

Steller Parent Group Meeting May 1, 2013

Call to order at 6:00 p.m.

Introductions: Jennifer Hall Jones, Dorothy Pickles, Patti Randlett, Rochelle Wilhelm, Victoria Weindel, Christine Miller, Ken Varea, Wendy Woolf, Rebecca Johnson, Dale Evern, Janine Nesheim

Minutes Review

Approve Agenda - Approved

Reports

Principal:

Dale - Steller granted Rock Wall from the Legislature; Dale concerned about more important items that were also requested, like greenhouse and gym. Request for a rock wall was initially made by previous principal. Marla Sanders hired as new math teacher-will take Natalie's advisory group. New Spanish teacher still pending. Elizabeth will also not be coming back; moving out of state. Student wait list in 7th, 8th grade, 49 students in 9th grade, only lost 2 students from 8th to 9th grade. 10th grade has small (10-11) wait list. 2 spots open in 11th, 8 spots open in 12th grade. Largest funnel of graduates have gone on to UAA with scholarships.

Staff:

Ken - Thank you for Parent Group checks to teachers. Schedule will include slot for new Spanish teacher in anticipation of hiring. Making sure seniors set to graduate. Currently, Intensives are one day shorter next spring semester because Activity Day falls on Friday May 16th. 39 people are interested in Physics and only one class is scheduled at this moment.

Ad Board:

Several meetings set for this summer to get planning underway. Consistent minutes have been a challenge; one suggestion included exploring the idea of offering student credit as a way to encourage participation. Philip offered to do Roberts Rule training. Ken suggests doing training in smaller group meetings will be the most effective.

PG Treasurer:

Wendy reporting for Rebecca M., Sherry B. is ill -

Discussion of Treasurers Report and end of year balances.

Motion by Wendy that we approve Sherry Borer as Parent Group Treasurer, Rebecca seconded, motion carries.

Rebecca moves to accept treasurers report, Victoria seconds, motion carries.

Note: Item #4 - Check written out to Ken actually to Dale for Activity Day.

Old Business

- *Northstar/last Souper Steller*: Jennifer Hall Jones states successful event.

- *Report from Ad Board*: By-Laws update; changes are approved by Ad Board. Spacing and a couple hard pages to be added by Rochelle. A word document will be kept and it will be posted on our website. Thank you Rochelle!

- *T-shirt order for CES school year 2013-14*: Rochelle ordering; anticipate that we will have items for registration in August.

- *Volunteer Staffing for August registration*: Notice in Flash will come out for parent staffing at registration in August. Staff will be reduced by ASD budget, so parent volunteers will be needed beyond what we have provided in past years.

- *Parent Liaisons – check in*: Liaisons surveyed indicated that overall it went well, easier than most expected. Establishing how best to communicate with staff, e.g. email vs. phone differed amongst staff. A couple of parent liaisons had children no longer at Steller, or had switched advisories in the course of the year, so in addition to the liaisons with seniors, there will be new liaison positions ready to fill for next year. Alyse G. offered to help fill these positions.

- *Parent Group 9/4 agenda verification*: elections and fun for new parents too? Suggestions from group are welcome. Not sure what this first PG meeting will look like. No concrete suggestions. Dale suggests skit for August 19th New to Steller Orientation informational meeting. Rebecca suggests small group discussions about our students would be welcome.

- *TOB*: How to spend a lot of money has created angst, and concern about health and safety issues with a lot of parents/students using the kitchen space. Meeting occurred with Dale today to discuss. Parent Group observes something happening that is not best for Steller community, but as a club not able to affect changes. Effort has been started to help TOB become what it was originally tended to be (student run, student managed with parent/staff doing legal financial end of business). No real student leader at this time. Students can make cold drinks but not hot drinks without an adult present. Dale sees the club as under new direction, perhaps not being run at optimum, but would hesitate to tell any other club how to spend their money. The TOB club, under John's direction, proposed spending \$1000 on Food Bank, \$1000 on upgrading the outer counter and adding bar stools to make the counter more effective. Funds were also set aside to help pay for broken equipment. PG proposed Bistro tables as a suggestion to the club- something that would not attach to a wall to obscure murals or make use of the space less flexible. Dale suggests a school to work program, something to explore

