

Parent Connection Minutes

March 17, 2009

Co-Chair Report: Alesia Duncombe opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

- If you are experiencing issues with listserv please be patient. Listserv sometimes sends errors and you might hear from Alesia concerning rejections with certain email providers and security settings. Please know that Alesia is willing to work with you on any glitches but it may be that the actual fix will need to come from parent's mailers, specifically with junk-mail or spam filters. Contact alesia.duncombe@gmail.com if you have any questions.
- There are PC leadership positions open for next year: Secretary, Listserv Moderator and Co-Chair. The last couple years our mission has been to increase and facilitate communication between parents and CHS. Next year our mission may need to change and become more focused on organizing broader volunteer efforts or fundraising.

Co-Chair Report: Carol Hennessy

- PC has been paying for the newsletter to be translated into Spanish. After conferring with Alicia Ward, Monica Schechter, and others it has been decided that a monthly meeting for Hispanic parents would be a more effective way to communicate school news. Childcare will be available at the upcoming meetings.
- In other efforts to reduce expenses the front office is calling all 200 people who receive the English version of the newsletter by mail to see if they are able to switch to receiving it by listserv.
- First Alternative Co-op offers an option to donate funds to CHS. Instead of using your member number while checking out, just tell the clerk you would like to donate to Corvallis High School. The funds then go to the CHS general fund which is controlled by Dawn Granger.

Staff Appreciation: Pat Collier

- During conferences all classes will be providing a potluck dinner for teachers at 4:30 on April 9. There will be a notice on listserv identifying items needed for the meal.
- The last Staff Appreciation meal will be held in May. It will be sponsored by the Freshman class.
- Last month, Peggy Dolcini, a parent stepped forward and provided a home cooked meal for Andy Collins, the lucky staff member who had the winning raffle ticket at the Staff Appreciation lunch. The gesture and the meal were appreciated.
- A picture board is now mounted on the wall in the main entrance of the school. Soon it will include photos and names of staff members.

Principal's Report: Dawn Granger

- Eric Wright is unavailable to attend today's meeting. He is attending a workshop concerning graduation requirements. Eric wanted everyone to know that he was sorry to miss the meeting, and that he would rather be at school with kids than at meetings with adults!
- If you have been trying to email teachers and have not heard from them in a week, please try again. There was a security issue with the school's email and many messages were not getting through to the teachers' mailboxes. The security is turned off now and messages should be getting through. For general knowledge, it is Dawn's expectations that email messages are responded to within 48 hours of receipt.
- Dawn shared the current CHS budget version that is now balanced. Dawn had to cut approximately \$240,000. CHS has \$170,000 in discretionary funds that it controls. After listening to feedback from staff, parents and students the following reductions were made from the discretionary items: Cut office of principal supplies by 20%, all copies decreased by 10%, staff development travel reimbursements cut. Staff will need to find grants to fund their travel. Also, an assistant coach from football has been cut. Dawn did not cut teachers' supplies and materials budget. After discussion with teachers, it was agreed to keep those expenses so that the classes can continue to be engaging and effective teaching continues. All overtime has been cut. Budget for substitute teachers has been reduced to \$3,000 from \$10,000. This reduction will force teachers to take a personal day if their absence is deemed "unnecessary". Grades will be emailed and/or sent home with the students to save on postage.
- After reviewing the graduation expenses, it was discovered that the rental of Gill Coliseum was actually \$4700 (not \$10,000 as previously thought). Next year's diplomas, programs and salaries of staff for graduation will be paid out of the discretionary funds. If Gill is the venue for graduation next year, the expenses will need to be paid by fund raising.
- Dawn reviewed the budget feedback she had asked for last month and shared that generally the students' concerns and ideas for the reductions centered around: reduce, reuse, and recycle. The students also asked for increases for the library and upkeep of the facility. Parents were more concerned with saving academic programs.
- The current version of the budget Dawn presented is not the worse case scenario budget. The District has alerted Dawn that the money from the state could go down and has asked administrators to create a second version of the budget, or "The Budget of Tears" as Dawn refers to it. The District wants administrators to rank in priority the cuts that would need to be made in order to balance this worse case scenario budget. Dawn is using feedback she received to create the priority lists.
- On April 13, the official budget will be unveiled by the District. CHS can only share discretionary expenses, not personnel expenses.
- The budget, which Dawn will give to the district on Friday, will show how much money is coming from the State and how it will be spent. It is based on hope that the available money won't go down, and that the stimulus plan may help if there are not too many strings attached to it. Dawn will know on the 6th of April, if there will be staff cuts for the first version of her budget

and will know in the summer if more personnel cuts are needed, which will be made from the priority list. Those savings may be from retiree positions that will not be filled, or fully replaced.

- There was a question about in-kind donations, wondering if that would free up money to pay for other items. Anything will help, but Dawn realizes everyone is affected by the economic downturn, and wants to make sure that people know volunteer time is as valuable as items or money. Dawn will create a resource list and ask teachers for wish lists so that people will know what is needed.
- The District is working hard to place, or combine personnel/blend jobs at multiple schools. If that doesn't work, there will be an effort to place personnel with other districts so people can drive and not be forced to leave their communities.
- There was a question about doubling up on classes. Dawn said that doubling up is viewed on a case by case basis. However, if there is room in a class there is no reason why to not let a student in even if it is the student's second math, science, etc. class in the term.
- The secondary principals are engaged in conversation with the district and sheriff's office about the possibility of bringing drug sniffing dogs onto campus. Dawn would like to gauge parent feelings on this subject. Dawn feels that CHS's drug issues are less than when she was here 2 years ago. Out of 1,263 students, there have been 9 infractions of varying degrees related to drugs. CHS doubled campus support this year; we have two employed behavior specialists who help to monitor student behavior and make sure students are where they need to be. Campus support feels they know who is involved with drugs, but would not be adverse to having another tool. If used, the dogs will be trained to smell and alert passively, if drugs are near. The dogs would be outside only. Dawn is asking for parent input and questions concerning this topic.
- After discussion, it was clear that those in attendance felt that kids are gaining trust with the administration, and were concerned that use of dogs will lower level of trust.
- Dawn wants what her community needs. She will take the feedback she receives to the board.
- Dawn wants to assure all that she will absorb information and listen and will do what she feels is right for our school.

In April, Dawn will be back to speak on the final budget. She has requested feedback from parents about her performance this year, and also, how to comment on teachers' performance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Thompson

PC Secretary