

Blue Oak Charter School Parent Council meeting minutes 9/24/2013

6:04pm: Opening verse. (Laurie Kopping)

- Roll call of everyone present. Laurie informed the group that new officers needed to be voted in and listed the nominations: Damon Fadale (chair), Autumn Field (co-chair), Jessica Wright (secretary). Nomination given by Caryl Brown, 2nd: April Robinson. Vote was unanimously in favor for each officer as nominated.
- Other representatives present were introduced: Melonie Ensign, Finance Rep.; Kate MacLeod, Faculty Rep.; Holly Cochran, Kindergarten Rep.; April Robinson, 2nd grade Rep.; Caryl Brown, 4th grade Rep., Wendi Hart, 7th grade Rep.

Comment [CW1]: Is this the Faculty Rep's name? I did not receive her contact info (I looked her up on the website)

Comment [CW2]: Not all present passed in contact sheets. Missing 3rd, 5th, 6th & 8th grade, and I believe two of those were present but I'm unfamiliar with names. Additionally, what is Laurie's role within the council?

New Business (Damon Fadale and Laurie Kopping)

- Thank you to all for volunteering.
- Mentioned Parent Council Bylaws are in packet handout supplied.
- Discussed and defined Parent Guild and Parent Council. This year the Parent Council will not be handling funding, freeing us up to establish a new mission and focus on new goals.
- Discussed community farmer's market concept. We may want to look at establishing committees down the road to meet this goal.
- There has been some turnover in the school community; new faces coming in and that's good. *A review is needed of reps/officers/committees this year.* The Brown Act does not govern us this year. If we want to change back into a governing body we can look into that at a later date.
- (Laurie K.): Clarified what would / would not qualify as a "governing board" re: Brown Act.
- (Damon F.): Recommends everyone take the time to review the Parent Council Bylaws. Discussed overall job description of Room Parent (liaison between council and parent council, report after meetings to teachers, etc.)
- Discussed continued clarification of council functions (2.1-2.6 in bylaws).
- (Laurie K.): reviewed process flow of fundraising > events (includes Summer O'Neill, etc.)
- Question raised: What are rules about amending bylaws? (reviewed 8.1 in bylaws) We are governed by bylaws until/unless we change them.
- Question raised: Why are there grade meetings? Answer: For community-building of school.
- Discussed that the Parent Council supports the festivals.
- Discussed that one of the two parents voted in Friday on the charter council should attend these parent council meetings as a representative. *(Laurie K. recommended to Damon that he email Nathan and request their presence).*
- Discussed 3.7 in bylaws: Failure to attending three regular council meetings without an exception granted for extenuating circumstances, rep will be removed.
- Discussed section 5.2 in bylaws: Agenda will be in word format, just add your item as applicable after Damon sends it out.

Comment [CW3]: Is this correct? I didn't hear clarification of who was voted in on what council, but it was mentioned that Nathan be contacted to have them attend the parent council meetings

- *Discussed contact list, will be created and sent out by secretary.*
 - Discussed the magic pen for secretary. Jessica doesn't need it; she has a magic ipad :-)
 - Discussed bylaw 6.3: Robert's Rule of Order do not apply in actuality. *We will discuss later what will replace it for structure.*
 - Discussed bylaw 6.5: Quorum requirement does not apply either but for continuity we will allow that whomever shows up at a parent council meeting can be the deciding voters (i.e. if someone or several are out sick and no replacement or rep is available to take their place).
 - Discussed what committees there are at Blue Oak (are listed on the website, and/or were listed on the handouts at the first all school meeting).
 - Discussed clarification of bylaw 7.3.
 - Discussed bylaw 7.4: Listed clubs (chess, 2 handwork clubs qualify). There is apparently a student council being formed, *we should look into that to see if we need to support and include them with representation at the council.*
 - Discussed overall changes of the bylaws as they stand: Recommendation by Laurie K. to really consider before amending the bylaws, because it is a large undertaking. Anyone can submit a suggested amendment change to the bylaws, when we are ready to do so, however we are able to function with outdated bylaws. Agreed to get our vision/mission statement and then tackle the revision of bylaws. Tabled revision for now.
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- Reviewed Blue Oak School Parent Guild Organization form.
 - Discussed definition of Parent Council Reps vs. Room Parent Reps. Council members should read through on their own.
 - Group discussion on room parent role: how it is handled and what prevents volunteers from stepping up (i.e. role is large, demanding position toward the volunteer, etc.) Signupgenius.com helps with classroom sign-ups.
 - It was suggested that more than one way of contact should be used (i.e. some families do not use email, so some balance of communication would be helpful in relating needs, etc.) Discussed.
 - Consensus was that we all understand the difference between the Parent Council Rep and Room Parent role.
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- Discussed some redundancy between bylaws and Blue Oak School Parent Guild Organization definitions (i.e. "Hosts a Grades Meeting at the beginning of each school year" on Guild Org. sheet and on the bylaws it stipulates hosting "two grade class meetings each year"). *Review and change as needed in future meeting. All should read through.*
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- Discussed whether Parent Council have access to contact info for new families. (Laurie K.: we have an enrollment coordinator that could alert the appropriate grade/room rep when a new family comes to the school. A card or note, a call, etc. could then be handled by the Rep.) *A protocol for this should be established/coordinated w/the enrollment coordinator / council.*
 - (Damon F.): Discussed a good point from this discussion being the

