

Cowlshaw General Meeting February 8, 2017 Minutes

A. **Welcome/Call to Order**- Kristin Wolfgram and Willa Brinke – 6:33pm

B. Executive Committee Reports:

- a. **Secretary**- Maria Murphy
 - i. IPPC- update **maria update here**
- b. **Treasurer**- Julie Sterzinger
 - i. Fall fundraiser was \$1k short, but there have been private donations with company matches that have made up that shortfall. We are even to budget as of now
 - ii. Will wait and see how many field trip requests come in and how the Luau comes in – that is our last big fundraiser of the year
- c. **VP Membership and Special Events**- Elizabeth Sieben, Jodie Moreno, Tanjie Brewer
 - i. Dinner Night Out
 - 1. Just had one with It's A Bling Thing and Frost Gelato – not as successful as we had hoped
 - 2. Next ones are Pie Five 3/21, SkyZone during Spring Break, Portillo's 4/18, 5 Below in April, Buffalo Wild Wings and Chuck E Cheese in May
 - ii. Run Walk Club
 - 1. 2x year – Fall and Spring – we are looking for volunteers to help during recess on Fridays 11-1:30
 - 2. Looking for more dads to help as well

C. Event Chair Reports:

- a. **Watch DOGS**- Joshua Hunt
 - i. Next Wednesday is kickoff at 6pm – 7:30pm – Pizza with kids and YK Martial Arts for kids while dads get more program info
 - ii. Dads can sign up for days to volunteer at that time
 - iii. 5th grade dads will get a first chance sign up
 - iv. Dominos will be donating pizza for the event
 - v. 2/21 is the first day to volunteer
 - vi. Still looking for dads to volunteer as Top DOG
- b. **Luau**- Jill Mieszala
 - i. March 10th 6:30-8:30 – DJ, Photo booth, Dessert Bar
 - ii. RSVP's due March 1 – no tickets sold at the door
 - iii. Goal is to raise \$7k for the school and kids – there will be raffle baskets as well
 - iv. Looking for raffle basket donations (service or items) – each grade level will have a themed basket and students/families can donate a small item to put baskets together to raffle off – letters coming home next week
 - v. Need volunteers for setup/tear down/food

- c. **Career Day/Week** – Tracy Leung
 - i. Looking for a date in April to finalize
- d. **Welcome Committee** – Tracy Leung
 - i. Families seem to be doing well. Most families have not reached back out to us for more assistance
- e. **Muffins with Moms-** Jaime Daggatt
 - i. Hoping to have a something with Mom's this year (May 12/19?)
 - ii. Looking for donations currently
- f. **Box Tops**
 - i. Will start up again next week – got \$400 in fall, hoping for more in Spring
- g. **Culture Fair**
 - i. Thank you for all the support and volunteers
 - ii. We will be doing a feedback request that will be sent out soon to let us know how to improve the event
- h. **Reflections-** Kristin Wolfgram
 - i. Had 26 participants this year, 21 went to District, 4 went to Region, 1 went to State
 - ii. Looking for more participants next year

D. Other Business:

- a. **Nominating Committee Election**
 - i. Jill Mieszala moved to elect Josh Hunt Jill Mieszala and Jodie Moreno to the Nominating Committee, Jodie Moreno second, motion carries
- b. **Bylaw Committee**
 - i. Kam and Dennis Mieszala
- c. **Open Chair positions for next year**
 - i. Reflections (the national art and music competition)
 - ii. Reading Incentives (Ozzie, six flags, and Chicago steel reading logs and free tickets program)
 - iii. Halloween Party
 - iv. Luau
 - v. Book fair (2x / year)
 - vi. Movie Night (2 movies a year)
 - vii. Run/Walk Club - Approx. 8 Fridays in fall and 8 in spring- during recess)
 - viii. Staff Appreciation (one week in spring)
 - ix. Teacher's Luncheons (3 lunches a year)

