

4/19/05 6:30-8:30 CP Academy Parent Council Meeting

Flora: Next leadership is the 28th. And then the parents said they would work with doing the showcase. So the showcase is the 2nd of June – is that a Thursday? We're looking at senior celebration for the academy on the 9th. You're all welcome to come.

Gary: I've got an email from Ken that the leadership has 3 focus areas one which is getting student support tutoring going.

Flora: That survey addresses whether students are willing to be tutored.

They have a brief conversation about the communication for announcing these parent council meetings. More parents come in – there are a total of 7 parents, Flora and Annie:

Gary

Judy

Sherry

Deborah

Rich

Flora

Teodolinda

Annie

Mal

Chanelle

Ken

Gary: Let's look at the agenda.

Rich: Can we push looking at the 4 year curriculum off?

Annie: We're working on it now as a staff, so we'll have something to look at if we put it off until the next time.

Gary: How parents can help with student support – Ken asked me to put that on the agenda. We need maybe 15 minutes for that. Anyone here from the student showcase? (Debra raises her hand) What kind of time do we need to report on the that with us? Debra: 5 minutes.

Annie: I think the conversation about parents helping student support might take more time – 20 minutes.

Gary: We want to talk a bit about teacher communication with parents – 10 minutes.

Flora: I would at another meeting is address that we need more parent input on the website, too.

Gary: We have about an hour or so for now. Asks for time-keeper and taking notes. (Colette takes notes and sends notes to Gary Amato.) Asks for process person. Sherry will do that. Ken will be here later.

Gary: What came out of leadership on student support?

Annie: Maybe we can start with the data that came out of the student group?

Flora: Out of the staff retreat came 3 things. One this was that we were asking for more student support in math and science which led to a survey that was done. (Everyone looks over the survey of students that was generated from Ms. Bell's class.) The thing that had the greatest impact on me was that the students didn't really think that the parents motivate them throughout all four years. Not so much in the senior year. A lot of times the parent will think that the student isn't listening to them, (but they are).

Annie: I was also struck by the fact that many of them said they would seek out help on their own.

Flora: Students say they will do it on their own, but they won't.

Annie: But yes they see it as they have been pushed, but no one said they had to do it. So they see that as they did it on their own.

Gary: Math is consistently the most used tutorial. Where are they getting help?

Annie: In the math department with a math teacher one day a week. We also pulled some UC Berkeley students and programs from UCB – when they are available, we go find the students who need help.

Flora: We probably have 20 tutors throughout the week from UCB. The students who benefit from that are students who are not doing well who are in my or Ms. Johnston's classes duing proctors. There are some that get pulled out of the math classes or the tutors help in the math classes.

Annie: There are some saying evening is the best time for tutoring.

Rich: What came out in the WASC stuff and how we can help solve student support problem (is this the time to bring it up). I've been thinking about this a longtime. They compared Ds and Fs in CAS, CP Academy and the large school during fall semester. We have some pluses and minuses. Where we do a lot (page 23 of WASC report) with intervention in terms of African American children, but unfortunately of all students in Ds and Fs ,we have the highest percent of students who have at least one D or F. Large school 44%, CAS 31% and CP Academy 60%. I talked the math teachers and they said if we could ensure that our students did all of their homework everyday we could guarantee that everyone gets a C. That would be 0% getting Ds and Fs. So my question is why can't we program them into a 7th period? We'll call it an

enrichment class (I got that from Annie). There we have a professional expert and 4 tutors with math and science. And then of course we also do the other stuff. But we make sure they do all of their homework in that period. And then Mr. Dotman in freshman class, we can work them on how to take notes a little bit at a time on how to do the SAT. We have them for 45 minutes and most of it is doing the homework. If we can do that and set up a program, I looked up how much would it cost (I got it from BSEP costs) - \$6000 per tutor x 4 is \$25,000 and the fulltime equivalent is \$60,000. Could it be cheaper?

Flora: You're looking for one fifth and cost of benefits. About \$15,000 for the teacher.

Rich: My plan at least is to look for grants. I think it would work. I don't see how it could not work if we have them there and we have them in our hands and there is a connection back to the science and math class. And Mr. Bremer says this is what we were working on today.

Gary: In your proposal are you thinking it is required or optional class?

Rich: It has to be required.

Gary: You have to require it because the kids who are not doing well are kids who would not come if it is optional.

Annie: What grades are you talking about?

Rich: I'm talking about 9th grade

Annie: 9th and 10th still gets you four sections. There are actually a lot of them that don't need it. There are students who might feel held back. One thing misleading is that we are transitioning from a program for at-risk students with a larger mix of students-of-color that are mapped onto disparities from the district that are mapped on top of race. This coming year I don't think we'll have 60% Ds and Fs. We should probably target....