in 8th grade and putting into action later, and suggested proposed funds go to that. For next year there will be no money to pay John, or any other staff to supervise, and will need parent volunteers if John does not volunteer his time to help run TOB. To help with perspective-Ken states that TOB run much better than in the past; they do not run out of supplies and free drinks not given out. Students appear to be doing their job (more or less) and whatever profit margin is being returned to the school in some form. Students also get their experience as baristas-though for this year there was no formal training since students didn't show up for Kaladi sponsored training. Questions from the group: Do clubs usually take space that usually can be used by other students? Yes. Is it a business club? TOB students used to get Economics credit in the past, but it now falls under a club model, so no credit is possible with current configuration. To get credit a teacher must be present. Experience in TOB potentially is used for Passages credit. Teacher wages cannot be paid for by TOB funds. There is some crossover of supplies (cups, napkins etc). used by the larger Steller community (this was not a concern for PG).

New Business

- *Escrip volunteer position solicitation: Escrip sends parent group a check (\$1000+ this year), but has been higher in the past.*

Discussion: requires education of parents in order to be most effective, posting notice, training of parents to think about using escrip. PG is seeking someone to be savvy with all the information /follow up with parents to keep people enrolled. Rochelle is the current name associated with the escrip organization for Steller. Escrip partners with hundreds of vendors, including Amazon. Even grandparents in other states can help-it is a nationwide organization- just need to advertise the benefits. Once signed up the organization only requires a yearly check in and no additional action on the part of the parents! Rebecca offered to research particulars of escrip and to work with volunteer next fall. Another idea included putting a "subscribe" button on the Flash, contest for kids to get people to sign up for escrip, with prize for most.

- *Flash posting policy – what are the parameters: We have had difficulties with Flash this winter, but have been resolved thanks to Rebecca and the Mitchell sisters. Now Rebecca is sharing responsibility and posting is not as consistent. Do we want daily emails or more set days for posting? How many announcements per posting? No consensus. Rebecca suggests adding Facebook for student contact. Discussion about robocalls and intrusiveness. Perhaps create a Content policy or guideline? Tabled for next year.*

- *Teacher appreciation for school year 2013-2014: Tabled until next school year.*

- *Inventory control/ordering for kitchen products:* Tabled until next school year.

- *Grants Committee and Travel Scholarship:* As grants committee from Ad Board is not meeting again until next school year, no money was granted. We received 9 (larger pool than usual) applicants for scholarships (3 financial, 6 other) for December 2013 travel. Students must commit to travel before school ends. Currently we have \$7000 allocated for the whole school year, but only \$3500 can be spent for the December trips, the remaining (\$3500) is allocated for the spring 2014 travel intensive. We can grant up to half of the travel cost for each student. If we put in another \$2000 in we can increase the total available for December trips to \$5,500. Wendy made motion to add \$2000 to the auction fund for December travel, Rebecca seconded, motion passed.

Mentorship program discussion: Ken talked about how the gifted mentorship program is being drastically reduced this next year; currently 300 slots are filled, and only 80 are expected to be allowed for next school year. Steller could help fill the gap with their passages program. When kids sign up for passages –required of all incoming 9th graders–they will see a form that asks parents to volunteer as mentors. Could become a formal part of the passages program. Victoria – could be only an hour for parents to discuss their job, or a larger commitment that might look more like a traditional mentorship. Need to figure out how to see what kids are interested in so we can pair students with parents with similar interests and experience. Teachers involved are Leigh Anne, Bob, Ken and Philip at this point. This will be offered for 9th graders and above. Discussion transitioned to how students need portfolios when they are applying for college. Parents need to be involved with assisting. Would we want to suggest adding an exit portfolio requirement? Portfolio's help for scholarships, not with college admissions necessarily. Ken would like students to create their own portfolios, with staff assistance.

-*Auction:* Juniors in charge instead of freshman this year. Wendy willing to work as co-lead, but will not do this alone, and will take lead on the directory. Request for Auction Co-Lead will be put on Flash.

Recognition to Rochelle; thank you!!! You will be missed.

Announcement: Tina-Trip to China sponsored by Chinese government (two of her kids have gone), where you only have to pay airfare; Chinese teacher at Bartlett in charge. \$1500 - \$2000 for two weeks in mid July–still seeking students.

Adjourned at 7:59 p.m.