

March 18, 2008

Parent Connection Minutes Contact person: Carol Hennessy chenness@peak.org

Topics: "Tobacco Prevention" and CHS budget concerns

Officer's Reports

Listserv Coordinator: Alesia Duncombe

- Always striving to find right balance between adequate information and not too many emails
- Please don't take offense if your post doesn't fit the guidelines.

Treasurer: Mary Jo Chapman

- Continue financially support Spanish translator, Sally Boyer (CHS AmeriCorps volunteer)
 - Course catalog
 - Parent/Student Handbook
 - Updates '08-'09 school year
- Financially supporting staff member working on master calendar, Gretchen Cuevas
 - How to setup up in a manner than can be accessed by newsletter, web, etc.
 - Requires great deal of thoughtful planning.
- E-scrip, received 2 deposits this month.

Staff Appreciation Luncheons: Pat Collier

- April 11th is next potluck

Site Council Representative: Jan Zajicek

No report

Special Guest Presentation: Dana Strowbridge, Tobacco Prevention Education Coordinator (working to bring information and awareness to students elementary through high school)

- Involved with school district policy (annual review), curriculum and the student use and violation matrix
- Dana explains to students at middle schools, the tobacco industry NEEDS them. They are the replacement smokers.
 - Industry has discovered if can target children at age 12, can have them for life
 - Only costs 2 cents to make a cigarette; sell for over \$4 pack
- Tobacco industry spends \$450,000/yr. marketing in Oregon
 - Advertising is supposed to be banned but some magazines still carry ads because tobacco industry is willing to pay high prices
 - Ads emphasize masculinity, romance, sports
 - Have added flavors to entice youth (bubble gum, spice, black cherry, etc.)
 - Give out coupons to youth for free tobacco products
- Lots of visuals: passed around a quart of tar, amount in lungs if smoke for 1 pack/day for a year
 - Lighters that look like toys

- Camel cigarettes are being marketed to girls, pink packaging, use of chai tea flavoring
- U.S. tobacco warnings on packages low key compared with Canada (“cigarettes will kill you”) and other countries.
- “Joe Cool” marking cigarettes with cartoon character
- Training-wheel cigarettes! 60% tobacco and 40% clove (with twice as much nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide)
- Herbal cigarettes, 100% tobacco free, still cause health risks, increased amount carbon monoxide
- Hookah (water) pipes, used by older students in social smoking rooms, involves smoking for long periods of time. 40-50 minutes (average time) can be equivalent of 100 cigarettes.
- Tobacco chew, flavored, approx. \$5 can
 - Contains ground glass to make cuts in mouth so nicotine can be absorbed
 - 1 can equivalent to 3 packs of cigarettes
 - 1 dip, 8-10/day equals 30-40 cigarettes a day
 - 3,000 chemicals involved in processing chew (7,600 chemicals involved in processing cigarettes, some of which are toxic)
- If kids hear a message over and over again the message will be effective. Parents can speak up.

Q: Do you speak directly with students?

A: Have spoken in middle school. Have spoken in 1 health class at CV.

- Second hand smoke includes many toxic chemicals.
- Will set up booth at high school to check how much carbon monoxide is left in lungs. (Wood stove smoke can also increase carbon monoxide levels.)
- Snooze is a smokeless, spitless chew. Advertised for use during airline travel.
- Movies are currently effective smoking advertising.
 - Efforts being made to get movie industry to print disclaimer that they aren’t taking any buy-backs or payoffs to show actors smoking cigarettes
 - Sometimes individual actors receive payment for agreeing to smoke in movies.
 - When youth see favorite actor smoking in 2-3 movies it changes youth’s perceptions about smoking.
- All Corvallis parks are smoke free.
- When youth decide to stop tobacco use there are few opportunities for assistance.
 - Oregon quit line with telephone counseling service, 30% success rate
 - Good Samaritan Hospital has cessation program (may be covered by person’s health insurance)
- Tobacco #1 preventable disease in United States

Q: How often are our kids exposed to this talk?

A: Middle school level have shared presentation once with 6th graders and then follow up with anti-tobacco activities. (Games, tournaments, incentives.)

Q: Is your position funded year to year by grant?

A: I am funded for next year.

Q: Contact at the high school level?

A: Suzanne is working to set up a forum.

- **Suzanne:** Recently sent letters to approx. 40 students, with copies to their counselors and parents, who have been seen hanging out at least once on Pierce Street, either smoking or not.
 - Inviting them to have lunch and conversation this Friday with principal, Dana and CHS neighbor.
 - Will share school's policy regarding tobacco and discuss how to "be a good neighbor".

Q: What about the rest of our high school students?

A: Eric: Two health classes are required for all CHS students and both include a considerable amount of information about the dangers of tobacco.

