

**CP Academy Parent Council Meeting
February 15, 2007
Minutes**

Rich Hemphill chaired the fifth meeting of the year. We discussed the Leadership Council recent business and the March 10th College Information Event, listened to a presentation about the Writer Coach Connection, and discussed internet real time grade posting.

Leadership Council and Habits of Mind Document

Teachers have reviewed the Habits of Mind document proposed by the Leadership Council. It still needs a student review and another review by teachers.

College Information Session

The Parent Council will host a college information session on Saturday, March 10th from 10 am to noon in the College and Career Center. The question before the Parent Council was "What particular issues do we want Ilene Abrams to focus on in her presentation?" Suggestions and requests were:

- Focus on all types of colleges, four-year, two-year, UC, Cal State, and private.
- Discuss the transfer process from community colleges and Cal State to UC.
- Suggest ways to help students choose a college.
- Explain the differences between the SAT and the ACT and provide information about subject tests.
- Give tips on college application essay writing.
- Provide information for students with special abilities, such as athletics, art, and music, and list colleges that are looking for students with these abilities.
- Tell us what freshmen need to do to prepare for college.

Simon volunteered to learn how to turn on the PA system for the event and parents volunteered to help with clean up and set up, and to bring bottled water and cookies.

The WriterCoach Connection

Robert Menzimer, Executive Director of the Community Alliance for Learning that developed WriterCoach Connection, was invited by Annie Johnston and Flora Russ to give a presentation about his program. The program started at Berkeley High and is now used in Berkeley Middle Schools, as well as in the Albany school system. WriterCoach Connection was discontinued at Berkeley High last year when the BSEP committee decided not to fund it. Annie and Flora are trying to reinstate this program next year for CP Academy.

What the WriterCoach Connection does is bring adult volunteers to the classroom on a regular basis to work with each student one-on-one. Coaches

work with students of all levels of writing proficiency. Reponse to the program has been very positive and Annie and Flora feel that it will fill an important need for writing improvement for CP Academy students.

The questions for the Parent Council were “Can we find enough volunteers to serve as coaches?” and “Can we raise the money need to support the program?” It was estimated that we need about 30 volunteers to commit to about two hours a week in the classroom. We probably couldn’t find that many parents but could solicit volunteers from other groups, such as Cal students and retired people. The cost of the program would be about \$125 per student. If we started the program next year with two 9th grade classes and two 10th grade classes, the approximate cost for a year would be \$15,000. The money pays for training for coaches as well as a paid site coordinator who schedules the volunteers’ time in the classroom.

We have extra money this year from a generous \$10,000 donation but we would want this program to be ongoing. Annie and Flora will solicit money from BSEP and the Berkeley School Development Foundation. The fundraising committee will send out a letter to parents asking for donations and featuring the WriterCoach Connection as a reason to contribute.

If any parents want to train now to be writing coaches, there will be training classes on February 28th and March 7th from 6:30 to 9:30. For more information or to sign up now, contact Lynn Mueller at 510-524-2319 or writercoachconnect@yahoo.com.

Real Time Grade Posting

Rich Hemphill asked BHS to purchase the grade-posting component for the Berkeley High School homework site and they did. However, for parents to be able to view their students’ grades on a daily or weekly basis, the teachers need to post the grades on the site. Nat Lewis, one of our math teachers, volunteered to work with Rich on finding a way to post the grades that works for both teachers and parents.

Wrap Up

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00. It was well attended with much discussion and lively involvement from all present.