

School of Technology and Arts I
Steering Committee Agenda
January 7th, 2020

Officers:

President: Doris Faucheux

Vice President:

Secretary: Kirsten Gabriel

Treasurer: Kerrie Moore

Principal: Ben Burns

Fundraising: Erika Cedergren

Teachers: Maria Henry and Mike Lawrence

Yearbook: Leah Lachman and Ashley Patros-Kader

District Wide Parent Rep: Dawn Wacek

Volunteer Coordinator: Clarissa Grover

Community Building: Judson Steinback

Technology:

Present: Renee Stowell, Mike Lawrence, Leah Lachman, Kirsten Gabriel, Maria Henry, Dawn Wacek, Clarissa Grover, Doris Faucheux, Kerrie Moore, Ashley Patros-Kader, and Ben Burns.

1. Reviewed and Approved November Minutes.
 - a. Doris offered a correction to the minutes, noting that the Karen working with the Scrip program is Karen Burnet, not K/1 teacher Miss Karen.
 - b. Clarissa moved to approve the minutes; Leah seconded the motion. Motion passed.
2. Teacher Report
 - a. **Spanish Instructor Gift Card:** Dawn made a motion to increase Jean's gift card from \$50 to \$75 total; Leah seconded that motion and it was approved. Leah will take care of purchasing the gift card for \$75 for Jean, the Spanish instructor.
 - b. **Open House:** The December Open House went very well. Teachers appreciated all the parents who assisted; Sue assisted and had a sign-up for interested parents. Many people stayed after the Open House to tour the building and meet with teachers. It was suggested that a similar open house be held in the spring in the evening to accommodate working families.
 - c. **KVR Funding for Bus Transportation:** The trip form that was sent home for families requested \$8 per student. Mike is checking into the cost of busing for the day (two buses that stay with the participants throughout the trip). The other field trips that occur this year are the Madison trip and the camping trip.

Dawn asked if the \$8 per student also went toward the cost of transportation, and it was clarified that the \$8 per student went toward other costs for the day. The steering committee decided to put \$800 toward the cost of the KVR transportation; Leah motioned to approve and Ashley seconded.

- d. **Artist in Residence:** Students seemed to really enjoy the recent Artist in Residence, though the skill required to produce the art that was created may not have been quite the caliber expected. Conversation ensued regarding the cost of the Artist in Residence, and it was shared that there were funds contributed beyond the \$500 contribution made by the SOTA Steering Committee, including grant funding. For context, Artists in Residence have received approximately \$1,000 per week in the past. Leah mentioned a friend who might be a good fit for an artist and residence and will forward their contact information on to Ben Burns; Eva Marie Restel, a former SOTA 1 parent, might also be an option for a future artist in residence. Clarissa asked how artists in residence typically work, and it was noted that it typically arises organically or through recommendation from staff. Doris will post information about the artists in residence on the Facebook page.
- e. **Facebook:** Renee will be posting information about KVR on the Facebook page along with an invite to parents of trip participants who are interested in driving themselves to KVR.

3. Principal Report

a. **Enrollment updates:**

- i. As of now, we have 20 kindergarteners interested in attending SOTA 1 (up from the less than 15 this year). Our average class size is 20. The priority deadline has closed, but people can and do continue to submit requests/applications.
- ii. SOTA 1 has been approved as a district 4K site and will be on this year's ballot. We would be exploring a 4K/K classroom, per district suggestion and our commitment to multi-age classrooms. Total number of spots would be 18 in the morning and 12 in the afternoon. The next domino would be how many people register with 4K; families have until the first Friday in February to accept. Miss Karen and Miss Anna are excited about the prospect of 4K/K classrooms.
- iii. District lost 211 seats last year (and has been losing seats steadily for the last 8 years), and is committed to not making increases in staffing district-wide for the foreseeable future. We will likely be capped at 7 teachers, though there might be some shifting across the district. The good news is that our publicity has worked and our average class size will be going up.