Topic: Next year's CHS budget

Available for questions: guest, Jim Hogeboom, assistant superintendent with Corvallis School District, Suzanne Dalton, principal, as well as Rynda Gregory and Eric Wright, assistant principals.

Suzanne: Biggest issue is centered around decline in student enrollment for next year.

- Projected 63 fewer students (CV projected to have 41 more students)
 - Decision made at the school board level for two high schools to have comparable numbers and resources
- Student enrollment determines dollars individual schools receive
 - We will have fewer teachers next year
 - Where cuts will be made is still in discussion
- Have been involved in discussions with assist. principals
 - Dept. chairs and faculty
 - Read and considered feedback from parents
 - Student forum yesterday
- **Jim:** In the past we considered combining two high schools
 - If going to have two – need to keep similar numbers of students
 - When get discrepancy then cannot offer as many classes, (AP, adv. Lang. etc.) Board adopted policy to have no more than a 7% differential between the two schools.

Q: How often do you re-evaluate the attendance boundary dividing line between CV and CHS?

A: Every 2-4 years (including last year when we gathered parent and community input.)

Q: Could you please explain more about next year's funding reduction to CHS for ELL and Special Education students?

A: Suzanne: Budget includes the allocation from Dept. of Ed. that goes to school district

- Enrollment
- "Basic School"
- Weighting
 - Decision made several years ago to add weighting to certain populations

- Eng. Language Learners (ELL), Spec. Ed, Free and Reduced lunch recipients – schools received more money per pupil for students in these categories (TAG a small additional weighting as well.)
- The change in weighting will be a loss of \$4,529 total for CHS

Q: Why?

A: Jim: Administrators were not happy with our weighting system, brought a group of school administrators together to discuss.

- New: Decided to make basic allotment (“Basic School”) consistent among schools for secretaries, beh. specialists, athletic directors, counselors
- Current: State gives district extra money for students who qualify for special ed, ELL and students on free and reduced lunch. (An extra .5 or 1.0 student, no extra for TAG.)
 - Schools who didn’t have those student populations were getting less money than schools who did.
 - Up to \$900 more per student, committee felt that was too high.
 - (Weighting separate from Title 1 funds, allocated by federal gov. for students in poverty, received by Garfield, Lincoln, Wilson and Mt. View)
 - District already funds ELL and Special Education by providing staffing and TAG by providing district liaisons and curriculum
- New: Students in poverty need 28% more funds than regular student (Quality Education Model).
 - District decided to only weight the funding for those students more.
 - Also decided to use formula to determine support staff, 1 counselor per 133 students = need 4 counselors at CHS (3 at CV)

Q: Poverty based on self-reporting?

A: Based upon families that sign up for free and reduced lunch.

Q: Wonder if it makes sense to implement this when CV has gotten higher test scores than CHS?

A: Jim: Test scores are a separate issue. Current goal is how to even the funding between schools. Basic School is being phased in over a 3-year period. Change in weighting will only reduce budget by \$4,529. We are working to lessen the enrollment gap between the two schools and we are getting pretty close to succeeding. CV does have higher test scores, and test scores do relate to factors such as how many students in poverty.

Q: Next year CHS will get significantly less money, how much less?

A: Total estimate \$195,755 less. \$130,762 based on fewer students plus a % reduction from the local option levy based on student population decline of \$27,703.

Q: What does that translate into in terms of number of teachers?

A: 2.42 teachers

Q: Budget issues in the past have been dealt with in various ways, sometimes by cutting whole programs. I remember when CV cut their German program and part of the thinking was students could commute to CHS to take German. Only a tiny % of student population is able to arrange transportation and commute in this way. Concerned about possibility of the French program being cut.

A: Rynda: No dept. will be cut in its entirety, including French.

Q: You mentioned you have detailed plans, what are they?

A: Suzanne: We received this information from the district at the end of Jan. We requested input from dept. chairs at their Feb. meeting, some responded quickly and some have only recently responded. **Rynda:** More detailed communication with staff took place late Feb. and early March. More input was invited from parents at the [evening] Parent Connection meeting in Feb. We don't have one plan, we have different options as we are still receiving input.

Q: One example you gave suggested if you had 25 students in 4 sections of a math class and 1 section with only 12 students that smallest section would be absorbed into the others. How does that account for the last levy to reduce class sizes? Increasing class sizes is going directly against what the district promised the voters in the levy. Wouldn't this be the type of circumstance for which the rainy day fund has been put aside for?

A: Jim: Formula we've always used to determine individual school funding has been per pupil. There has been no change in that. Corvallis is a declining enrollment district. Fewer kids = less money from state = less money to give out.

