

## Minutes from Pierce School Council | Thursday December 9, 2010

### In Attendance

Pipier Smith-Mumford, Gayle Van Hatten, Carin Aquiline, Ginny Carroll, Imari Paris Jeffries, Sandy Lundy, Lisa Goldblatt Grace, Chuck Silverston (PTO)

Meeting started at 7:05 a.m.

**Principals Forum: Wed. December 8, 2010** went well. Kindergarten and first grade-level discussions were based on remarks from teachers on panel. They structured their comments around this question: "What are you wondering about regarding your child in K-1?" Teacher/Specialist participants, Amie Buchman, Susan Liepman, Mary Gabriel and Tara Washburn, shared their expertise. Parent participants/Council members who participated were Karen Sutton and Carin Aquiline. A special thank you to all teachers and specialists for making an extra effort to join the panel. since her daughter was sick in the hospital.

Some of the issues that came out of the discussion were about the academic pressures teachers and parents face while still trying to strike a balance for our K-1 students academically and socially. Comments raised the issue that we need to come to a deeper understanding about children playing as another way to learning. Some of the parent body also expressed a sense of stress and the pressures of school, and on the other hand, some parents are continually looking for more academic challenges.

One parent expressed she liked the format of the forum, as it reminded her of the format/process of Kindergarten orientation for parent night. She was reminded that our students have a wide range of abilities and that it works when the parent and teacher are seeing the same child and thinking in the same way, "It's ok". A teacher reflected on the definition of play and how that can be interpreted for school, eg. choice time is work for a K student and it may look like play. It was stated that the range of perspectives and how different interpretations of our parent population contributed to richness of the discussion. Our student population of families speaks to the diversity of our Pierce community. It made the meeting more engaging and inclusive of varying views.

Last year the Principal forums focused on Parent Networking and this year's forum extended an opportunity for teachers to partake in the discussions and tin the continuing effort to establish partnerships with parents.

### **Principal's report on recent Budget Meeting**

- \* Growing enrollment and budget deficits create challenges for the district.
- \* Monies will address enrollment needs,
- \* The ratio of aides and Special Education services, numbers have been significantly decreased as appropriate

### **Principal's update on Building Issues, Expansions etc.**

- \* Meetings were held with the architects to discuss options of creating classroom space and restructuring of classrooms.
- \* Discussions were held by the Principal with Pierce teachers to discuss possible changes and who may be effect by these changes.

Future spaces to be targeted: Auditorium (Friday December 17th meeting) builders will take a look at Amphitheater, hoping to create a multi-purpose space/outdoor classroom. It will not be closed. It will be used as Green space, possibly plants /growth and nutrition and performance use.

The Kindergarten Park is above the amphitheater and there has been a request to include Kindergarten in the planning. More green added to K-park, will help to make the park more child friendly.

### **Upcoming Topics:**

Forum for February 9, 2011 Grades 2-3 (Anyone with ideas please send to Karen and Pipier).

Sexual Health Grades 4-5 will be discussed

Sexual Health: 6th grade parents will continue to talk about this topic at their next meeting

### ***Ideas around Posting "Honor Roll"***

Surveys will be devised to get a read from parent population, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students and their teachers first. The question: Does the honor roll have to be posted publicly?

In addition, feedback in January will be initiated from the whole school community including all teachers, via a survey for posting the honor roll.

Another topic, Exercising of the Brain - Pilot at Grade 4, more to come.

The meeting closed at 7:50 a.m.

The next meeting: **Wed. January 5, 2011 at 6:00pm.**