Flora: Rich and I attended a CAS meeting regarding data driven decisions and then afterwards we sat down and looked at math specifically the freshmen students who were below grade level, So if you came into BH with IMP1 you were already a year below grade level. If you were in 10th grade in IMP1 you are two years behind based on the district model. When we looked at IMP2 and Geometry, there were not that many Ds and Fs. But when you looked at the students who were below grade level, there were many Ds and Fs. Those students have not been doing the homework. Mr. Lewis has been consistent throughout – you do your homework you get a C or better.

Rich: I don't know all the things we can do with that enrichment class. But the point is that we pull up all the students who are not doing well. This is a wonderful way to do that. But we need a grant writing part where we can find that money. There's lots of money floating around, but someone has to look for it. [He suggests parents can do this.] It pains me because they put this information out and it doesn't look good (the data that indicates that CP Academy has 60% of the students have at least one D or F).

Gary: What I want to do is keep that in mind that we look at how we can do a more basic program of getting more tutoring going. Isn't that a leadership council level program?

Annie: The leadership council can't be responsible for writing all the grants. If it was an impetus from the parents, the likelihood of getting the grant is higher. It shows that we are working together as a community type partnership. We've got some funds set aside to bring in an Americorps person to help coordinate, We really need a coordinator. CAS has put together an after-school program that the kids enjoy tremendously. It is a homework and social center that builds community. The kids feels like it is about student activities and academic success.

Rich: I'm not a teacher, I'm a parent. I don't know the answers, but I do know if you put someone in there with those students who didn't do their homework, they are now going to do their homework. Its nice to go from not passing to passing. It doesn't seem unbelievable to find \$100,000 for a school of this size. That's my solution anyway.

Gary: It involves a decision-making that seems more like a leadership council thing.

Annie: Leadership and staff have said that student support is a priority. The staff can't do that grant right now.

Gary: Is it focused toward after school and tutorial?

Annie: What they said was math and science, but they did not specify when it should be. We have been including it (extra help for students) in people's day and that's been helpful for people. When a kid has a proctor period, we'll take that and hook them up with a tutor. After school is good, but there should be other parts too.

Sherry: What about English? There is the writers' workshop. For the fall, perhaps we get some of our parents to attend the writers' workshop so we can have our own in house tutors who are parents.

Gary: Is that only for some English classes?

Flora: It s for all English classes in the 9th grade.

Gary: It's right in the English class right? The class gets brought to their space

Flora: They also have lunchtime once a week where students can get additional help and they get extra credit. The students don't take advantage of that. They have lunchtime when they can see their friends. They only get 40 minutes for lunch. If they have to make up a test or check in with a teacher, they end up missing lunch.

Annie: The writers' workshop works on assignments the teachers have handed over. It is also their homework the same as it would be help for math and science.

Gary: The biggest areas are math and science, and that's the hardest for parents to tutor in. Can we get a training process where parents learn to tutor in math and science?

Annie: Maybe if we did what Rich is talking about first, then maybe those people who are taking on what the kids need help in and set up a structure that helps the students, then they are in the best position to train parents in how to tutor kids in what they need. But that's after we get a coordinator.

Rich: We just need money is all I was thinking about.

Gary: They don't need to be college graduates.

Annie: That person can call the parent list. They are your grunt worker to do all of the details.

Gary: Some of them are college graduates and they can do far more. Sounds like we need some steps to lead into this. That's the only reason I'm worried. It seems like a big step.

Rich: The first step seems to me to be to ask Annie and Flora if we can program in a 7th period.

Flora: 10th graders will be doing a lab once a week. I think there will be a real need for parent support for students who say they don't want to do it and try to get out.

Gary: It seems like 9th grade parents should sign a contract to support school decisions.

Flora: I would agree to that. There are some students who don't have to be there. Its like the sports thing – your grades have to stay up. That's up to the leadership council to decide where that cut off of grade is (that requires a student to participate in 7th period academic support).

Rich: The problem is that no one wants to see their child get a D or F before they put them in.

Flora: By parent or teacher request for 10th-12 grade. But 9th grade students are an absolute.

Rich: I want to give 9th grade students a heads up. If you had them everyday and according to some teachers they would get Cs or above. That's unheard of at Berkeley High. If that's possible then what we should do is get some folks together to get some money. I can get together with Annie who can tell me that I need to get the numbers right, but then we can look for funding sources. I don't know how to write a grant in an educational sense. We can find someone who can help us write it and write it until we get it right. Obviously Annie knows how to do it.