- iv. There will be an event at the La Crosse Public Library on Feb. 1st from 10-12 to showcase all the Kindergarten options in the area; there may not be human representation from each school, but there will be information about each school. SOTA 1 will have a table and Ben will be available to talk to parents, but the goal is to make it non-competitive. It was noted that something similar might be very helpful for families moving into 5th grade.
- v. Building expansion went before the School Board as an information item (not an action item, which is the other option). We may be coming before the board in February to raise building expansion as an action item that the board would vote upon. This continues to be on the district and school board radar as well as the radar of community partners that have a vested interest in our school.
- vi. Family Night is slated for this Thursday night. A Skylert email will be going later this week. Mrs. (Carrie) Harden and Sarah Jackson have put it together – the theme is environmental sustainability with different booths and a catered meal.
- vii. Doris asked if there had been any further conversation about a technology staff member at SOTA 1. Ben indicated that given the current hold on staffing, it doesn't appear likely that an additional staff member would emerge. It was recommended that the conversation with the district be renewed in September.

4. State Testing Talking Points Review

- a. Talking points drafted by Doris, per a comment/request from a SOTA 1 parent:
 - i. Parents can opt out. Opting out does not affect the funding we get from the State.
 - ii. The teachers at SOTA I do not teach to the test. They use the results to improve their teaching approach.
 - iii. Dates? Anything else to add?
- b. Discussion ensued regarding the points above, the purpose of the outreach, and the desire to provide unbiased information to families. In the spirit of keeping everyone informed, Doris will look into posting a DPI link about testing and opting out on the Facebook page. More conversation will take place at upcoming SSC meetings as needed.
- c. SOTA 1 teachers and staff choose a two-week testing window during the March 23 - May 1 window advertised by the state.

5. District-Wide Meeting Updates

- a. Dawn attended the November DW meeting, and it was great/spirited. Any and all parents are invited to attend the Jan. 14th meeting to learn more about the

search process for the new superintendent, the firm we hired, and to share qualities they want to see in new Superintendent.

- b. Hamilton/SOTA 1 will be hosting the district-wide parent meeting in March. The district has an agenda full of district wide entity, but there's space for each school to showcase who they are in a way that involved students. Ben will come up with an overview of who we are, what we've been up to, and involve 4th and 5th graders. We'll have a few meetings between now and that meeting, so we can talk further.
 - c. A potential district-wide snack policy banning food-based products at celebrations was discussed at the DW meeting. There were parent concerns with the potential policy including but not limited to the cultural importance of food celebrations, sugar being public enemy #1, and homemade food being a thoughtful gift for teachers. Given the pushback from parents, representatives would go back and talk to their respective schools and the district-level conversation will be tabled at this point.
6. Budget
- a. In recapping our budget to date, Doris and Kerrie shared that Equal Exchange brought in over \$1700 (significantly more than anticipated) and Scrip cards and direct donations are up from last year. We projected receiving \$750 from AmazonSMILE and BoxTops; we're currently at \$187, but those figures come in sporadically.
7. Fundraising
- a. Doris asked if anyone would be interested in running this year's Skate-a-Thon fundraiser, slated for March 13 (an early release date). Conversation ensued about how best to plan this fundraiser. Dawn is interested, as may be Lindsay Abicht. Doris will reach out to Lindsay to see if she's interested. There isn't a clear plan as to how this event works and how funds are raised, but it was determined that it is first and foremost a fundraiser. Some suggestions included but were not limited to requesting a \$5 minimum donation to offset upcoming events such as KVR, the Madison trip, another Artist in Residence, etc.
 - b. Doris mentioned that it might be useful to do a big fundraising push combining a second Equal Exchange fundraiser using online ordering, Skate-A-Thon, Night Out and Box Tops (all of which can occur within a few week period).
 - c. Our next Family Night is slated for February 22 at Java Vino; Erica is point on this event. Next time we meet we'll be talking about a vision for this event as well as a vision for the Skate-a-Thon.
8. Bike Rodeo –Clarissa will be sending an email out about this event.
9. Rep. Reports – no reports.
- a. Technology, Fundraising, VP – we need people to serve in these capacities. Doris

will take on pursuing conversations with Lindsay.

10. Meeting adjourned at 7:31pm.