

APP Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2008

The meeting of the APP Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at Garfield High School by Chair Stephanie Bower, and introductions were made. In attendance were AC members Stephanie Bower, Val Morris-Lent, Jane Fellner, Karen Jensen, Marcy Shadow, Kathy Tanaka and Dr. Robert Vaughan, Advanced Learning Manager. Also in attendance were APP parents, and Garfield Principal Ted Howard arrived during the meeting.

Stephanie wanted to know what issues were of interest to parents attending the meeting. Transportation to Garfield, the path or direction of APP and strategic planning were named. Parent Charlie Mas reported that the District's Student Learning Committee will take up revisions to District Policy D46.01 (High School Grade Marking and Graduation Procedures) at their next meeting. If revised, middle school students will be able to get high school credit for certain courses taken in middle school, should they chose to.

Washington Middle School Report

Washington building representative, Marcy Shadow reported that they are working on the building's budget, which looks good for 2008-09. She added that the new weighted staffing formula frees up PTSA funds, and brings Washington certain benefits, more staff for example. They are currently working to prioritize where to apply these benefits. Marcy also reported that staff has been meeting to develop improvements in APP Math and Science. Lastly, Marcy stated that bussing to Washington is not guaranteed for West Seattle Spectrum students next year.

Garfield High School Report

Garfield Parent Representative Val Morris-Lent reported that the reading and writing portions of the WASL are next week, and the Math portion is in April. She said that Garfield's projected enrollment for 2008-09 is 397 ninth graders, 448 tenth graders, 392 eleventh graders and 402 twelfth graders (for a total of 1,639 students).

She also said with the new budget formula, the building can take over some things currently funded by the PTSA. Mr. Howard added he has made a proposal to the PTSA to fund professional development instead. He also reported that the building's budget looks positive, and may see an increase in the art teacher's time, pre-engineering, Math, Language Arts and possibly the addition of a new office assistant.

Garfield is considering a later start time (8:30 a.m.) for next year, and is polling families to determine whether such a change is supported. Mr. Howard stated that Garfield students will ride Metro next year, and Val added that the District's target for Metro bus travel is 1 hour or less, with no more than two transfers. Should the start time for Garfield stay the same (7:40 a.m.) next year, Val reported that Ammon McWashington, Director of Services for the District said that Garfield students would be allowed to ride Washington's yellow buses on a space available basis. If Garfield moves to a later start time, Mr. Howard said they would consider offering a "0" period if there was enough demand.

Enrollment Access to Garfield

There was some discussion about the move back to a remodeled building, renewed interest, wait lists and neighborhood access. Mr. Howard assured the group that students who live in the Garfield neighborhood can get in if they apply on time. He also stated that 50% of the 1,009 students from outside the Garfield neighborhood come from the Cleveland and Franklin neighborhoods. Dr. Vaughan stated that his should "bury the idea that APP kids prevent neighborhood kids from going to Garfield." Both Dr. Vaughan and Mr. Howard distributed maps and information from the District that support their statements.

APP Enrollment for 2008-09

Dr. Vaughan reported that enrollment projections are not yet available for 2008-09, but that 3,883 students applied for advanced learning programs and buildings will likely be full. He said the large numbers

indicate that the District was successful in adding more candidates for whom English is a second language and free and reduced lunch students to the testing pool, but because eligibility requirements remain unchanged, it is unlikely that more students of color will be identified. He went on to say that the solutions to under-representation are in rethinking student identification, and getting all educators to develop the student talent within their buildings. It is his goal to make advanced learning “something that everyone wants.” He also reported that one of his staff is working with 39 schools to identify and develop talented students in their neighborhood schools.

Advisory Committee Response to the Evaluation Report

Stephanie reported that the AC is working on a response to the Evaluation Report Accelerated Progress Report (the “Report”). She thanked APP parents and community members for their comments regarding the Report, and said their feedback was taken into consideration when drafting the AC’s response. She added that in writing the response, she was reminded that none of the strategies can be implemented effectively unless there is a culture and attitude change about APP in the District.

Update on the Cross-Representational Committee

Dr. Vaughan will present a flyer to the Student Learning Committee regarding the duties of the cross-representational committee (the “Committee”) recommended in the Report. The Committee will meet five times, on March 18 (now postponed to the following date), 25, April 8, May 6 and 20. The Committee will consist of Advanced Learning Staff, administrators, parents from APP, Spectrum and ALO, representatives of outside advocacy groups, business and the University of Washington and Seattle city government. Dr. Vaughan added that one of the biggest issues facing the District is fairness, in particular the wealth of gifted education opportunities for students in the north end, versus few in the south. He said the District also needs to address the issue of education quality throughout the city.

Members of the Committee will read The Conceptions of Giftedness by David Sternberg as a prelude to a conversation about program philosophy and the definition of giftedness. This book contains a chapter by the Dr. Carolyn Callahan, author of the Report, and gives her vision of the “ideal model” for gifted education. Dr. Vaughan also stated Ms. Callahan writes about an “APP-like” program in her section of the book.

In addition, subcommittees will meet to discuss such issues as program design, curriculum, student identification, program monitoring and evaluation and guidance. These subcommittees will make their recommendations to the Committee on May 6th. On May 26th, the Committee will meet to make its recommendations to the District’s senior leadership.

Biology at Washington?

Dr. Vaughan said that Roger Daniels, Advanced Learning Consulting Teacher is working with Washington, Lowell, and District staff to bring high school biology to middle school. If students can take this course in middle school (biology is typically taken during freshmen year of high school), students will be able to take AP Chemistry earlier (before their senior year).

Advanced Placement Courses (note: these courses are totally separate from APP, and are open to all high school students)

Dr. Vaughan also reported that Roosevelt High School is now requiring all 10th graders to take AP Human Geography. This will be an interesting development to watch as AP courses are difficult and challenging college level courses. He added that AP European History is the AP “training ground” at Garfield.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by Kathy Tanaka, Secretary