Mal: How did CAS get the money for theirs?

Ken: The first thing they did was an emergency intervention when they saw their first quarter science grades. There were a lot of failing students. They had a science teacher who was not communicating with parents and who was just teaching the stuff and the kids got it or not. They had staff members rotate after school volunteer time, some seniors as their internships (that was a big part of it as leadership in tutorial) and the parents brought in food. If the students completed X work, they could opt out. That was last year. This year they applied for a grant and it took them awhile to get it, so they were running it as volunteer at the beginning of the year. They finally got a coordinator who is still using the model. The idea shifted from how do we save these kids from failing to in the grant let's create a positive space for anyone who wants to do some work after school – it's a community building kind of thing.

Mal: What kind of turn out do they have?

Ken: I think they have a group of 20 kids who almost always come and then other kids who come depending on the day.

Mall: Is it self selecting?

Ken: Its open to everybody. They encourage everybody to go. If a student is really struggling they will go to the family and say we really recommend this and they say the same to the student. They are really careful not to do a punitive model. It's more, "We want to support you in this way." I think they are still doing contracts where if the kid does X thing, the student can get this grade.

Gary: Its important to know if it is improving grades. Has it resulted in having students to pass?

Ken: Almost all students, except one student, they got from failing to passing in the intervention last year. This year I don't know either way. They have a new science teacher. If we got something rolling here, it would be worth consulting with them because they have a template.

Gary: It is really important to have staff, students (seniors) and parents and move it at once. Rather than having parents start it and have others join.

Annie: The staff has already said this is something they want to do. They are working on coming up with universal practices that can build consistency across classes. Staff has asked for that.

Rich: I specifically with the math teachers – they asked for this. They can think of other things you can do in a 7th grade enrichment since all students are getting Cs. They can do other things because they are no longer trying to run down homework. The connection to home is tough. When you get students tutoring, it can die off again. The goal is to not have anyone fail. I suggest that if there is anyone interested we can... I don't know what to do.... May be we can take 10 minutes a day to do a search on the internet for grants.

Gary: First we have to get a group of parents who agree to participate and we should get a staff member on this.

Annie: I have the grant proposal that CAS wrote that we can use as a template.

Rich asks Gary to facilitate getting people on a committee to initially look into grant writing.

Rich: My wife says she will help look for money.

Mal: In participation in grant writing, is it a cart and horse thing? Do you start the program first or write it first?

Annie: You write it first has been my experience. You write for what you want. What is the need, what have you been doing so far to address this, what are you proposing to fund and what other resources are you going to pull in so its not all on them and how can you sustain it in the long run so if their funding dwindles it will still continue? Then you can do a rough letter of interest – are you interested in funding something like this? You have to work out some of the details of your program before you do that.

Mal: But it can be done before you prove that it works?

Rich: My experience has been in science grants and there it's the same thing. There is a goal that the granting institution has and it's so general, you can write anything in. So if we can write what we want to do, there is a funding source. Because I think our goal is quite noble. Berkeley High is one of the top 25 schools in the nation and here's an innovative program inside Berkeley High that is doing something great.

Gary: If you are trying to address the achievement gap in math and science, that's even better. Rich are you willing to spearhead this as a parent?

Rich: There are parents who know more about this than me, but I will spearhead it.

Ken: I think 2-3 people who know the ropes of how to do this is all you need to do this. So one question I have is did we identify in the data sheets is that one of the categories?

Rich: Yes there was. So you said you wanted to be a part of the grant writing thing and I don't have a problem calling them up.

Ken: I think Anita Hayward said that she was interested in this in our small group meeting.

Annie: Doesn't she administer a school? So that's helpful.

Ken: She was very excited about doing some after school student support.

Rich: We were talking about programming it into the day.

Annie: 7th period is after school.

Rich: I was just talking about programming it in so the parents don't have to fight them on it.

Ken: Once we identify that group, there are 2-3 places that already have a lot of research done on funding. (He lists the places – Foundation Center in SF, Alameda County of Education grant center and he mentions something about east bay.) When CAS did their grant, they did it with a parent who is an expert. There is a person who is worth sitting down with and talking about the technical side of it and how would you structure it. There are resources out there I'd be happy to connect you with once we find a small group of people. [Debra, Rich and Anita (possibly Mal Mead) make up this small committee.]

Gary: Clarifies with Ken who the parent is in CAS – it's a 12th grade parent.

Gary: I want to underline again, the whole Americorp thing should be tied in with it. They might need to have something pretty soon because they start assigning in June.

Annie: The job description for the Americorp person is already in.

