

**Thornton Creek Site Council Minutes**  
Thornton Creek Parent Group

September 15, 2009  
7:00-9:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

Julie Bisson, Rob Einaudi, Amy Feldman-Bawarshi, Stephanie Morris, Catherine Kamerling, Shannon Ratner, Deb Voss, Janet Kimball, Tamara Leonard, Sally Nordquist, Kimberly Balsam, Jenny Evans, Michelle Brown, Judy Ruha, Kathleen Elsenboss, Katie Zissermann, Teresa Swanson, Marsha Schoene-Langohr, Ken Hammer, Kevin Jones, Donna Howard, Nova Herzog, Joan Sias, Rolf Sonnerup, Chris Stewart, Julie Johnson, Sandra Brettler, John Miner, Cosette LeCiel, Ramona Hattendorf, Chris McNulty, Maria Gutierrez, Courtney Miller, Meredith Honig, Rae Keyes, Crystal Okada, Holly Demaranville, Fran Keown, Mark Yeend, Cristina McGlynn.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 7-9:00 p.m.

**Discussion Items**

**Becoming a PTSA or PTA – with presentation by guest speaker Ramona Hattendorf, President of the Seattle Council PTSA**

- The Seattle Council PTSA is a long standing child-advocacy group and the coalition of all of the PTA's in the city, consisting of 74 PTA's and 14,000 members. Each PTA is an independent entity and running autonomously, however, each one can choose to become more active in local and state education policies. The Seattle Council was able to push for more state funding for Seattle Public Schools and is interested in having Thornton Creek Parent Group join so that we can join in their parent lobbying efforts and benefit from their extensive and informative resources.
- The PTA also provides training and support to parents so that they can be effective political advocates. The PTA's across the district have begun to collaborate more as the need has increased.
- Dues are \$8.50 per year per member.
- Ramona recommends that Thornton Creek study the by-laws of each respective organization to ensure that there won't be any conflicts or any particular need to change our Parent Group By-laws and hopes that the council will consider being part of the organization.

**Salmon Bay Preference**

*R..Keyes/H. DeMaranville* Currently working on launching the school-wide petition. They are looking for a volunteer with technical skills who can help put this together so that signatures can be collected electronically.

**Calendar of committee meeting dates**

*J. Bisson:* Council asks the committee Chairs to share dates of upcoming meetings so that we can publish a calendar.

**Adding a Safety Committee**

*J. Bisson* asks should a Safety Committee be added? This committee would be to address the following types of issues: H1N1 preparedness, earthquake safety, severe allergies, playground access and lighting. Michelle Brown interested in being on committee but will need a Chairperson. The council and attendees agreed that this would be a welcome addition as it has been helpful to have this type of committee in the past.

**New Playground: (Rose's Playground)**

Katie Z. scheduled kick-off meeting for Tuesday, 9/22 at 7pm in Room 3. Project will begin playground design, begin grant writing process.

**Open Site Council Committee Positions**

Auction still needs a chair and co-chair

Fundraising still needs a co-chair

Safety Committee needs a chair

Attendees brainstormed a few possibilities for Auction Chairs or Co-Chairs. Dean LaRue, Anji Jarvis, and Naara Righi. None of the potential candidates were in attendance to the meeting.

**Action Items****After School and Before School programs:**

Office Staff would like for all instructors, parental assistants, and program leaders to ensure that measures are in effect for parents who are late for pickup without burdening the office, and that parent's also do not drop children off too early in the mornings.

There was some discussion about the popularity of these programs as they fill up quickly and the wait lists are extensive. Due to space shortage there isn't room at the school to hold additional classes. Also concerning that parents of families across two households and those with full time working parents, may be having a harder time getting info in time to sign up for the classes that are filling up. Many families do not have the option of signing up for activities in the Office during the workday so electronic forms would give more children a fair chance at 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> serve. Meeting attendees recommend using the lottery method instead of always first come first serve. Chess for Life takes care of registration themselves so this wouldn't be an option for that program.

*Note:* The reason that the Site Council must approve of each class is so that all onsite extra curricular activities are covered under the Parent Council's Liability Insurance.

**Before School Spanish Class** –(Xan Gerst ) *Note:* Enough kids signed up for 4 classes. Only room for two classes on site thus far. Council is approving all 4 classes if there becomes space available.

**Consensus:** *All consent.*

**After School Guitar Class** – *J. Bisson* for Jaxie Binder

**Consensus:** *All Consent.*

**After School Double Dutch Class** –*Cosette LeCiel*, will be taught by Andrea Gardner.

**Consensus:** *All Consent.*

**Academic Assistants for First Grade**

Todd Bohannon and Mari have significantly higher numbers than last year. 27+ in each class. Request to double the instructional assistant hours, currently at 5 hours per week. This expense is estimated at an additional 2,000+ dollars for each class. There was much discussion about this topic because 1<sup>st</sup> grade isn't the only grade that is overenrolled and beyond the capacity of the current IA's. Thus it was decided that site council will consent to the funding of 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers' request but the site staff can discuss the final word on appropriating or disproving the appropriation of these funds in their next staff meeting.

Site council meeting agreed to administer the \$4,753 for instructional assistants.

**Consensus:** *All consent.*

### **Student Banking**

*J. Kimball* discussed Student Banking Program on her husband's behalf. Last year's was handled by WAMU, and had enrolled over 60 students. CHASE will no longer have a student banking program. Would cost site council \$450. Coordinators will be onsite designated mornings each week to help the kids count their money so that they can learn to manage their money and build their savings.

