kids answer questions correctly, they do one of the AVID claps--Diane demonstrated some types of claps students might do--e.g. Mosquito clap, hamburger clap, etc.

Diane, ACT supports AVID at all levels. There is a licensing fee, professional fee, and binder purchase. There is no Full Time Equivalent AVID instructor at the high school. The administration is looking at expanding AVID into more free and reduced lunch schools. Susan Brennan added that a principal said AVID adds new vitality to the schools.

### **Comp 1 & Comp 2 [potential college credit]**

Diane Schumacher said Comp 1 and 2 will now be offered with the Kirkwood Regional Academies. Some teachers will teach on-site similar to Project Lead the Way where students get Kirkwood credit. Teachers must have masters plus 18 hours to be qualified to teach. This year, Liberty will be offering Comp 1 and Comp 2 and the administration is looking at expanding this offering to City and West. They would also like to eventually help students get Kirkwood credit for math and science classes for kids who aren't going to major in math or science or are not taking AP math to help them take care of their general education requirements. The district is looking for qualified teachers.

Matt said this is a 'great opportunity.' Teachers will need content hours to teach at the Kirkwood College Level, not a masters in another area. For example, Diane added a communications teacher will need 18 content hours in communications, and one possibility is to have students take communications as an online course.

Question from parent and DPO Co-President Elect Stevie Toomey – Is there money in the budget for professional development so teachers can teach these courses? Matt replied no, however, when we hire teachers we need to look for teachers with content hours in master's areas. There is nothing in operation for teachers to complete certification hours.

Diane stated that if we offer these classes in person, the district gets supplemental weighting for the courses. Kirkwood gets a little of that so we share but we get the bulk so it's good to offer onsite as it keeps the funding here.

Eric mentioned that the district a few years ago lost classes like 4<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra and 7<sup>th</sup> grade languages. He stated administrators were describing a deal about offering later secondary courses and asked how do you balance this--referring to, for example, not offering language arts now until eighth grade.

Matt – The district is starting to talk about junior high and language offerings, thinks there has been some stagnation at the junior high, is not sure where things will end up with regard to career & tech, PE, etc. He asks, how can we make it better? Can we look into more trimester classes versus full year offerings.

Diane mentioned that the district offers French and Spanish in high school currently – they have been approved to award a seal of biliteracy.

[\[https://educateiowa.gov/article/2018/11/16/new-state-seal-available-biliterate-students\]](https://educateiowa.gov/article/2018/11/16/new-state-seal-available-biliterate-students),

The seal will show competence in speaking, reading, writing of second language plus community service project. ELL students can earn this seal to demonstrate proficiency in English.

Mary Murphy asked about the Chinese course offering at the high school and mentioned more students might have enrolled if there had been more publicity from the district about it. Diane stated Chinese was offered through the University and is being cancelled. Students can still go to the University of Iowa to take it.

Diane also stated that starting this year, the district will identify Extended Learning Program students for high school sooner.

Miriam adjourned meeting at 1:04 pm

Respectfully submitted,

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By Jenni Mettemeyer and Mary Murphy, DPO Co-Secretaries

Co-Presidents: Miriam Timmer-Hackett\*Eric Johnson

Co-Presidents Elect: Noor Miller\*Stevie Toomey

Past Co-Presidents: Brad Kelly\*Tara Sterba

Co-Secretaries: Jenni Mettemeyer\*Mary Murphy

Treasurer: Cynthia Crossett-Powell

The next meeting is Wednesday, January 9, 2019, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Hills Elementary, 301 Main Street, Hills, IA 52235

- The topic is Legislative Update
- Approve Minutes November 2018 & December 2018
- Approve Treasurer's report