importance of communication between the Parent Council Rep and Room Parent.

- (Laurie K.): Clarified Summer O'Neill's role as volunteer coordinator, as it's new this year. Her role introduces new families to the community of the school.
- Discussed Code of Conduct for Parent Council.
- Discussed Four Agreements.
- Discussed how meetings will be run, see handout.
- (Damon F.): *Recommended the "Waldorf Education, A Family Guide" by Pamela J. Fenner (available on Amazon.com for \$23.70) as an easy read and an excellent, informative source so we all really understand the waldorf pedagogy.*
- (Autumn F.): If we find something going on in the classroom that may not go along w/the waldorf pedagogy, what should be done? (Damon F.): Go to the teacher to discuss.
- Reviewed future agenda structure, which will follow this meeting's format.
- (Melonie E.): *Requested that on future agendas, Finance Rep. would be the first committee to speak. Group consensus agreed and Damon will handle.*
- Discussed what and how meeting information/minutes will be distributed.
- Grade reps do not to report anything after meetings.
- *Chair will write a blurb that is appropriate for the Leaves based on meeting minutes from the Secretary.*
- Parent council meeting minutes are on the website for any that would like to read them.
- Discussed Audio One Call: Yes, we are still using it as needed. Laurie K. will send one out 9/25. Phone numbers can be updated on the website.

Open discussion:

- (Autumn F.): For parents that do not use email, is there a hard copy of the Leaves? Yes, they are at the front desk and in the pockets in the front office.
- (Caryl B.): After school, a lot of kids walk outside class and are on their electronics immediately, still on school grounds. Recommended wifi password should be changed, all agreed. *Laurie K. will change password.*
- Discussion surrounding uniforms that were discussed last year and some of the reasons behind it.
- Discussion about how we could encourage the Blue Oak community as a whole to follow the waldorf pedagogy and follow through in the class, with media-free clothing, on the playground, etc.
- (Kate M.) brought up that there are legal issues surrounding things like asking shirts to be turned inside out, etc. *Action item: Damon F. to email Nathan for clarification and report back to parent council.*
- *Agenda item for all council: work on the awareness of media, etc. and what*

may be done about it.

Finance report (Melonie E.): Defined and discussed her role as Parent Financial Representative.

- Discussed STAR test phasing out to common core testing. As a result, the state is requiring students from 3rd grade and up use computers to take the tests. At this school, this is against our pedagogy, but it is a state requirement and not optional. This will have a financial impact.
- Teachers want to set up guidelines for the testing and where the school stands in offering it. *Melonie will put together the guidelines and present for the next meeting, with more information on what the financial impact and testing will look like.*
- *Read and discussed the guidelines that she will provide at the next meeting.*
- Discussed that Blue Oak not currently have enough computers for the testing. There is funding set aside for technology by qualifying as socio-economically depressed community. The restrictions are not completely clear, but it is thought that the school will qualify and receive the funds. In the meantime, school savings will need to be used.
- Discussed that computers/tablets cannot be borrowed/rented because the children need to have time to practice/learn taking the test, not solely for the testing window.
- Discussed overall goal: 60 computers (touch tablets with keyboards and a charging/rolling station called "the cow). 2 classrooms will use them at the same time. Additional 1-2 main computer(s) for teacher use.
- Cost estimate: \$300/unit + the cow set up. Approx. \$30,000 total. Charter council will be responsible for approving the purchase by 2nd tuesday of October. Discussed whether donations/local business funding should be sought. Finance committee's stance is that it should not be. Discussed.
- Discussed other costs involved: IT/maintenance technician (\$50/hr): TechConnection as needed basis. Proctor for testing to be hired, approx. 10-15 hrs/week to oversee process in the classroom(s), \$10/hr.
- *Parent council is asked to disseminate the vision of how the equipment will be used, to come up with questions other parents may ask, and to open the dialogue with parents in our community. Get parent feedback, gather specific opinions and questions and bring back to the council. (Laurie K.): Mention in the Leaves.*
- Discussed at length the impact of having computers brought into the classrooms, the impact on the children, the school's community and how it will be/is being handled by the teachers. Typing skills will need to be integrated into the class instruction earlier than currently (6th grade). Discussed what accommodations might be made for enabling the use of the keyboards, etc. (i.e. voice command tablets).
- (Melonie E.): Shared her opinion on a 3rd grader being apprehensive about even taking a test, and the needs of the teacher in the classroom having to address these issues. This concerns her.
- (Laurie K.): The vote on the specific computer purchase will be made by the