Q: Because we know we will have 60 fewer students next year wouldn't it make sense to let us absorb that loss and wait on the implementation of the Basic School requirements? In addition I don't understand how the change in weighting can only amount to a difference of \$4,500 when we have the Special Ed. and ELL programs at CHS and you said those students are weighted twice?

A: Jim: Basic School is being implemented over 3 years. The effect of the change in weighting will be CHS receives more money than before because you have more students in poverty (than Spec. Ed and ELL) and now those students will be weighted twice. District is funding the ELL and Spec. Ed. program. The Levy hasn't changed either. The main purpose was to lower class sizes and we're still doing it. From that Levy, \$47,703, five or six staff members were assigned to the high schools. With the increase of enrollment at CV there will be an increase in the money assigned over there.

Q: We will have the loss of the 2.4 teaching positions, isn't there also a required increase in non-teaching positions?

A: Suzanne: The Basic School requirements can be implemented over a three-year time period. **Eric:** Some of the Basic School requirements we don't have, such as a full-time librarian and one counselor for every 333 students. If we were to add those positions right now it would be an additional 1.5 FTE. There may be an additional loss of enrollment next year. There is never a good time to decrease teaching faculty.

Suzanne: We currently have 2.75 counselors, "a possibility" is we may increase to 3.5 for next year.

Q: How was the number of students for next year determined? Is the \$195,755 reduction in funding over three years or just next year? Is there an evening time when parents are invited for input?

A: Suzanne: Feb. Parent Connection meeting parents were invited to give input, and many have. (It was an evening meeting.) Through the PC minutes that were posted on the listserv other parents have provided input. There was a small notice in the newsletter that there would be a conversation about budget at the “First Friday with the Principal”, which some parents attended. The window for providing feedback is very short.

Jim: Enrollment projections are done by Kathy in the business dept. and she has been historically extraordinarily accurate. \$195,755 is how much less the budget is this year compared with last year. District has a budget process, everyone in the district has to turn in their budgets this Friday. Then, Dawn and the executive team looks over all the input. Then Dawn presents her budget to the Citizens’ Budget Committee and the Board and once again details are carefully examined.

Parent: I appreciate you allowing for a dialog with students and parents, without which our trust can feel undermined.

Jim: Thank you. CHS hasn’t had the declining enrollment and I think we weren’t really clear about some of these things. We as the district didn’t give the school administration enough warning that this was coming. That was our mistake.

Q: State decides to allocate money weighted a certain way and then the district can redecide to allocate it differently? It doesn’t sound legal. Doesn’t the district need to use the same formula the state uses to allocate funds?

A: Jim: The state gives us extra money for certain categories of students but there is no requirement to spend it in a specific way. We receive about 1.1 million dollars for ELL students and we spend close to that on our ELL program. Our programs are regularly audited by the state to make sure we are spending the money appropriately.

Q: Looking at the Enrollment chart, in 1997, the two high schools combined enrollment looks like we had about 250 more students. Might that loss be due to the change “no school choice” and as a result more students are choosing Ashbrook, Santiam Christian and homeschooling?

A: Jim: Kathy Rodeman does track how many students choose private schools or homeschooling, and that number has not increased. We get more transfers into our district, like students from Albany, than leaving the Corvallis Schools. The issue is declining enrollment in general.

Q: The Dual Language Program has now reached 7th grade, I’m assuming the students will be coming to CHS, not CV. Is that part of your budget in two years?

A: Rynda: We’ve been encouraged by the district to think now about hiring someone who is bilingual/bi-cultural who has a content area we need. Intent of the program is for the Dual Lang. students to have access to at least one class that would be in the dual language. We are considering something in the Spanish literacy area. We are not

removing someone to fill that spot, we are looking for openings, opportunities. The native Spanish speaker could be in any content area.

Q: The original funding came from a federal program, isn't the funding due to run out?

A: Jim: By the time the program is in the high school level you only need to maintain the language. Goal is to have a class taught in Spanish by a native speaker at a high level – for the students to have one to two classes available in Spanish.

Q: Week after Spring break registration materials come out, will all classes be offered with just some reduction in sections?

A: Suzanne: In a perfect world you forecast before you build your budget. Here we build our budget, then register, then forecast. Budget is due Friday. Number of courses will be determined by the amount of FTE (teacher time) for that dept.

Eric: If there is inadequate enrollment for a class it may not happen. **Suzanne:** We may need to offer some courses on alternate years.

Parent: That is difficult when my student is a senior and it is the “off” year for an important AP course.

Parent: It wasn't long ago that was more common. My son wasn't able to take AP Physics, because it was on an alternate year.

Eric: We are going to be seeing declining enrolment over a number of years. Our goal is to always take students' needs as our top priority.

Q: Tough economic times, efficiency, is there any possibility of cutting somewhere in the administrative office? Where else could we cut so we don't have to experience the loss in the educational experience?