E. Principal's Report- Ken Bonomo

- a. Pilot for new homework policy – there will still be work coming home, but no expectation to complete. Kids will still be reading 20 mins every night
- b. Looking for ways to increase student achievement – looking at a significant achievement gaps (gap between white, Asian, and African American students)
- c. It's a district and national level issue and we are looking for ways to combat

- d. Homework purpose – is independent practice – then looking at how much support kids are receiving for work at home
- e. Then began looking at feedback given to students, a 7/10 isn't feedback, it's how many you got right/wrong. The focus should be look at what was done wrong and help you get it right
- f. There will now be guided practice in the classroom, teachers can see who is struggling with what, and help in real time. Same goes for students who need more challenging assignments
- g. Teachers and kids both dislike homework. It takes away from kids being kids, esp those who have afterschool activities or don't have supports available at home
- h. 3 teachers have already piloted in small doses, and the amount of instruction time gotten back from not looking over homework has been substantial
- i. Taking home homework to correct doesn't work, because of the compounding by the time the work gets back to the students you are days behind
- j. Looking for ways to challenge and support kids at the same time
- k. Kam – is this for all kids?
 - i. Yes K-5
- l. Tanjie – so when is this time and how is it being used?
 - i. Depends on each day, and the lesson plans
 - ii. There is no research that shows that homework is beneficial or makes kids more successful later in life
 - iii. Punishing kids for not getting homework done, but it's still not helping them learn. We can't keep giving kids consequences when they don't have the same level of support.
 - iv. There are many variables that need to be taken into account due to different levels of support outside of school
- m. Question – how long is this pilot? What's the goal to prove we've been successful? How will you get kids to go back to homework if it doesn't work?
 - i. Goal is to see kids achieve at higher levels – PARCC is still to come
 - ii. Pilot runs until the end of the school year – AIM Web Plus, and PARCC will be our barometer
 - iii. Teachers notes and student assessment performance will dictate – the goal is to level the playing field for all kids
 - iv. Every kid opportunity to be challenged and supported
 - v. Statistically 2-3% a year is success, we want more than that
 - vi. We are changing our teaching and what we do in the classroom
 - vii. There are other districts that have been doing this
- n. Question – concerned about the long term effects of pilot on work ethic of kids? Stress is something kids have to learn how to deal with
 - i. When we look at research there is no correlation in the work that kids do later in life
 - ii. Homework is for practice, it's not comprehension
- o. Willa – is anyone going to look at the assignments?
 - i. There is no point in sending it back because by the time the teachers get to it they've already moved on
- p. Maria – how will this effect kids who are moving on to middle school? Isn't learning how to study and do homework a necessary skill?
 - i. Been in contact with the principal at Hill and Metea
 - ii. Hill is looking at going away from graded homework

- iii. Kids should be able to show mastered content, not how well you do homework/compliance
 - iv. If kids are getting A's without doing homework, the homework has no value
- q. **Liz** – there is the opposite as well, that if you're not a good test taker, but you've put in the work and the time to learn the content that should show your mastery
 - i. Many times the homework is done by the parents, not reflective of the kids work and comprehension
- r. Josh – will there be more consistent feedback for the kids from teachers?
 - i. The time and reinforcement is what will show teachers what the kids know
 - ii. They are already doing it now in reading
- s. **Question** - how do you prepare kids for a time bound activity? Similar to homework? Not all kids can do things right the first time. Better to know now, before the tests
 - i. Being able to give immediate feedback in the classroom is more substantial support for kids
- t. **Question** – how much practice time is being allocated now? Is it necessary now to have supplemental class outside school? Is this the same for PA?
 - i. There is no additional time needed outside of school. The goal is not to have to do outside resources
 - ii. PA is doing the same program as well
 - iii. Practice time will depend on the day
 - iv. The rule is no new learning at home, but that wasn't always happening
- u. The way kids are learning is changing. It's conceptual. It's no longer rote memorization.
- v. **Jodie** -how are the additional tutoring opportunities correlated with no homework?
 - i. It's for the kids we know that need that after school assistance on top of what is given in class
- w. **Question** – who are we looking to for best practices?
 - i. There are other districts we are looking at that have been doing this, originally had a lot of pushback from parents, but have seen noticeable success
 - ii. Kids seem more alert and less tired in classes. They seem more available to learn
- x. **Dennis** – how are the teachers reacting? Any resistance?
 - i. The teachers were surprised at first, and there were some that had anxiety about it
 - ii. Teachers were more concerned about complicity, and that's not the purpose of homework
- y. **Dennis** – there is still the opportunity for kids to do the work, and it's a benefit for the kids to see a different way to do thing and to learn
- z. **Question** – will every teacher in every grade provide the supplemental work? Because homework allows me to see if my kids are actually understanding and needing extra support.
 - i. Most teachers will send Eureka home every day and kids are on honor system. It's just practice
 - ii. Each teacher is following the same curriculum, but how they teach it may vary