*This proposal is deferred so that more information can be gathered and a new proposal submitted.*

**New Drama program on Early Release Days:** Julie for Mim/Meredith: 4 early dismissal days.

**Consensus:** *All Consent.*

### **Cleaning Stage Curtains**

*Nova H.* Nova requested bids from several companies and submitted the most attractive ones. Alpine will clean on site (just surface dust removal) and reapply flame-proofing for \$2,000.

Coit takes them down and deep cleans in machines \$5279.65. Replacing completely would be \$31,558.

*J. Miner* wasn't certain but building funds might be able to help cover the expense. Some parents have expressed concerns about fireproofing chemicals. This issue is tabled and will be added as a Newsletter item to see if anyone has any contacts or knows of any other businesses willing to provide Thornton Creek a discount or more affordable options. *This proposal is deferred pending the parental inquiry.*

### **Donation to Jane Addams PTA**

*J. Bisson:* Jane Addams is a new K-8, some of our Thornton Creek teachers generously donated much needed supplies from their own classrooms. Proposal is to have the site council give their new PTA a \$500 start to help them with classroom supplies as they haven't had any fundraisers yet and the supplies are so desperately needed. There was some hesitation and much discussion.

**Consensus: Council consented.**

**Disagree with all or part of the proposal but still consent: 9**

*T. Leonard* disagrees with decision based on sending money to another schools when there are more pressing causes out there in these times. Also, is worried about giving money to another school as donors are giving money to our school to fund our kids' education.

**Special handwritten notes** were handed to the Secretary for recording in the minutes as follows:

*-J. Evans* "It would be great to do a separate fund raiser for them. We might raise more than \$500. Also, let's give them a day of our time."

*-C. Miller* "Being new to Site Council, I'm unsure of the funds available for site council to allocate, so before giving money to another school, I'd like to know how this will affect funding for TC programs and needed academic assistance. I also agree with Tamara that the communication to parents has been that funds in site council fund are for Thornton Creek."

*-R. Sonnerup* "While generally in favor of supporting Jane Addams K-8, I believe we should raise money from families directly for this purpose. An item in the newsletter outlining the history and plight of the Jane Addams K-8 situation and soliciting individual donations (>\$25) may raise more than \$500."

*-M. Schoene-Langohr* "I agree with Tamara. I think that donations from parents are with the understanding of what the donations are for. Maybe if we let parents know what this is for they would be willing to donate more."

*-S. Morris* "Disagree because I want staff to have a chance to ask us for money before we give to non-urgent priorities. Also agree with Tamara that parents intended to give to Thornton Creek, not general community. But I'm new, so I don't feel comfortable holding up the group if they feel strongly, so I consent."

### **Ombudsman's Report:**

*T. Leonard:* 1) A parent expressed concerns that we don't have the after school math club funded. (J. Bisson addressed this issue and announced that a parent has just come forward with interest and commitment to running the Math Club.)

2) Complaint that the bathrooms are dirty...council suggests talk to the kids about proper bathroom etiquette, flush toilets, wash hands, etc. and J. Miner will work with staff to remedy cleanliness.

3) Filling School Counselor Position: Someone to run friendship groups, parent wants to know the status of these plans?

4) Question about 15 minute lunch. Kids are feeling rushed. (*N. Herzog:* Explained that because the school is overenrolled there are no longer extra tables for the slower eaters to take the time that they need to finish lunch.)

### **Principal's Report**

#### **Enrollment, Student Assignment Plan, Alternative Schools Audit, Math Waiver, Staff Update**

School now has 332 students, 25 more than is typical. The district can over-enroll our school based on the thought that some students won't show up. However Thornton Creek does not lose students. John would like Thornton Creek to have ownership of the waitlist to help ensure that the school isn't so extensively overenrolled. John encourages all parents to involve themselves in discussions with the board and decision makers about this so that Thornton Creek does not continue to run into this problem as the district is developing growing capacity issues across North Seattle elementary schools.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m., preliminary and very basic info about boundary maps will be presented at the Board Work Session. Next there will be community meetings held by various school board members, so that feedback can be gathered and discussed. John emphasized how important it is for as many Thornton Creek parents as possible attend these meetings and express any concerns they might have. John is not allowed to contact the board members and discuss these issues himself. On Nov 18<sup>th</sup> the school board will make the **final vote** on the boundary maps.

John summarized the 20 page document on the student assignment plan as it is currently written and handed a copy to attendees. There are pressing concerns that we still don't know what Thornton Creek's geographic zone will be. Attendance area schools won't have "sibling preference" anymore and this will cause some hardship and complications for many families affected. Option schools will only get bussing within their respective Service Area (middle school area). Tracy Leboss recently stated that for each school there will be a link will be to a comprehensive middle school. Salmon Bay preference is unlikely in the long term plans due to the district's commitment to cut back on bussing, but it could be pursued as part of the transition plan which could be in place over a few years.

Salmon Bay issue is pressing but the attendance area issue is an enormous concern to John and hopes for as much of our school's parental support as possible.

John was fully prepared to provide a much more extensive report, however, the meeting was adjourned on time. John will provide his additional information to the community electronically on the website and in upcoming newsletters.

**Staff Report** (Deferred until next meeting)

**Committee Reports** (Deferred until next meeting)

Finance	Donna Howard
Communications	Joel Domingo/Kellie LaRue
Hospitality	Holly DeMaranville/Deb Voss
Diversity	Cosette LeCiel/Julie Bisson
Grants	Rob Einaudi/Amy Feldman-Bawarshi
District Relations	Michelle Brown/Chris Stewart
Facilities	Janet Kimball
Evaluation	Maria Gutierrez/Joan Sias
Recruitment/Hiring	Rae Keyes
Fundraising	
Safety	