

PARENT ENGAGEMENT FORUM

September 14, 2007

In Attendance

Alison Turner, Rhonda Glyman, Donna Anspach, Paula Williams, Joy Kendall, Mary Jo Malloy, DeAnn Bauman, Skip Rapoport, Verda Hines, Erin Cranor, Beverly Waters, Cathy Rosenfeld, Jo Boyd, and Rev. Robert Fowler. Staff in attendance included Joyce Haldeman, Lauren Kohut-Rost, Eva Melendrez, Holli Kalaleh, and Mike Englert.

The meeting began with Dr. Walt Rulffes thanking the group for their participation and commitment. He emphasized the importance of community-wide involvement in promoting education.

Group Purpose

Joyce Haldeman initiated a discussion regarding the purpose and focus of the group by soliciting comments. Parents provided feedback with comments ranging from how communication should flow from this group to other parent groups, utilizing this group as a sounding board to the Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, to organizational structure. It was noted however, that the forum should be more than an opportunity to merely vent. A parent added that often the public perception is that the administration is unconcerned or unresponsive to the views of parents, but this group is an example of why that perception is incorrect. Another parent illustrated how discussions from this forum are translated into action. Joyce Haldeman summarized the comments by stating that this is a worthwhile forum. The process of disseminating information emerging from the group will be improved.

Forum Format Improvements

It is recommended to expand the length of meetings from one to two hours. The final hour should primarily be reserved for parent comments and discussion. When the group was originally formed, the bylaws indicated that appointments to the forum would be for a period of two years with half the group rotating out annually. To meet this requirement, all members currently participating are invited to stay through this year. Membership will be perpetuated by the appointment of twelve new individuals. Dr. Kohut-Rost will designate a participant from each geographic region and the Superintendent's Schools. Additionally, each region superintendent and the Superintendent's Schools will designate a member of their choosing. A diverse, heterogeneous group is the goal. Following the conclusion of this year, the current existing members will retire and a new group of twelve will be appointed utilizing the method previously discussed. This will create a finite membership of 24 individuals. In this way, the group can remain both dynamic and diverse. In the event a member cannot attend a meeting, that member will self select a substitute in their absence. Rather than having a rotating chair person, an annual chair and vice chair will be selected by the parent participants. Dr. Kohut-Rost will discuss the Parent Engagement Forum with the Region Superintendents' Council to inform them that

this parent group is a source for disseminating information to the region and trustee PACs. Minutes will be prepared, distributed, and posted on the CCSD website to aid in the delivery of information to all interested parties. A request was made to include a representative from Nevadans for Quality Education and the Nevada PTA as components of the forum to ensure the desired group diversity. With respect to information dissemination, a parent observed that some school web sites are extremely limited in content and function. Staff noted that the district does not maintain individual school sites and that this problem may be impacted by fiscal and personnel issues at the individual school sites. Discussion regarding the selection of a parent communication tool that will hopefully roll out as of the 2008-2009 school year was had. A redesign of the CCSD web site is currently in progress. It is intended to be more user friendly and include a search function as a key component. The roll out of this new system will be shared with the Parent Engagement Forum.

Keep Your Eye on the Cap

Dr. Kohut-Rost provided a brief presentation on the superintendent's initiative. A handout was provided detailing the key components of the initiative. The acronym CAP stands for Climate, Academics, and Participation. Climate represents how all stakeholders are treated including students, parents, community, and staff. Academics represents the commitment to setting a strong foundation at the elementary level, providing a well developed academic bridge at the middle school level, and a rigorous academic focus at the high school level so that all students will be successful as they enter the world of post-secondary education or work. Participation represents the focus on parents, elected officials, community, teachers, administrators, support staff, and students all being involved in the education process. This presentation led to a brief discussion of the proposed GATE Magnet School that was noted in Dr. Rulffes' presentation. It was noted that this is still in the research and development stage and as such the scope and details of the program are still being formulated.

Announcements

A handout was provided about the APPLE Partnership's upcoming Celebration of Reading with Author Marc Brown on September 29th at 1:00 p.m. at the Henderson Pavilion. It was announced that the new Nevada PTA President Elect is Alison Turner, Joy Kendall is the new Vice President of Legislation, and Verda Hines is the new Director of Region 4. The organization's goals are to advocate for children and improve communication and parent involvement. A monthly newsletter will be sent from Region 4 (Clark, Nye, Lincoln Counties) to share information.

Erin Cranor was selected by the forum as the Chairperson while Skip Rapoport was chosen as Vice Chair.

Next Meeting: October 19th from 9:30-11:30 a.m.