- aa. Question** – will you be having this discussion again for a larger audience? This seems like a sensitive topic.
- i. Once we are in to it deeper, we will survey kids, parents, and staff
- bb. Question** – can you explain the timing of now instead of the beginning of the year? And why didn't you pilot a portion of kids?
- i. We didn't want to split up a grade level of kids
 - ii. We want to do it for next year, so it gives us time to look at data and work out unexpected things over the summer
 - iii. We can't go back to how we used to do things
- cc. Michelle** – I think homework does bring comfort to parents to know what is going on in the classroom. I think some of the devoted time the classrooms are getting back should be devoted to giving parents the feedback so they know how the kids are doing, aside from just conferences and tests.
- i. Teachers look at homework as a communication tool. So we know that we need to do better, because that's not the purpose of homework
- dd. Josh** - what I like about it is we can focus just on the areas where additional help is needed, not just doing work just to do work. We went through this in an old school, and it really was such a huge success. Teachers really liked additional instructional time. We got more communication because things were recognized sooner.
- ee. Liz** – is the expectation to teachers that there will be improved communication?
- i. Yes, I will provide that feedback to teachers
- ff. Question** – how does no homework give more time in class if they are doing it in class?
- i. The checking of and checking in of homework is more time consuming that you'd imagine. That's where the time is coming from
 - ii. When they do it in class they can see who is struggling in real time
 - iii. The time spent on each subject is the same, but now they are getting those administrative minutes back to devote to kids who need help or challenges
- gg. Sabrina** – homework should be done in 10-15 mins. So if they are doing the optional practice sheet and struggling, we would send it back with a note. We were encouraged to send it back and communicate with teachers
- hh. Julie** - we've seen firsthand that my child can bring back the work she needs help with and there is time for the teacher to help her with the ones she needed the help with
- ii. The goal is to keep challenging kids
- jj.** There is a cultural difference in how families approach education and that effects how we learn and teach and that will help us close the achievement gap
- kk. Sridevi** – at what point will teachers know that kids are struggling at home?
- i. That's when parents should send it back with a note that their child didn't understand
 - ii. That communication piece should be there
 - iii. There should be no surprises with parents – there should be a partnership with school and home
- ll. Question** – will teachers continue to encourage kids to do the work at home?
- i. I don't think it will be encouraged every night, but there will be other times where additional practice will be encouraged to reinforce
- mm. Question** – how is this going to look with the achievement gap?
- i. We have to find practices that benefit all kids, but have additional impact on kids who aren't performing

- ii. Kids need to have a relationship with their teachers – kids who are low income will gain even more from that relationship
 - iii. The first few days of school there were no academics so that kids could get that relationship
 - iv. Kids will continue to be challenged, and the goal is to keep challenging
- nn.

F. Upcoming Dates:

- a. **Skate night**-This Saturday Feb 11, 5-7pm
- b. **Watch DOGS Kick-off**- Feb 15, 6-7:30pm
- c. **Luau** March 10, 6:30pm
- d. **Class Parties**- March 24
- e. **Next General Meeting**- April 5th, 6:30
- f. **Science Fair**- May 5, 6 pm

G. Adjournment – 8:15pm