West Point Elementary Community Council Meeting

January 13, 2015

Minutes recorded by Catherine Carlson- Community Council Secretary

1. Welcome from co-chair Valerie Hulsey-

In attendance were David Pendergast, Marjorie Conrad, Valery Hulsey, Andrea Jones, David Halling, Catherine Carlson, Jaime Vorwaller, and Melanie Morris. Absent from the meeting were Kallie Lindgren and Kathy Leerskov.

1. Review of the Last Meetings’ Minutes-

Minutes were read by Catherine Carlson, the Community Council secretary. Mr. Pendergast requested that the minutes be modified to reflect that the decision to eliminate some reading specialist positions was made and agreed upon by the entire Community Council last year. Catherine Carlson will make that correction to the minutes.

Valerie Hulsey asked about the requirements for the co-chair positions as she was unsure what they were after attending the training meeting. Marjorie looked up the information on the district website and found that we are in compliance. One of the co-chair positions can be filled by a teacher.

1. Review of 2014-2015 School Improvement Plan-

Marjorie explained that the school is working toward the reading achievement goal, specifically that 65% of students be fluent readers. Despite the district window for testing starting in January, K-3rd grade students were Dibles tested in December. The results of those tests will be available next week and will be reviewed by the administration and teachers. There is some concern that because the district pushed the schedule, not as many of those students will meet the proficiency benchmark as would have 6 weeks later. Dibles testing for 4-6th graders is going on this week. Valery commented that as a teacher she appreciates the information this test provides. Marjorie will report to the Council at the next meeting where our numbers fall.

Mr. Pendergast reported that in the area of STEM the school is working to provide more information to parents in the school newsletter. Also, borrowed from Endeavor are some Universe panels that the students can read and look at this month. Other STEM related items are the robots, MESA program, and some new microscopes.

Lastly, Marjorie addressed professional development. There is a book review program ongoing and money is being used to make it easier to allow teachers to attend professional teacher development meetings.

Melanie Morris asked how often progress monitoring goes on in the classroom. Mr. Pendergast explained that progress monitoring is always ongoing as opposed to tests like Dibles that are benchmarks that happen periodically through the year. Marjorie also explained that teachers do constant progress monitoring now as opposed to what they used to do, which was implement a program for 3 or 4 weeks and not know until the end whether or not it was effective.

Melanie commented that her son was a very excited participant in the MESA club. Valerie concurred that interest had been high in the new program. Mr. Pendergast would like to add teachers to accommodate the interested students rather than restricting participation.

Mr. Pendergast talked about code.org and the new robots that work with the Dot and Dash computer program.

1. Land Trust-

It was suggested that the council discuss what we would like to see in next years Land Trust budget. Mr. Pendergast would like to continue with Dibles help for 4-6th grade teachers. Valerie agreed that that is helpful for teachers.

Mr. Pendergast said that in discussion with the PTA, they have agreed to provide financial help with field trips. Mr. Pendergast would like each grade to have two field trips per year, one with a STEM focus to a place that requires an entrance fee, and one with perhaps a different focus that has no entrance fee. He would like those trips to be fully funded.

Also, money will be needed to keep up with technology changes, such as purchasing new ipads, etc…

Marjorie noted that as part of the district accreditation program, 3 areas of emphasis were put forward and those will need to be represented in next years’ School Improvement Plan.

Jaime Vorwaller asked when we might see numbers reflecting the change in the reading program, specifically the loss of the Power Half Hour. Mr. Pendergast said that we won’t know the effect until the end of the year, although the mid-year Dibles test will give them some information. Valerie noted that with the new language program, the data might be skewed.

1. Future Meetings-

The date for the next meeting was set for February 10 at 3:45. Subsequent meetings will be March 10 and April 28, also at 3:45.

1. Other-

Council members were encouraged to think about items they would like to see included in the Land Trust Budget and come ready to discuss those next time. The meeting was adjourned.