Chanelle: When you say it will be a 7th period requirement, say a child is in sports how would they fit in? Because I know my son needs to be in there, but he would try to find a way to not be in that class. I want it to be a requirement. That would be good.

Gary: Could we have a report?

Rich: I can have the people.

Chanelle: I know when I worked at UCB and I helped doing proposals for the science department.

Rich: So we can pencil you in.

Gary: So we really had a good turnout. Rich, can you report this back to the leadership council?

Gary: June 2nd showcase.

Deborah: I met with the kids and they came up with a whole bunch of things. They had a nice little group who showed up. We're trying to get a group of them to do a lot of the work. Nat Lewis said he would be an advisor. Anyway he can help he would help on that. He doesn't know what that means and I don't know what they means either. But we use his room for meetings. So we're going to try to put together a showcase for the kids on the 2nd. They want to do projects and they recommended some college essay and movies that some kids have done and we talked about the internships. We have to find all these people. We have volunteers for the program and someone to videotape CPA (videotaping the everyday life of students and what they look like everyday). We want to showcase a whole year of CPA and what we do. We want someone from each class level and you have students who want to participate and try to help the students put it together. Parents have to do most of the work of course.

Annie: When are you meeting with them again?

Deborah: Our last meeting 4 kids came. We had it at lunch and I showed up without food and I realized I need to have food for them and we have to decide when we want to meet with them. Maybe next week or the week after, but we need something for them to do. I don't know if community building is meeting again before. I don't think we set up a meeting time. I don't know if it's just me – Sherry, your husband cut out and I never saw him again. The 2nd time he didn't come

back. I feel out there by myself. I have good ideas, but I don't know how to pull it together. We have good kids who are excited and scared a little maybe. I'll take suggestions.

Chanelle: I missed the last meeting what is the June 2nd thing about?

Debra: We want to give kids a chance to shine and a community building thing. It gives CPA students a chance to show what they learned this year. They do things all year long, but parents don't get to see it. It's a grooming thing. They come out and they have to come to a few meetings before then so they can learn how to present before then. Learn how to present themselves and their projects. They were shouting out some good stuff they've done and the powerpoint presentations and someone shouted something out about the cold war. Also they have a presentation on those boards

Chanelle: Are you taking only a certain number of kids from each grade?

Deborah: So I asked them if there were some that were the best and they picked out some – it's trying to find the kids who are hiding.

Chanelle: Students who want to come into CPA for next year can come and see.

Deborah: Next year it will be better because they'll have all year to prepare for it.

Chanelle: Do they only meet at lunch because for some kids lunch is very vital to them.

Deborah: The ones who came at lunch didn't want to meet after school. If its a brown bag lunch then we'd be sitting there by ourselves. I need help pulling it together so the ones who come at lunch have something to do and after school they have something to do.

Chanelle: Have you thought about putting it in the etree, so parents can motivate their students?

Ken: Reads off a to do list of things left over from some meeting (I missed which one it was) and he says that she needs to put out that email to get people together.

Ken: I'll forward the email with the summary.

Rich: We need someone to just tell us what to do (referring to: If Debra just tells them what to do, they can help. But they need to have tasks delegated to them.)

Gary: When Janet comes back she can design the pamphlet. And she can advertise the meetings.

Ken: If someone forwarded you a paragraph, do you have the ability to hit one nickname and it goes out to everyone?

Rich: Well, Janet has all the emails and she does all that, I assume she has an email list. Except for those people who don't have email.

Flora: This is what we talked about before – everyone needs to get into a group.

Rich: And with the parents without email, there is a phone tree, but that's Janet again.

Annie: Maybe Janet needs a backup.

Rich: What Gary is talking about is that we've been trying to have each teacher have a website so that we know what the homework is. We've had a great response. We have 6 teachers who do it everyday. One was difficult and Flora figured out how to it for that teacher. The positive thing is Mr. Dotman – he always has so many things going on. We have 5-6 parents going online saying I didn't realize this was due next week. The way he grades is you get points for different things and if you don't turn it in, you get 0 points. All of a sudden a grade goes from a D to a B now that the parent knows that all you have to do is get the work in. It's been wonderful for the teachers who participate. Annie gets 20 hits a week.

Annie: Is there a way to see who is commenting?

Rich: It's a lot. I didn't know if you wanted to see it. I'm reading a book on how to do the comments section. I set it up so they can write as much as they want to write. Sherry sent me a comment. Someone sent an opposite comment.

They finish the conversation about the website, with Rich agreeing to send the comments to Flora. Computer shuts off – out of juice, but the meeting generally end with parents breaking down into their subcommittees. I leave at 8:30.