Charter Council on the 2nd tuesday of October. *If the Parent Council has concerns and wants to request the delay of the vote for further research (i.e. voice command as a feature of the particular tablet) that is an option.*

- (Kate M.): Discussed the research done by faculty over the summer relating to the waldorf method and where it meets w/the state requirements and how it can be handled. It is a work in progress but the faculty are keeping the childrens' needs top of mind.
- (Damon F.): Discussed taking the common core/pedagogy and how you wash that with the requirements of things like the computer mandate. Gave a big thank you to the faculty for constantly handling that wash for the students and parents to keep up the waldorf pedagogy within the structure we are given by the state and federal agencies.
- (Laurie K.): We have requested to be pilot and take the common core, but have not received response yet.
- Discussed last year's STAR results, they had gone down 48 points. There were many anomalies that factored in.
- (Damon F.): *Discussed hand out of waldorf philosophy for each grade rep to read* and encouraged them to remember why we are here, and how it applies to their grade.
- *Damon will find committees and ask them to attend the meetings.* (Laurie K.): recommended Damon work w/Summer to define how those committees should/would work with the Parent Council.

Closing verse

Adjourned: 8:33pm

Important Dates

October 8th: Charter Council votes on computer selection.

Comment [CW4]: Here I'd typically pull down any important dates/deadlines for easy reference. Let me know if this should be removed

Action Items:

- (All Council): A review is needed of reps/officers/committees this year.
- (Damon F.): New parent members of the charter council voted in Friday should be invited to attend the parent council meetings. Email Nathan.

Comment [CW5]: I generally carry over "Action items" on a separate page to provide easy reference for any assigned/agreed upon action items. This is purely as a help to those that we are expecting something from at upcoming meetings, since everyone is so busy. Let me know if this should be continued or removed. These are all items in italics in the body of the minutes.

Comment [CW6]: Same ? as above, is "charter council" correct? If not, what should it be?

- Robert's Rule of Order does not apply in actuality. We will discuss later what will replace it for structure. (Carry over to next agenda)
- There is apparently a student council being formed, we should look into that to see if we need to support and include them with representation at the council.
- Review and change discrepancies between bylaws and Guild Org. sheet as needed in future meeting. (All council members should read through)
- A protocol for [orienting new incoming families] should be established/coordinated w/the enrollment coordinator / council.
- (All council): Recommended reading: the "Waldorf Education, A Family Guide" by Pamela J. Fenner [available on Amazon.com for \$23.70] as an easy read and an excellent, informative source so we all really understand the waldorf pedagogy.
- (Damon F.): Place Finance Rep. as first to speak from committees on future agendas.
- (Damon F.): Email Nathan for clarification regarding federal/state regulations/laws on restriction of media in dress code, etc. and report back to parent council.
- (All council): Work on the awareness of media, etc. and what may be done about it within our community.
- (Melonie E.): Put together the computer use guidelines and present for the next meeting, with more information on what the financial impact and testing will look like.
- (All council): Disseminate the vision of how the equipment will be used, to come up with questions other parents may ask, and to open the dialogue with parents in our community. Get parent feedback, gather specific opinions and questions and bring back to the council.
 - (Laurie K.): Mention in the Leaves.
- (All/any council): If the Parent Council has concerns on computer purchase and wants to request the delay of the vote for further research (i.e. voice command as a feature of the particular tablet) that is an option. Vote is 2nd Tuesday in October.
- (Grade Reps.): Read/review your grade philosophy from handout provided.
- (Damon F.): Find committees and ask them to attend the council meetings.