A: Jim: We have been a declining enrollment district for years; we've been cutting since before I got here. There used to be a Teaching and Learning Director, which was rolled into the position of the superintendent. I would invite you to spend a day with any person in the dist. office because they are working incredibly hard. We need some help, and we're trying to support the schools. We have cut as much as we can because it has been like this for a long time.

Parent: I graduated from CHS and have four children who have attended CHS with the oldest now graduating from college. In looking at the Enrollment chart, when you notice the CHS enrollment begin to increase (2000) that is a result of good choices made at CHS that were different from the decisions made at the other high school. My biggest concern is that in the last few years decisions have been made at the district level. Committees have been formed to make all these efficient decisions to make everything the same. We are losing local control to make our own choices. One example is CHS made the decision to keep science all year long, instead of as a block class. Parents started moving their kids here and our enrollment went up. My biggest concern is decisions are centralized at the district office. If CV continues to have problems and decisions are centralized then they lose some of the incentive to make changes themselves.

A: Jim: From 2000 CV's enrollment continued to decline every year and they tried self-reflective analysis, surveys, and everything they could think of to discover why students were transferring to CHS. The faculty was incredibly demoralized and every year they

needed to make further budget cuts. There comes a tipping point in enrollment when a school can't offer the same classes the other school offers (AP subject, or sections of band, or auto shop).

Q: I understand the necessity to balance the enrollment between the two schools. My concern is with the other changes being made for next year, the mandated Basic School positions. Do we have a choice at the individual school to not add a full-time librarian or increase our counseling staff? Last year my daughter had 40 students in all her classes.

A: Jim: At the district level we decided if every school needs certain support staff then let's fund that centrally. The mandate was determined by a group of principals and administrators that came together to decide the basic services every school needs.

Q: We don't appear to have a choice about the Dual Language Immersion Program. Those will be classes offered that will replace the possibility of other classes.

A: Jim: Before we began the Dual Lang. Immersion program we learned it only works when it is a K-12 program. We needed to commit to it through the high school level or there wouldn't be a point of offering it at the elementary level.

Parent continues: We saw at Linus Pauling the Immersion program was given special privileges, like an emergency license granted to a native speaker to teach a very small science class to 17 students in Spanish. At LP we have classes with 40 students in a class. When those students arrive at CHS it will mean there will be teachers who are exclusively with that group. That will be to the detriment of the other students, as we look at cutting staff at CHS.

Jim: This year there was one immersion class at LP, next year there will be two coming up from Garfield and Lincoln – that will mean more students.

Eric: It is a tough time to be adding that person as we reduce staff.

Q: How can the revenue that the district receives in rental of the theater benefit the students?

A: Jim: We are looking at that. Students who work are paid, those productions are very expensive to put on. There is not a great deal of profit.

Parent comment: Because of the school district's relationship with Park and Rec. you see children who do not have access to school gyms. You have adult basketball, volleyball and dodge ball that take precedence.

Thanks to Jim Hogeboom, assistant superintendent, for attending the meeting.
jim.hogeboom@corvallis.k12.or.us

Suzanne: This budget cut wasn't anticipated or planned for. We want you to understand the cut isn't just this year, it is for next year and possibly the year after that as well. My email box is so full, if you send an email please copy all three of us.

Q: We have a feedback form here but I don't understand what is discretionary. How can we give thoughtful, meaningful input? This form is so open ended. Is there a way to make it more relevant to what input parents can have?

A: Suzanne: We anticipate a reduction across the board in every department.

Parent continues: At the elem. level principals might pass out a list to indicate this is where we have flexibility and permit parents to voice input or rank choices within those priorities.

Eric: Harder to do within a high school where it might be a 1.7 FTE reduction in one dept. and .33 FTE reduction in another. What would be helpful is to share if you have a perspective or information we might not already have.

Q: Could you inform us before things are set in stone?

A: Suzanne: Not possible to notify parents before we notify affected staff. The budget is due Friday.

Q: Both high schools are in the same position with long-term decreasing enrollment. How can we better share resources between the two schools?

A: Eric: We have buses and a van that transport between the two schools and our schedules are slightly staggered to facilitate this exchange. It is difficult because the length of time it takes to commute causes students to be late for their classes.

Suzanne: Enrollment is one factor, an additional factor is our state economics. What level will the legislature choose to fund schools next year and will we have that information this time next year? We will also be impacted if they choose not to include school improvement money.

Q: What about sharing teachers of electives between schools? Marshall Price divides his time between CHS and LP. Seems easier for teachers to commute than students.

A: Rynda and Eric: It has been done. Teachers prefer to stay at one school.

Q: Has cutting administration time been discussed?

A: Eric: Basic School requirements suggest each high school have one principal and two assistant principals.

Meeting end at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Hennessy
Parent Connection Secretary